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Mr Lawrence Lee  
Headteacher  
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Dear Mr Lee

### **Short inspection of Glebelands Primary School**

Following my visit to the school on 7 June 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 September 2014.

#### **This school continues to be good.**

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. Since taking up your post in February 2016, you have established an effective and committed senior leadership team. The governing body challenges you well and makes a positive contribution to moving the school forward. With the support of all leaders, you have built upon the strengths of the school and are addressing the weaknesses you have identified. Due to financial considerations, you have had to make significant reductions in staffing this year. Staff that I spoke with say that these changes have been handled well and morale is good. They comment that everyone works well together as a team and that leaders have maintained the school's caring and aspirational ethos. You call this ethos 'The Glebelands Way' and expect all staff and pupils to follow its principles.

You offer pupils a broad and stimulating curriculum which challenges their thinking and encourages them to consider the needs of others. For example, just prior to the inspection, pupils had donated pairs of unwanted shoes to send to schools in Africa. On the inspection day itself, parents, carers and grandparents were in school to help pupils improve the outdoor environment, as part of your Grow Glebelands topic. Pupils were keen to show me their garden. They use the vegetables they grow to make soups and salads and so develop their understanding of healthy eating and sustainable living.

Pupils benefit from a wide range of trips, clubs and additional activities. These opportunities support pupils' all-round development. You place particular emphasis on ensuring that as many pupils as possible participate in sporting activities. Pupils

are often very successful. For example, the Year 5 and 6 football team recently won a city-wide tournament. Older pupils welcome the opportunities they have for taking responsibility. With the support of staff, Year 6 pupils lead mixed-age circle time sessions. This gives pupils the chance to share their thoughts and feelings and to develop their understanding of others. One parent commented on 'the outstanding care and compassion' shown at the school. Pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour make a major contribution to their good progress.

Self-evaluation systems and procedures are well developed and so you have an excellent understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. You have identified the strengths in teaching as well as areas that need to develop further. You provide appropriate support and challenge for all staff to develop their skills. There are clear links between your school improvement plan and teacher appraisal; staff understand the school's priorities and the importance of their contribution. As a result of this work, you have made good progress towards addressing the areas for improvement from the last inspection.

Pupils' workbooks in all subjects are now a delight to read. They take great care with their presentation and are proud of their efforts. Handwriting is taught well so that, by the time pupils leave the school, they have developed a clear and consistent style. Pupils write at length across a range of curriculum subjects. This makes a good contribution to ensuring that attainment in writing at the expected standard is above average by the end of Year 6.

Since the last inspection, you have introduced a new system to track pupils' achievements throughout their time in the school. You use this to check that pupils are making the good progress you expect of them. Teachers know their pupils very well and discuss their learning needs in regular meetings with the leadership team. Leaders hold teachers to account for the progress that pupils make. You recognise that in the past pupils did not make sufficient progress in Years 3 and 4, particularly in reading and writing. This meant that they were not as well prepared for the demands of the curriculum in Years 5 and 6 as they should have been. You have taken steps to address this. You appointed a new English leader in 2016 and she now leads the Years 3 and 4 team. Despite some changes to teaching staff in one of the classes during this year, work in pupils' books and your assessment information show that pupils in these year groups now make good progress.

### **Safeguarding is effective.**

The leadership team and the governing body have ensured that all safeguarding requirements are fit for purpose. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and child protection matters. As a result, they are alert to their responsibilities to keep pupils safe. Staff have a clear understanding of the process they should follow if they have any concerns about a pupil's welfare. The school's systems for recording and reporting these concerns are strong. Leaders ensure that pupils in need of additional support receive it in a timely and proportionate way. Leaders ensure that the required checks are completed to ensure that staff and volunteers are suitable to work in the school. Governors check regularly on this aspect of the school's work.

All parents who responded to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, agreed that their children feel safe at Glebelands. Pupils say that they feel safe in school because adults help them and listen to their concerns. Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe in a range of situations. They learn about fire and road safety as a result of visits by the fire brigade and the police. They also learn how to keep themselves safe when using technology.

Pupils have a clear understanding of what bullying is. They say that bullying is rare at Glebelands but that they would speak to an adult if it did occur. They are confident that any incident would be dealt with promptly and well. Pupils say that behaviour around school and in lessons is good. They appreciate the awards and rewards they receive for showing positive attitudes and good conduct.

### **Inspection findings**

- The proportion of pupils who achieve the standards expected for their age by the time they leave Glebelands is above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics.
- In 2016 and 2017, some of the most able Year 6 pupils did not make the progress the school expected of them in reading. This was because their skills in understanding more complex ideas and vocabulary in texts were not sufficiently well developed. You have made addressing this a high priority this year. The English leader has worked with staff throughout the school to improve the teaching of reading.
- All pupils in key stage 2 now study three high-quality texts a year in great depth. They relish the opportunity to immerse themselves fully in the text and to discuss the characters and plot. For example, Year 3 and 4 pupils have just read, and thoroughly enjoyed, *Macbeth*. Most pupils are now making increasingly good progress in this aspect of their learning. Your assessment information indicates that a well-above-average proportion of pupils in Year 6 are on track to reach the higher standard in reading this year. You recognise that improving pupils' range and depth of vocabulary will further enhance their attainment and enjoyment in reading.
- You have made changes to the ways that the pupil premium funding is used following a detailed evaluation of previous spending and the impact on pupils' achievement. As a result, attainment for disadvantaged pupils at the end of Year 6 improved in 2017. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics was in line with that of other pupils nationally. However, no disadvantaged pupil reached the higher standard in either reading or mathematics. The progress of disadvantaged pupils, particularly the most able, was below that of other pupils nationally for reading and writing. However, this group of pupils had made slow progress when they were in Years 3 and 4, and this affected their overall progress in key stage 2.
- Your assessment and tracking system now enables teachers to ensure that the progress of disadvantaged pupils is closely tracked and to provide work which is closely matched to the needs of these pupils. The most able disadvantaged

pupils that I spoke with agreed that they feel sufficiently challenged in lessons. Their books indicate that they do not always receive sufficient support to improve their written work and so achieve the higher standard.

- Children enter the early years, whether in the nursery or Reception class, with skills below those expected for their age. Over the past three years, an increasing proportion of children have reached a good level of development by the end of the Reception Year. In 2017, this proportion was similar to the national average. However, the difference between boys' and girls' achievement is wider than that found nationally. Boys' reading and writing outcomes are weaker areas. The gender gap narrows in key stage 1 and, by the end of Year 2, boys have almost caught up with girls. This is due to high-quality phonics teaching and frequent opportunities to read and practise writing skills. Observations and scrutiny of written work during the inspection showed boys in key stage 1 using and applying their phonic skills effectively in both reading and writing.
- Your leadership team identified the need to accelerate progress for boys in the early years and you have taken swift action to address this issue. You have worked closely with the early years leader, visiting local schools to learn from others and establishing a strategy that will work for children at Glebelands. Teachers are increasingly accurate in their assessments of learning and so planned activities are more closely tailored to children's needs. Children, particularly boys, benefit from carefully structured activities and additional support for those who have fallen behind is in place. As a result, children's progress is accelerating. Leaders recognise that there is more work to be done to ensure that teachers plan consistently high-quality learning experiences which enable children to develop their early language and literacy skills more rapidly.

### **Next steps for the school**

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers support the most able pupils, particularly those who are disadvantaged, to improve their writing so that a greater proportion achieve the higher standard by the end of Year 6
- teachers and other adults encourage and enable pupils to develop and use a rich and wide range of vocabulary so that they are able to tackle complex reading texts more successfully
- children, particularly boys, in the early years are provided with sufficient opportunities to develop and practise their early language and literacy skills so that they make faster progress from their starting points.

I am copying this letter to the chair of the governing body, the regional schools commissioner and the director of children's services for Leicester. This letter will be published on the Ofsted website.

Yours sincerely

Joanne Sanchez-Thompson  
**Ofsted Inspector**

### **Information about the inspection**

I visited all classes with you to observe teaching, learning and assessment. We also looked at pupils' workbooks to check the progress that they are making. We discussed the school's effectiveness and the actions taken to ensure the school's continued improvement.

I met with leaders with responsibility for the pupil premium funding, safeguarding and English. I spoke with two members of the local governing body, the clerk to the governors and a representative of the local authority. I also spoke with a small group of staff. I met with a group of pupils from Years 5 and 6 and talked informally with other pupils in lessons and during playtime. I met with parents on the playground at the beginning of the school day.

I looked at a range of documents, including your evaluation of the school's effectiveness and the school's improvement plan. I also scrutinised the school's safeguarding systems, records and associated documents. I checked assessment information on how well pupils are achieving. I considered 26 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and five written comments from parents.