

# Glascote Academy

Silverlink Road, Glascote, Tamworth, Staffordshire B77 2EA

## Inspection dates

14–15 September 2017

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

## Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

### This is an outstanding school

- Staff, pupils and parents work together superbly at Glascote Primary Academy. Consequently, pupils love coming to school and they thrive in all aspects of school life.
- The headteacher is unwavering in her pursuit of high standards for the pupils. Her leadership inspires confidence and encourages everyone to be the best that they can be.
- Senior leaders and middle leaders are highly effective in their roles. They carry out precise checks on the quality of teaching and work alongside teachers to improve classroom practice. Staff appreciate feedback and make swift improvements to their teaching.
- Governors are committed and astute. They know the school very well and offer a positive blend of challenge and support.
- From starting points that are often below typical levels, pupils excel academically. Their progress is rapid and outcomes in almost every phase are above national levels.
- Disadvantaged pupils flourish. They are extremely well supported in class and through wider enrichment activities. Their progress far exceeds that of other pupils nationally.
- Staff teach reading to an exceptionally high level. Pupils love to read and parents support them with reading at home. This leads to superb standards across the school.
- The school's method for assessing and tracking pupils' progress is thoughtful and accurate. As a result, staff are quick to address any gaps in learning and no child is left behind.
- The school's curriculum has a superb impact on pupils' progress and on their personal development. They visit places that they might not ordinarily see at such a young age. Pupils also learn essential life skills on the on-site farm and in the woodland area.
- Communication between home and school is excellent. Leaders and staff engage brilliantly with parents, who are unanimous in their support of the school.
- Pupils feel safe and incredibly valued by their teachers. Safeguarding is at the heart of the school's work. Staff are well trained and vigilant in keeping pupils safe.
- Pupils' behaviour is exceptional in lessons and around school. They are extremely polite, articulate and confident.
- Children in the early years get off to a flying start at school. The learning environment is extremely well planned and teaching is outstanding. Children make excellent progress in all areas of learning.
- Occasionally, in mathematics, the most able pupils do not make the rapid progress that they do in other subjects.

## **Full report**

### **What does the school need to do to improve further?**

- Boost the most able pupils' progress in mathematics, by:
  - ensuring that teachers move the most able pupils on to more challenging work as soon as they are ready to do so.

## Inspection judgements

### Effectiveness of leadership and management

### Outstanding

- The headteacher's inspirational leadership has galvanised the school community and created a shared sense of purpose. Her high expectations are summed up in the school's vision statement, 'Pride in myself, Pride in my work, Pride in my school and Pride in my community.' Other leaders, staff and governors are ambitious for the pupils and fully subscribe to this vision.
- The headteacher and the staff have developed a wonderful partnership with parents. One parent commented, 'It is not just a school here, it is like a family where everybody works together.' The school farm has become a hub of the community and families take responsibility for it during weekends and holidays. The strong links between school and home make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and their academic progress.
- The senior leaders are a cohesive and forward-thinking team; they constantly seek ways to improve the quality of teaching. Staff are given robust and supportive performance management, alongside training that is specific to their needs. As a result, staff feel valued and successfully improve their practice.
- Leaders have embedded highly effective systems to check the quality of teaching. Staff appreciate the precise feedback that they are given and leaders use these checks to create opportunities to share best practice among staff. These processes make a significant contribution to the outstanding teaching across the school.
- Middle leaders are focused, enthusiastic and highly effective. They thrive on the responsibility that they are given and can clearly articulate where they have had an impact on outcomes for pupils. They also feel a duty to cascade information about their subject areas to staff. Middle leaders add excellent capacity for further improvement.
- The school's well-designed assessment system leads to accurate teacher assessment and effective tracking of pupils' progress. Consequently, leaders and staff know pupils extremely well. If pupils' progress slows, there is swift action to enable them to catch up.
- The school's curriculum is lively and interesting for pupils. Leaders have made a conscious decision to provide experiences that pupils would not ordinarily receive. There is a strong focus on outdoor and practical learning through the school's woodland area and on the on-site farm. During the inspection, a member of staff was skilfully questioning a group of pupils who were looking at a butterfly and using their science knowledge to identify its lifecycle. Another group of pupils were using mathematical understanding to measure the correct amount of feed for the animals. Whole classes are also taught music by a specialist, and they learn to play a range of musical instruments, including drums and ukulele. As a result of the rich curriculum, pupils love learning and develop a broad range of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- Leaders and staff further enhance the curriculum with wide-ranging trips. Pupils visit places such as the seaside, London and Windsor Castle. This promotes important learning about British heritage while also giving pupils experiences beyond their own community.

- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Staff model and teach the school's values throughout the day. As a result, pupils are very thoughtful and demonstrate confidence and maturity when sharing their considered views. Pupils also demonstrate great compassion and consideration for others. During the inspection, pupils were seen supporting other pupils on the playground, holding doors open for visitors and carrying out responsibilities across the school.
- Leaders use additional funding for disadvantaged pupils and for pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities extremely effectively. Leaders understand the barriers to learning for these pupils and target funding to help them overcome them. For example, the school reading manager works closely with disadvantaged pupils, and by the end of Year 6, they reach higher reading standards than other pupils nationally.
- The additional funding for physical education (PE) and sport premium has a significant impact on the quality of PE and the range of opportunities for pupils. Staff have been given training on areas of the curriculum that they are not as confident with and, as a result, there have been improvements in the quality of teaching for activities like gymnastics and dance. Pupils also enjoy a range of additional clubs, for example younger pupils have yoga sessions with a specialist teacher.

## **Governance of the school**

- The governance in the school is highly effective. Governors and trustees:
  - are knowledgeable, skilled and determined to get the best for the school community
  - have a very strong understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement
  - operate clear lines of delegation between the trust and the governing body
  - demonstrate an excellent blend of challenge and support to leaders
  - ensure that the headteacher is held to account through the use of impartial and professional advice
  - are focused on continual improvement
  - know where the additional funding for pupil premium has had the most impact
  - understand that maintaining the school's leadership capacity is a priority if the multi-academy trust grows.

## **Safeguarding**

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Safeguarding is at the heart of the school's work and a key strength. Leaders and staff ensure that pupils are exceptionally well cared for and safe.
- Leaders provide regular safeguarding training and updates for staff. Consequently, staff are vigilant and have a superb understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. Staff are fully aware of the risk factors associated with different forms

of abuse and indeed their duty on specific aspects such as child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. Critically, staff are swift to report any concerns about pupils to the designated safeguarding leads.

- Leaders' practice for recording and monitoring safeguarding is exemplary and leaves no stone unturned. The safeguarding leaders regularly review and reflect on cases and their own practice. Any concerns about pupils are tenaciously followed up by leaders, and when it is necessary, concerns are escalated to the appropriate external agencies.
- Pupils that inspectors spoke to felt overwhelmingly safe in school. Staff and pupils have exceptional relationships, which helps to build a high level of trust and safety in the school. The curriculum also provides pupils with a range of opportunities to understand how to keep themselves safe beyond the school gates. Leaders arrange purposeful visits from the local police, fire service and bike safety team.

### Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

### Outstanding

- Superb relationships between staff and pupils lead to a 'can do' attitude in the classroom. Teachers have high expectations and pupils respond with an impressive thirst for learning. Pupils enjoy lessons and are challenged by the content. Consequently, their progress is rapid and sustained.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work cohesively to assess pupils' understanding during lessons. A prominent characteristic of their teaching is the quality of questioning. Questions are often open-ended and require pupils to think for themselves. Furthermore, staff are very skilled at intervening during lessons to deal with misconceptions. As result of this ongoing assessment, staff know pupils well and plan work that is matched acutely to their needs.
- The teaching of reading is leading to extraordinarily high standards by the end of Year 6. Staff provide pupils with stimulating texts and check their understanding through challenging comprehension questions. Pupils and parents see reading as important. They commit to reading at home regularly and are excited by the reading challenge reward system. Pupils who find reading difficult are given regular and precise support from the reading manager. As a direct result of the school's wide-ranging strategies, pupils become avid readers and develop a love of books.
- Staff's subject knowledge in phonics is excellent. Their crystal-clear teaching of new sounds enables pupils to confidently decode tricky words. Staff also teach pupils the correct terminology. During the inspection, pupils could clearly articulate that, 'a digraph is when two letters are joined together to make one sound.' High-quality phonics teaching secures strong early reading progress for pupils.
- Teachers have very high standards for pupils' writing, presentation and handwriting. They provide pupils with effective demonstrations of what successful writing looks like and pupils take pride in producing their own versions. Pupils are also encouraged to embed sophisticated grammar, punctuation, vocabulary and spelling in their writing. This, coupled with the use of exciting stimuli for writing, leads to high-quality longer pieces of writing across the school.
- Teachers have secure subject knowledge in mathematics. This is particularly the case in calculation, where staff exude confidence when teaching written methods for

calculation. Consequently, pupils have a clear understanding of the necessary procedures and become fluent in their calculations. The school's approach to mathematics enables pupils to see, try, apply and reason in every lesson. Pupils enjoy this approach and are motivated by applying their understanding to problems. However, some of the most able pupils occasionally spend too long on work that they find easy.

- Teachers and teaching assistants offer sensitive and specific support to pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff have an exceptional understanding of individual barriers for pupils and offer them timely support during lessons in order to help them manage learning. Resources are also used highly effectively to support and motivate these pupils to learn. As a result, this group of pupils make excellent progress in lessons.
- Other subjects are also taught well across the school. Staff involve pupils in designing a theme of learning for the term and subjects are taught in a cross-curricular way. The themes are further enhanced by 'wow weeks' to deepen pupils' learning experiences. Pupils enjoy this approach and their work shows a strong progression of skills, knowledge and understanding in a range of subjects. They also apply their writing and mathematical skills well across the curriculum.

## Personal development, behaviour and welfare

## Outstanding

### Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Leaders and staff have instilled an ethos in which pupils feel valued and happy. Pupils speak with immense pride and genuine enthusiasm about their school. They also have a strong voice in the school and are outstanding ambassadors for the promotion of its values. Pupils are confident and articulate young people, and are exceptionally well prepared for their next phase of education and life.
- Pupils' attitude to learning in lessons is exemplary. Even when faced with challenge, pupils respond positively and show resilience. Furthermore, they are resourceful and look for new ways of doing things when faced with problems. These traits have a highly positive effect on the progress that they make.
- Pupils relish opportunities to take on responsibility. They are involved in democratic processes, such as elections for the pupil leadership team, for farm duty and the eco-council. The pupil leadership team is particularly proactive and carries out checks on various aspects of school life before reporting back to the senior leadership team.
- Staff cater for pupils' emotional and physical well-being extremely well. This is especially the case for vulnerable pupils. A councillor and a family support worker offer specialist and supportive help to pupils and families. The woodland area and farm is a sanctuary for pupils with emotional and social needs.
- Pupils have mature views about other faiths and can speak eloquently about valuing difference. The school promotes harmony and actively seeks to prevent discrimination. Pupils can articulate the similarities and differences between different cultures.
- Pupils have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They

understand what constitutes bullying and are really clear about how to respond if they are bullied or if they see it taking place. Staff teach pupils how to stay safe online. Consequently, pupils know the associated dangers and that they should seek the help of a trusted adult if they were to be concerned about something on the internet.

## Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Pupils' conduct in lessons and around school is exemplary. Pupils' superb behaviour makes a significant contribution to the outstanding learning that takes place. Leaders and staff have implemented highly effective systems to manage behaviour, but are rarely required to use them. Those pupils who have specific emotional and behavioural needs are managed seamlessly by staff. As a result, exclusions have decreased over time, and in the last two years, there have been no exclusions at all.
- Behaviour outside and in the dining hall is also excellent. Pupils feel very safe on the playground and commented that, if they were upset, another adult or pupil would provide support. Adults interact well with pupils outside and in the dining hall. Eating is treated as a social experience and pupils are taught good table manners by staff.
- Pupils' attendance has improved in recent years and is now in line with the national average. Leaders and the family support worker leave no stone unturned to get pupils into school. The school works closely with other agencies to ensure that families receive support in getting their children to school.

## Outcomes for pupils

## Outstanding

- By the end of Year 6, pupils reach extremely high standards. This represents remarkable progress from pupils' starting points on entry to the school. In 2016, at the end of key stages 1 and 2, pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics were well above national levels.
- Evidence gathered during this inspection found that these standards have not just been maintained but have strengthened further in 2017. This is particularly the case in reading at the end of key stage 2. Almost all pupils achieved the expected standard for their age and two thirds of pupils achieved the higher standard. The school's current assessment information and the work in pupils' books show that pupils make rapid and sustained progress on their journey through school.
- Pupils make strong progress in mathematics, and in recent years at the end of key stages 1 and 2, a high proportion of pupils have reached the expected levels for their age. However, the proportion of pupils who reach the higher standard is broadly similar to national levels. Teachers need to challenge the most able mathematicians so that their progress is accelerated even further.
- High standards are not just confined to English and mathematics. Pupils also achieve well in subjects such as science, computing, music and religious education. Work in pupils' books and on the vibrant displays around school show that pupils progress well in these subjects.

- The proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard in the phonics screening check in Year 1 has been above the national average for a number of years. The proportion of disadvantaged pupils reaching the standard dipped slightly in 2016. However, in 2017 pupils were targeted with greater precision and this dip has been addressed.
- The achievement of disadvantaged pupils is staggering. By the end of key stage 2 in 2016, their progress was well above national levels for reading, writing and mathematics. Their performance has continued to be high in 2017. Any barriers for these pupils are tackled head-on and the additional funding is having a profound impact on their achievement. Disadvantaged pupils currently on roll match this rapid progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make strong progress from their starting points. The special educational needs coordinator tracks pupils carefully and ensures that their individual needs are met in class. As a result, the number of pupils on the register has decreased over time.

### Early years provision

### Outstanding

- Children receive an excellent education at the very start of their school journey. The high expectations seen in the rest of the school are mirrored in children's Reception Year. The proportion of children who achieve a good level of development has been above the national level for a number of years. This represents exceptional progress from their starting points. Consequently, pupils are very well prepared for Year 1.
- Leadership in the early years is outstanding. Leaders are reflective and always striving to do the very best for children. Leaders provide staff with high-quality professional development, which has a noticeable impact on classroom practice. There is a strong sense of teamwork and commitment from all staff.
- Staff use accurate and thorough assessments to plan thoughtful next steps for children's learning. They know the children as individuals and do not let any child fall behind. Staff also make highly effective observations during activities, and when appropriate, they intervene skilfully to extend children's thinking. These timely interventions accelerate children's progress.
- Children's behaviour is amazing! Staff forge superb relationships with the children and, as a result, children are happy, settled and confident. Staff provide close care and guidance to children. However, they also balance this with structured routines which foster a high level of independence in the children.
- The curriculum is stimulating and children are constantly absorbed in activity. Staff plan exciting topics for the children and activities offer an appropriate level of challenge. Children love learning outside, and during the inspection, a group of children were deeply engrossed in imaginative play in the 'hairdressing' role-play area. Other children were demonstrating curiosity and solving problems in the water play area. The quality of resources and the activities help children to develop a range of skills across the different areas of learning.
- Staff teach early reading extremely well. They expose children to rich language through the environment and within their teaching. Children also develop very strong phonics skills and can pronounce their sounds accurately. Staff reinforce and apply children's

phonics skills in the range of activities that take place throughout the day.

- The strong progress across the early years is a direct result of the excellent teaching and close communication between home and school. Staff and parents work together really positively. This means that staff know as much as possible about the children and can use this information to plan learning that meets their specific needs.
- Different groups of children are well catered for by staff and make strong progress. Most-able children are identified at the start of the year and are given extension challenges to stretch their thinking. Additional funding for disadvantaged children is used wisely and any children requiring extra support receive it in a timely manner. Over a sustained period, a higher proportion of disadvantaged children have achieved a higher level of development than other children nationally.
- Staff are very thorough when considering children's safety. Children are encouraged to take risks and enjoy learning but their safety is of paramount importance to staff. All of the statutory welfare requirements are met.

## School details

Unique reference number	141450
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10037094

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	255
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Vanessa Buchanan
Headteacher	Maria Hamblin
Telephone number	01827 213210
Website	<a href="http://www.glascoteheath.staffs.sch.uk/">www.glascoteheath.staffs.sch.uk/</a>
Email address	<a href="mailto:headteacher@glascoteheath.staffs.sch.uk">headteacher@glascoteheath.staffs.sch.uk</a>
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

## Information about this school

- The school meets requirements on the publication of specified information on its website.
- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school is an average-sized primary school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged pupils supported by the pupil premium funding is well above the national average.
- A large majority of pupils come from a White British background.
- The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is below the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is below

the national average.

- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress in reading, writing and mathematics for pupils by the end of Year 6.
- The school is a converter academy and is part of the Fierte Multi-Academy Trust. Glascote Primary Academy converted to become an academy in October 2014. When its predecessor school was last inspected by Ofsted in December 2011, it was judged to be good.
- The headteacher is the chief executive officer of the trust and a local leader of education.
- There is a local governing body at the school, which takes responsibility for challenging and supporting leaders to develop educational outcomes for pupils, as well as acting being as a link to the local community.

## Information about this inspection

- The inspectors observed pupils learning in 17 lessons or parts of lessons. A number of these observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors scrutinised work in pupils' books and listened to pupils read. They met with two groups of pupils to gain their views of the school. The inspectors observed pupils' behaviour at breaktime, lunchtime and at the end of the school day, as well as in lessons.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, as well as other senior and middle leaders. The lead inspector met with two members of the local governing body and two members of the multi-academy trust.
- The inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including assessments and records of pupils' progress, the school's checks and records relating to safeguarding, child protection and attendance, records of how teaching is monitored and the school's improvement plans.
- Inspectors took account of 40 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. Inspectors considered 38 free-text responses from parents. They also talked to parents at the start and end of the school day.

## Inspection team

Matt Meckin, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Justine Lomas	Ofsted Inspector
Anna Smith	Ofsted Inspector
Patrick Amieli	Ofsted Inspector

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