

Glenleigh Park Academy

Gunters Lane, Bexhill-on-Sea, TN39 4ED

Inspection dates

8–9 July 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected
	This inspection:	Good 2
Achievement of pupils	Good	2
Quality of teaching	Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils	Good	2
Leadership and management	Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Pupils make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics.
- Pupils' progress has increased this year in every year group. Pupils' basic reading, writing and mathematical skills have improved dramatically over the past year.
- Effective teaching is ensuring that pupils are rapidly catching up with where they should be at this stage in their education.
- Standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 have improved this year and are rising in all year groups.
- Teaching is typically good and improving strongly. Teachers and teaching assistants are enthusiastic and committed to helping every pupil to achieve well.
- The teaching of phonics (the sounds letters make) is well focused, regular and effective. The results of the Year 1 phonics check improved substantially in 2013.
- Caring and attentive adults in the Early Years Foundation Stage ensure that children feel secure and make good progress.
- Pupils are polite, well behaved and extremely proud of their academy. They feel very safe.
- Pupils enjoy school and attend regularly. Pupils' attendance has improved substantially since the academy opened.
- The executive headteacher provides inspirational leadership for this rapidly improving school.
- Expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour have risen rapidly since the academy opened. Senior leaders and governors have very quickly and successfully established a positive and purposeful atmosphere leading to better teaching and achievement.
- The academy is strongly committed to ensuring that all pupils do their best, regardless of background or ability.

It is not yet an outstanding school because:

- There is not enough outstanding teaching. Occasionally, teaching is not demanding enough and the work set for pupils, including the most able, is too easy.
- Pupils make slightly slower progress in writing than in other skills because there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to practise writing skills in different subjects.
- Middle leaders do not have a sufficiently sharp view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement in different year groups.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 17 lessons or part-lessons, including six observations carried out jointly with the executive headteacher. Inspectors also observed small groups of pupils working with an adult other than their teacher.
- Discussions were held with the executive headteacher, senior leaders, a member of the local academy board, teachers, members of staff, parents and carers and pupils. A meeting was also held with the chief executive of Aurora Academies Trust.
- Inspectors took account of 17 responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View, as well as parents' and carers' views in a recent academy survey. Inspectors considered the views expressed by a number of parents and carers who spoke with them informally at the start of the school day. Inspectors also took account of 32 staff questionnaire responses.
- Inspectors observed the academy's work and considered a range of documents and policies, including the academy's improvement plan, information about pupils' progress, attendance records and safeguarding policies and procedures.
- Inspectors looked at a wide range of pupils' work, including a large sample provided by the academy, as well as pupils' work viewed in lessons. Inspectors also listened to pupils read.

Inspection team

Julie Sackett, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Carol Vant	Additional Inspector
Roger Fenwick	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The academy is larger than the average-sized primary school and growing rapidly. It gained academy status in September 2012. It is sponsored and run by the Aurora Academies Trust (AAT).
- The executive headteacher was appointed in September 2013. All the teachers with class responsibility have been appointed since September 2012.
- The proportion of pupils supported by additional funding known as the pupil premium is above that found in most schools. This is additional government funding provided to give extra support to those pupils known to be eligible for free school meals and to those who are looked after.
- Most pupils are White British. Few speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs supported at school action is above average. The proportion of pupils supported through school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is average.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.
- The academy runs a breakfast club.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of outstanding teaching by ensuring that:
 - the work set for pupils is sufficiently demanding, particularly for the most able
 - there are more opportunities for pupils to develop and use their language and writing skills in different subjects
 - teachers use questioning during lessons to build on pupils' learning more strongly.
- Make sure leaders below senior level have a sharper view of the quality of teaching and pupils' achievement across the academy so that they can drive improvements further forward.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Pupils' progress has improved substantially in the past year, particularly in mathematics. In some year groups, pupils make very rapid progress because teaching is often outstanding.
- When the academy opened, many pupils had gaps in their knowledge of basic mathematics and language skills. Since then, teaching has been sharply focused on addressing these gaps and on moving learning forward. As a result, pupils' progress is rapid and sustained across the academy. A number of pupils told inspectors that they are making better progress. Year 6 pupils are on track to attain levels much closer to 2013 national averages.
- The introduction of regular, well-focused phonics sessions has had a marked effect on pupils' basic reading and writing skills. Pupils now routinely and confidently use phonics knowledge to help them with reading and writing. The results of the Year 1 phonics check were close to the nationally expected level in 2013 and are on course to be well above that standard this year. Pupils told inspectors that they enjoy reading.
- Increased expectations of all pupils mean that the progress made by the most-able pupils has increased and they make good progress. As a result, more pupils are on track to attain the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2014. However, occasionally, the work set in lessons is not sufficiently demanding to enable them to make outstanding progress.
- Many children join the Early Years Foundation Stage with knowledge and skills which are well below the levels expected for their age, particularly in speaking, social and language skills. They quickly grow in confidence and independence and are well prepared for learning in Year 1.
- Pupils make slightly slower progress in writing than in reading and mathematics. Following its success in driving improvements in mathematics achievement, the academy is now turning its attention to writing. The academy recognises the need to provide more opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in different subjects, but it is too soon to measure the impact of action on this priority.
- Pupils who are supported by additional funding make similar, and sometimes better, progress to that of their classmates. In 2013, the attainment of pupils eligible for additional funding was higher than that of their classmates in mathematics by about 10 months, and in line in reading. They were about four months behind their classmates in writing. The academy's information about pupils' achievement shows that eligible pupils continue to attain in line with their classmates in mathematics and reading. The gap in writing has closed completely.
- Disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Some individual pupils with complex emotional and learning needs make substantial progress because support is very well targeted. As a result, they are much better prepared for future learning.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Strong teamwork and effective teaching are speeding up pupils' progress across the academy. The quality and quantity of pupils' work have increased substantially over the past year.
- Good attention is given to developing pupils' basic reading and writing skills. Improvements in the teaching of phonics have strengthened the teaching of literacy skills across the academy.
- The teaching of mathematics has improved strongly over the past year. Training for teachers is well focused and has strengthened the teaching of calculation skills. Improvements in the use of practical resources, such as cubes and number squares, are strengthening pupils' understanding of number.
- Imaginative approaches to learning mean that pupils are interested and motivated to write. Pupils regularly talk about their ideas and teachers show pupils how to tackle new tasks. As a result, pupils write with increasing confidence. However, there are insufficient opportunities for

them to practise language and writing skills across different subjects.

- Teachers have high aspirations for their pupils, who know that they are expected to do their best. However, while teachers' expectations are usually high, occasionally, the work set for pupils is too easy and stops short of the levels some pupils could achieve, including some of the most able.
- Pupils know that their teachers check their work frequently because their books are regularly marked. Teachers give pupils specific suggestions about how they can improve their work so that pupils are clear about what they need to do next and they invariably make the improvements called for. Improvements in the way pupils present their work were evident in the extensive range of pupils' work seen during the inspection.
- Children enjoy a wide range of appealing activities in the Early Years Foundation Stage. Teaching is particularly effective in the Reception Year because adults use every opportunity to move children's learning forward.
- Teachers generally use questioning well during lessons to check and build on pupils' understanding. Teachers are alert to pupils who are not keeping up during lessons and provide good support. However, occasionally, teachers' questions are not sufficiently demanding, particularly for the most-able pupils, so that their progress slows.
- Teaching assistants play a valuable role in supporting pupils' progress, including that of disabled pupils and those who have special educational needs. Extra help is provided quickly and successfully for those pupils at risk of falling behind.
- There is not yet enough outstanding teaching in the academy to ensure all pupils make the very best progress possible.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of pupils is good. Most pupils behave well in lessons, during break times and when moving between lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour has improved dramatically in the time since the academy opened. All adults expect pupils to be on their best behaviour at all times and to work hard in lessons. Adults speak to pupils and to each other with respect. Pupils copy the strong role models that the staff provide.
- Lessons are characterised by a calm, quiet, working atmosphere which sets the tone well for pupils' learning. Most pupils work hard and their attitudes to school are positive.
- Pupils are proud of their academy and enjoy attending. One pupil said, 'I'm going to miss Glenleigh Park!' Most parents and carers who completed the Parent View survey and those who responded to the recent academy survey consider pupils to be well behaved.
- Systems for managing pupils' behaviour are effective throughout the academy and pupils understand the consequences of their behaviour. A few pupils sometimes find it more difficult to behave well during lessons so that their progress slows. When this happens, pupils respond very positively to the calm, quiet and positive approach of their teachers.
- The academy's work to keep pupils safe and secure is good. Leaders make sure the building is secure and staff are rigorously checked prior to appointment. Pupils know about different types of bullying and are confident about talking to adults in the academy if they have any worries. Pupils get on well with each other. Any incidents of discrimination are tackled robustly and incidents of racism are rare.
- Pupils know some of the steps they can take to help to keep themselves safe, including when using the internet. Most parents and carers who completed Parent View consider their children are happy and safe in school.
- Pupils are punctual and attend school regularly. The academy's focus on improving attendance has been highly successful. Any unexplained absences are followed up rigorously. Pupils' enjoyment of school is reflected in above-average attendance rates. They appreciate the class rewards for regular attendance.

The leadership and management are good

- Parents' and carers' confidence makes Glenleigh a rapidly growing school, with large numbers of pupils joining the academy in all year groups. The academy's strong commitment to ensuring all pupils do their very best, regardless of backgrounds, abilities or beliefs, underpins the academy's success in securing rapid improvements in pupils' achievement.
- The appointment of the executive headteacher has been instrumental in raising expectations, securing improvements and instilling confidence in staff, pupils and parents and carers. He is very well supported by the deputy headteacher and other senior leaders.
- Teachers, leaders and other adults in the academy relish the drive to raise achievement. The upbeat atmosphere is infectious and staff morale is high. There is just one key priority for academy development which is understood, shared and repeated by all staff: 'raising standards'. Everything the academy does is focused on this single over-arching target – and it is working.
- The Aurora Academies Trust provides strong support for ongoing improvements in the academy. Training is highly effective. All leaders spoke of the impact this has on developing their leadership roles and in raising pupils' achievement.
- The academy's curriculum provides regular opportunities for pupils to consider complex social issues. For example, during the inspection pupils in Year 5 talked with maturity and sensitivity about the theme, 'Life as an immigrant'. These helpful learning opportunities strongly support their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Middle leaders' roles have developed quickly. They are very focused on aspects of pupils' achievement which need improving and understand their responsibilities. However, some middle leaders' knowledge of the quality of teaching and of pupils' achievement in different year groups is less well developed. Their limited understanding is hampering their view of the academy's performance and preventing them from driving improvement forward faster.
- Sports funding is used well. A wider range of sporting activities is available to pupils, including more sports clubs and pupils' participation in sport has increased. Specialist teaching has provided valuable support for teachers so that they are more confident about teaching sports skills.
- The breakfast club provides an enjoyable and calm start to the school day for those who attend.
- **The governance of the school:**
 - The local academy board plays an effective role in supporting and challenging the academy. Governors know the academy well. Training in the use of performance data on pupils' progress and attainment has improved governors' understanding of how well the academy is performing compared with schools nationally. They are well informed by academy leaders, and also inform themselves about the use of additional funds and about how successfully these are raising pupils' achievement. In addition, governors have a good working knowledge of the academy's day-to-day work. Regular visits mean that they are able to speak with confidence about improvements in teaching and in pupils' achievement because they have seen examples for themselves. Governors know how the academy's rigorous performance management procedures are used to recognise good practice and support improvements in teaching. Safeguarding arrangements are robust and meet statutory requirements.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138392
Local authority	East Sussex
Inspection number	426373

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy sponsor-led
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	283
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Moore
Headteacher	Paul Reilly (executive headteacher)
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	01424 213611
Fax number	N/A
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