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Mrs Debbie Redman
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Redman

Short inspection of Glenleigh Park Primary Academy

Following my visit to the school on 22 March 2018, I write on behalf of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills to report the inspection findings. The visit was the first short inspection carried out since the school was judged to be good in July 2014.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You lead with great patience and admirable determination. You and other leaders are dedicated to providing the highest possible standard of education for the pupils in your care. The inclusive ethos of the school is a great strength. Parents admire your open and honest approach, telling me that they respect and trust your decisions when they have problems or concerns. They were also positive about many aspects of the school, including support for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities, as well as the early years provision.

Staff are very motivated and work tirelessly under your direction, appreciating the guidance that they receive from leaders. They told me about the improved resources at the school and how they relish planning learning within the school's distinctive curriculum framework. Pupils told me that they enjoy lessons and appreciate the help they get from staff. When I talked formally to a group of pupils, some found it hard to identify anything they would want to improve. During breaktime, pupils who have recently joined from other schools told me how they preferred Glenleigh. Their reasons for this rested firmly on the support they receive in classrooms.

During classroom visits, pupils were happy to tell me about their learning. Their books showed me that they take pride in their work and that staff are providing appropriate levels of challenge across the curriculum. My visit to the Nursery Year showed that staff have a good understanding of children's needs. Scrutiny of

assessment records and learning journeys enabled me to confirm parents' views that their children make good progress and are cared for well in the early years.

Our visits to key stage 2 classrooms also showed me that staff know pupils well. Staff also understand your key priorities for improvement. Pupils told me that they read more often and more widely. The focus on improving their inference and deduction skills is showing signs of having a positive impact on progress in reading. Pupils, including those from disadvantaged backgrounds, receive additional targeted support when required. Our visit to an intervention group demonstrated that staff are persistent when they need to be and have high expectations, leading to good gains in learning for the pupils concerned.

At the time of the last inspection, inspectors acknowledged the many strengths of the school. These included the commitment of staff to help every pupil to achieve and the much higher expectation for pupils' learning and behaviour. Inspectors identified that leaders needed a sharper understanding of the quality of teaching and how it impacted on pupils' achievement. They also recognised a need to increase the proportion of higher quality teaching across the school. These aspects have been addressed successfully. Leaders demonstrate a clear understanding of the quality of teaching over time. Better quality teaching has led to significant improvements in outcomes for pupils at the end of key stages 1 and 2 in the last two years.

Since the last inspection, leaders have continued the important process of self-evaluation. You were able to explain the school's many strengths, as well as the key priorities for development. Although outcomes for disadvantaged pupils are improving, you know that their progress needs to accelerate further if they are to attain in line with other pupils nationally. You have also identified that the progress that pupils make in reading by the end of key stage 2 needs to be better. You agreed with me that systems to assess pupils' progress should be improved so that leaders and teachers have a clearer understanding of the progress that vulnerable groups are making.

Safeguarding is effective.

Arrangements to safeguard pupils are effective. Policies and procedures are sound. The culture to safeguard pupils is strong. Staff understand their duty to safeguard children. Their training is up to date and communication is strong. Staff, including non-teaching support staff, know what to do and who to talk to if they have concerns.

All parents who spoke to me expressed an opinion that their children are safe in school. The large majority of parents who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire think that their children feel safe and are cared for well at school. Pupils told me that they feel safe in school. However, they also shared that bullying sometimes occurs, although staff deal with it well once they are aware of it.

Inspection findings

- Standards have improved in the last three years. Children get off to a strong start in the early years. The proportion of pupils achieving expected standards in phonics in Years 1 and 2 is good. Attainment at the end of key stage 1 broadly matches that seen in other schools nationally. Pupils make good progress in mathematics and writing by the end of key stage 2. However, progress in reading is less strong. Leaders have made this a key priority for improvement.
- The school's curriculum meets the needs of pupils well. Staff enjoy planning learning that excites and motivates pupils to develop enquiring minds. Based on linked topics and themes, the school's 'paragon' curriculum takes pupils on a learning journey through time, which they start as they move into Year 1. Breadth and balance are ensured by the use of additional specialist staff who teach music, physical education and sport, or 'beach school' lessons. Learning is enriched by visits to local and national historic sites, or by visitors to the school who demonstrate aspects of different cultures, for example gamelan playing.
- Pupils' social and emotional development is supported well by the curriculum. A personal, social and health education programme enables pupils to learn about staying safe and healthy. Daily circle time sessions enable pupils to explore feelings and relationships, as well as learn about the values of tolerance and respect for the views of others. Residential trips, sports and activity clubs, as well as instrumental tuition in class groups or for individual pupils, are all part of the school's extra-curricular offer.
- Disadvantaged pupils are now doing better at Glenleigh. However, staff are acutely aware of the need to boost the attainment of this vulnerable group. Although standards are rising across the school, leaders and those in positions of governance know that disadvantaged pupils now need to make more rapid progress. This will enable them to attain more closely in line with other pupils nationally.
- Leaders track the attainment of pupils well. However, systems to monitor the progress that pupils are making are less developed. This is particularly the case with different vulnerable groups as they move through key stage 2. Leaders know that they need to refine these systems to have a clearer understanding of how these groups are performing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- pupils make more progress in reading as they move through key stage 2
- pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds make more accelerated progress, so that their outcomes improve more rapidly to match those of other pupils nationally
- systems to track pupils' progress are further refined so that leaders have a clearer understanding of the progress pupils are making, particularly those pupils from vulnerable groups.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the local academy governing board, the chief executive officer of the multi-academy trust, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for East Sussex. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Clive Close
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection I visited classrooms, assessing the progress that pupils were making and talking to them about their learning. I observed pupils' behaviour in classrooms, at breaktime and as they moved around the school. I attended two assemblies. I met with the headteacher and other senior leaders, the chair of the local academy board accompanied by one other governor, a group of teachers, non-teaching support staff, and with a group of pupils. I also met the chief executive officer and regional director of the academy trust. I talked to parents at the start of the school day, and took into account 21 replies to Ofsted's online parent questionnaire and accompanying text messages. A wide range of documentation was scrutinised, including safeguarding records, pupils' progress information, the school's self-evaluation and improvement planning, policies, minutes of local academy board meetings and records of monitoring visits by the trust.