

Glen Hills Primary School

Featherby Drive, Glen Parva, Leicester, Leicestershire LE2 9NY

Inspection dates

2–3 October 2018

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Early years provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders have created a climate of trust in the school. All staff are committed to improving the school and staff morale is very positive.
- The determined leadership of the executive headteacher, head of school and the senior team has led to rapid improvements over the last year, particularly in reading and writing.
- Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for development. They are ambitious for the school and actively support and challenge leaders in securing improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and balanced. Leaders and governors have ensured that it meets the needs and interests of pupils, including the implementation of successful nurture classes.
- The personal development of pupils is highly effective. This is complemented by plentiful opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes.
- Pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities are well supported and are making good progress as a result.
- The arrangements for safeguarding pupils are effective and leaders have established a culture of vigilance in the school. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy and parents strongly agree.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers use their subject knowledge enthusiastically to engage pupils in their learning.
- Pupils behave exceptionally well. The school has established a caring community ethos which permeates all aspects of school life. Pupils are polite, caring and helpful. They are proud of their school.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- Provision in the early years is good. Children settle in well and quickly adapt to the high expectations and routines that have been established. Parents are very positive about the provision their children receive and they make good progress.
- Teachers and leaders engage well with other schools in the Symphony Learning Trust to share effective practice and to check the accuracy of their assessment of pupils' work.
- Pupils make good progress in key stage 1.
- In 2018, pupils' progress by the end of key stage 2 improved in reading and writing. However, progress in mathematics is less good.
- The progress made by the most able pupils and disadvantaged pupils is improving but remains more variable.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve outcomes in key stage 2 by ensuring that all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, make consistently strong progress in reading and mathematics.
- Ensure that the most able pupils receive work which is sufficiently challenging to enable them to make stronger progress, particularly in mathematics.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- There is an exceptionally positive ethos within the school, underpinned by high expectations, strong values and a very cohesive and committed team of staff. Staff morale is very high.
- The executive headteacher, together with the head of school and other senior leaders, has recently driven significant improvements to the quality of teaching, learning and assessment – particularly in reading. As a result, pupils are now making better progress than was the case over the previous two years. However, these improvements have not yet secured consistently strong progress from disadvantaged and the most able pupils.
- Leaders and governors have an accurate and detailed understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Leaders have used a wide range of evidence to inform improvement planning and have accurately identified the right priorities to address. For example, they have prioritised improvements in reading. These plans are already bringing about improvements for current pupils.
- Leaders have successfully ensured that there is a strong capacity for further improvement across the school. Opportunities for leadership are widely distributed. Senior leaders provide appropriate support for subject leaders so that they are effective in their roles. However, there is some variability in the quality of subject improvement planning.
- Leaders have taken determined action to ensure that teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is accurate and this is closely monitored. There are regular opportunities to review pupils' progress. Leaders ensure that pupil assessment across the key subjects is standardised within the school and across the trust. Assessment information is purposefully used to identify where pupils have gaps in their learning and this informs the wide range of intervention strategies which are used effectively.
- There are indications that the impact of additional funding for disadvantaged pupils is beginning to have a stronger impact on pupil outcomes across all year groups. Barriers to learning are identified at an individual level. Funding is used in a purposeful way to support their welfare and narrow gaps in attainment between these pupils and other pupils nationally. Leaders recognise that there is more to achieve with this group of pupils.
- The leadership of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is effective. The coordinator for special education needs (SENCo) has a deep knowledge of pupils' specific needs and carefully maps out their learning to ensure that these needs are addressed. There is good engagement with parents and external agencies and, as a result, most pupils are making good progress.
- Leaders have placed significant investment in 'nurture classes' so that pupils with specific gaps in their learning can catch up quickly. These classes provide engaging and very supportive learning experiences for pupils.
- The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum. Leaders have placed a strong emphasis on ensuring that all pupils learn from discrete wider curriculum subjects such

as science, geography, history and art. The curriculum is very successful in engaging pupils' interest and enthusiasm.

- The curriculum is complemented by enriching learning experiences such as residential visits to York and to places of worship. These experiences further develop pupils' understanding of spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes, which are strongly developed in school.
- Pupils have a good understanding of the principles behind fundamental British values. They recognise the importance of tolerance and appreciate the inclusive school ethos of which they are a part. The election of pupils into positions on the school council also provides them with an insight into democracy.
- Teachers value regular opportunities for professional development to share effective classroom practice. These opportunities include external courses, learning from each other and from staff in different schools across the trust.
- The leadership of the additional funding for physical education (PE) and sports premium is highly effective. The funding is spent on additional resources, sports coaching and increasing participation in sporting activities. The recent 'school games platinum award' is testament to the effectiveness of how this funding is being productively used.
- Pupils are very appreciative of the wider range of extra-curricular opportunities. Examples include music, drama, sports clubs, gardening and library clubs. The school has very recently been awarded the Leicestershire 'music mark' award in recognition of curriculum and extra-curricular music provision.
- Leaders have benefited from and contributed to the supportive school-to-school strategies that exist within the trust. The chief executive officer is very positive about the contributions the school makes in sharing effective practice to other schools within the trust.

Governance of the school

- The governance of the school is effective.
- Together with senior leaders, governors are ambitious for the school and have a clear vision for improvement. Relationships are positive, constructive and forward-thinking.
- Governors are kept very well informed and, because of the high quality of information provided by senior leaders, they have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are fully aware of the actions the school is taking to improve outcomes and they make regular visits to the school to check on progress. This includes the production of detailed governor monitoring reports.
- Governors are skilled, knowledgeable and hold senior leaders to account effectively. They provide leaders with appropriate levels of challenge and support to ensure that the necessary improvements identified in the school's development plan take place.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders have embedded a culture of

vigilance which incorporates the views of pupils and their parents. Any issues that arise are swiftly addressed.

- All staff understand what to do if they have any concerns about a pupil's well-being. This is because they receive regular training and updates which are of a high quality. School records are meticulously organised and detailed. They demonstrate that prompt and decisive action is taken to keep pupils safe. Leaders work effectively with external agencies and with parents to ensure that pupils receive the right support when required.
- The checks made on the recruitment of staff are secure and monitored by senior leaders. Procedures are in place so that all visitors to the school are suitably vetted. The governor for safeguarding visits the school regularly to check on the school's processes and procedures.
- Pupils learn how to keep themselves safe and can talk about this confidently. For example, pupils are taught about internet safety, road and rail safety, personal safety and drug awareness. Pupils say that they feel safe and happy in school.
- All parents who spoke with inspectors or responded to Ofsted's online survey agreed that their children feel safe, happy and well looked after at the school.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Pupils benefit from consistently good teaching, which means that they achieve well.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve is high. Teachers know their pupils well and set clear routines that pupils understand and follow. Relationships are positive and pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good. Pupils behave well in lessons and present their work to a high standard.
- Teachers have strong subject knowledge which they use enthusiastically to engage pupils in a variety of interesting learning activities, which they say they enjoy. This includes the effective use of questioning to probe and deepen pupils' understanding.
- Lessons are thoughtfully planned and sequenced so that most pupils are appropriately challenged in their learning. Teachers use well-prepared resources to sustain pupils' interest and focus, ensuring that little time is wasted.
- Teachers make sure that pupils complete work which is set at the right level of challenge to help pupils deepen their level of understanding or to master a skill. These tasks do not always provide enough challenge for the most able pupils.
- Teachers work in a collaborative way to ensure that pupils' work is assessed accurately. Teachers use assessment information to plan learning that enables most pupils to make good progress over time.
- Opportunities for pupils to develop their reading skills are becoming increasingly effective. The introduction of the 'Reading Olympics', for example, is strongly promoting more frequent reading in school and at home and improving pupils' fluency and comprehension of different texts. Pupils say that they enjoy reading and, as one pupil put it, 'I like reading because you can shut off the outside world.'
- Opportunities for homework are used purposefully and are fully integrated into

curriculum planning. This enables pupils to explore their learning more widely across a range of different subjects.

- Additional adult support is carefully deployed to ensure that pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities and disadvantaged pupils are effectively supported. Pupils respond well to this additional support, although there is some variability in its effectiveness. The nurture classes are effective in enabling pupils who require greater support to make better progress.
- The school's policy on providing feedback to pupils is used consistently by all teachers. Pupils are informed about their successes in learning and about how they can further improve their work. There is some variation in how well pupils respond to this.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils have exceptionally positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school and are proud to be a part of its community.
- A distinctive aspect of the school's provision is its sense of community. Pupils have a very good understanding about the importance of human values, including fundamental British values, and this is reflected in their consistently positive attitudes. For example, the school has a democratically selected council which implemented its own initiative of 'Angel Jars'. This enables pupils with a worry or concern to share this and receive help and support from other pupils and staff within the school. Pupils also apply for leadership roles in school such as journalists, lost property monitors and litter pickers.
- Leaders promote the development of pupil's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development highly effectively. For example, pupils learn about the importance of team spirit and participation in a variety of ways, particularly in sports. They also learn about different cultures, including life in St Lucia. Creative and stimulating displays around the school showcase this aspect of the school's work.
- Leaders have implemented an effective and well-considered programme of learning to support the personal development of pupils. Assemblies, for example, are used to challenge pupils about their thinking and the importance of values. Pupils participate enthusiastically in these.
- Pupils know how to live healthy lives. They use the outdoor interactive physical fitness screens enthusiastically, for example.
- The pastoral care in the school is very strong. Pupils know who they can talk to if they have any concerns. Leaders have ensured that caring for the mental and emotional well-being of pupils is a distinctive aspect of the school's provision. For example, pupils have access, where appropriate, to a trained counsellor.
- School records show that incidences of bullying are very rare. Leaders ensure that pupils are taught well about the impact of bullying. Pupils say that bullying is rare at the school and that they are confident that staff would deal with any occurrence swiftly. A clear majority of parents who responded to Ofsted's survey agreed.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils conduct themselves around the school in an impeccably safe and orderly manner. They are exceptionally polite, courteous and helpful to each other, with staff and visitors alike. In the dining room they take responsibility to queue responsibly and clear up as a matter of routine.
- Expectations from staff are very high and, as a result, pupils behave exceptionally well in lessons and play together sensibly and responsibly. They are punctual and follow instructions from staff promptly.
- Overall attendance has improved for all pupils, including disadvantaged pupils. Attendance is above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are regularly absent from school has decreased significantly due to the well-targeted support and decisive action taken by school leaders.
- Exclusions from school due to poor behaviour are very rare.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- In 2018, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attained the expected standards in reading, writing and mathematics was above or in line with the national average. In all three subjects, the progress made by these pupils was much stronger than that seen in the previous year. This was due to the much sharper focus on reading and mathematics learning and intervention strategies developed during the last academic year.
- In 2018, the proportion of pupils in Year 6 who attained the higher level in reading and writing was in line with the national average, although below in mathematics. The progress made by the most able pupils also improved for reading and writing but declined for mathematics.
- The progress made by disadvantaged pupils at key stage 2 improved in 2018 from the previous year in reading and writing. However, progress overall was less good in mathematics.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress due to the well-targeted support that they receive.
- The school's own performance information indicates that current pupils in key stage 2 are making good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils who read to inspectors and a scrutiny of pupils' books confirmed this.
- Pupils in key stage 1 make good progress in reading, writing and mathematics. The attainment of these pupils is broadly in line with or above the national average at both the expected and higher levels.
- The proportion of pupils who achieve the national standard in phonics improved in 2018 and is above the national average.
- School performance information indicates that the progress made by current pupils across Years 4, 5 and 6 is strengthening.

Early years provision

Good

- Most children enter the early years with knowledge and skills which are broadly in line with or below those which are typical for their age.
- Leadership in the early years is highly effective. Staff know the children and their specific needs very well. Learning activities, both directed and free-flow, are well planned, sequenced and resourced. The learning environment is bright, attractive and stimulating for children.
- Children engage in a wide range of appropriate learning activities which flow seamlessly across the indoor and outdoor provision. The expectations of staff are high, and routines are quickly and firmly established to help ensure that children make good progress. Consequently, the behaviour of children is excellent.
- Children benefit from skilful teaching and questioning. Staff model expected learning goals and the engagement of children in their learning is impressive. Questioning is used effectively to enable children to explore their learning. Inspectors observed this in the development of language, for example.
- High-quality verbal and written feedback further supports children's ability to make good progress. Children's work in books and displays demonstrates the pride and care that they take in their work.
- For all children, the proportion achieving a good level of development has broadly been in line with the national average for the last three years. However, the proportion of disadvantaged children achieving a good level of development is more variable.
- Engagement with parents is very positive. Parents assist curriculum planning through the contributions made in children's 'All about me' learning journals and reading at home is also strongly promoted. Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the provision that their children receive.
- Arrangements for transition into the early years is well managed and this is supported by effective liaison with local nurseries. Staff also work closely with key stage 1 teachers so that children make a positive transition into Year 1.
- Safeguarding in the early years is effective. All statutory requirements for the welfare of children are met.

School details

Unique reference number	137932
Local authority	Leicestershire
Inspection number	10053286

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	4 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	516
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Christine Kingsley-Mills
Headteacher	Tim Sutcliffe
Telephone number	01162 782535
Website	www.glen-hills.leics.sch.uk
Email address	office@glen-hills.leics.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- This school is a much larger than the average-sized primary school. It became an academy in August 2012.
- The school is part of the Symphony Learning Trust. Directors of the trust are the appropriate authority with delegated responsibilities to the local governing body.
- The majority of pupils are White British.
- The proportion of pupils in receipt of the pupil premium funding is broadly in line with the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities is well above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have an education, health and care plan is broadly average.
- The provision is a vibrant, stimulating and welcoming learning environment.

Information about this inspection

- This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.
- Inspectors observed 24 parts of lessons both across the school and in the early years. Inspectors also visited assembly time. Some observations were carried out jointly with senior leaders.
- Inspectors spoke with three groups of pupils including the school council from the previous school year.
- Inspectors met with a range of school leaders including the executive headteacher and head of school and other leaders with responsibility for the quality of teaching, the curriculum, early years, pupil premium and sports premium. Inspectors also met with the SENCo and the designated leader for safeguarding.
- The lead inspector met with three governors, including the chair of the governing body. A meeting was also held with the chief executive officer of the Symphony Learning Trust.
- The lead inspector checked the school's single central register and procedures for recruiting staff.
- A range of documentation was examined, including the school's self-evaluation; improvement planning; pupils' performance information and a sample of pupils' books; the governing body minutes of meetings; information on attendance and behaviour; and a range of school policies including safeguarding and behaviour, pupil premium and sports premium funding.
- The lead inspector also evaluated the 45 responses to Parent View, Ofsted's online survey.

Inspection team

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Helen Atkins	Ofsted Inspector
Caroline Stewart	Ofsted Inspector
Debbie Beeston	Ofsted Inspector

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In the report, 'disadvantaged pupils' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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