

Glemsford Primary Academy

Lion Road, Glemsford, Sudbury, Suffolk CO10 7RF

Inspection dates

6–7 December 2017

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
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

- The well-respected headteacher has established high standards; his passion and enthusiasm are shared by all staff.
- Leaders, governors and trustees identify precisely how the school can improve further. They have effectively established a good quality of education at Glemsford Primary Academy.
- Pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. Pupils are safe, say they feel safe and have an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves and others safe.
- Pupils behave very well both in the classroom and at playtime and lunchtime. They have positive attitudes to learning and in almost all lessons are motivated to work hard and do well.
- In 2017, the proportion of key stage 2 pupils achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined rose sharply and was above average.
- Pupils do especially well in reading. In 2017, pupils' achievement in the key stage 1 and key stage 2 statutory assessments was well above average.
- In most lessons, teachers plan work which is matched well to pupils' needs and deploy teaching assistants effectively to support and promote pupils' learning.
- Teachers make skilful use of questioning in lessons to tackle pupils' misconceptions and guide them to improve their work.
- As a result of teachers' accurate assessment and precise planning, children's needs are well met in the early years. Progress is good and at times rapid from their starting points.
- Teachers do not routinely guide Reception children, in particular boys, to develop their skills in writing.
- Leaders track pupils' progress and attainment closely in reading, writing, mathematics and, most recently, science. This is not yet the case for other subjects.
- Teachers do not provide consistently good opportunities for pupils to practise and develop their high-level writing skills. Presentation, standards of handwriting and writing composition in some subjects are not as high as in pupils' English books.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Equip subject leaders with the skills and knowledge to use the school's monitoring and assessment systems more effectively to measure pupils' progress and attainment in subjects other than reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- Improve the achievement of pupils in writing, by:
 - providing greater, high-quality opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills in a variety of ways and for a range of purposes
 - ensuring that children in the early years, especially boys, have a variety of high-quality activities that encourage them to practise and develop their writing skills in all aspects of the continuous provision
 - ensuring that all teachers set high standards in relation to pupils' handwriting and presentation of work in all subjects.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher models the behaviour and standards he expects of others. As a result, he has quickly secured the confidence and support of his staff team, creating a culture where all staff are motivated to continuously raise the standards of provision for pupils. All of the 21 members of staff who responded to the staff survey agreed or strongly agreed that they enjoy working at the school.
- Leaders' efforts to establish the school's standing in the local community have been hugely successful. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the improvements and changes the headteacher has made. Almost all the parents who inspectors spoke to, and those that responded to Parent View, Ofsted's online questionnaire, agreed that the school is well led and managed and they would recommend it to others. The newly established Nursery for children aged two is now oversubscribed, as is the school as a whole.
- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher form an effective, cohesive team. Together, they regularly scrutinise the quality of teaching, learning and assessment, hold teachers to account for the progress and achievement of pupils and effectively target support to ensure that less effective teaching practice improves quickly.
- Leaders' effective use of the additional funding for pupils who are disadvantaged, including the most able disadvantaged, and for pupils who have special educational needs (SEN) and/or disabilities is helping to improve pupils' rates of progress.
- The special educational needs and disabilities coordinator carefully monitors and reviews the school's targeted intervention and support programme. This ensures that pupils are accessing the right intervention to make quicker progress.
- Leaders' use of the physical education and sports premium funding has had a positive impact on the numbers of pupils taking part in extra-curricular clubs and sporting events. Pupils have a good understanding of how to keep fit and of the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. Pupils in Year 2 explained to inspectors how they must 'warm up' and 'exercise' to 'develop strong muscles and a healthy heart'.
- Leaders' work to enhance pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is exceptional. Pupils, including the youngest children, participate in local charity events, organise community fetes and access a wide variety of sporting, artistic and musical experiences. The 'Glemsford scales' effectively help pupils and children to develop a strong moral compass, understand right from wrong and value the world and opportunities around them.
- Pupils articulate their understanding of British values confidently. 'Teaching Britishness' underpins much of the school's curriculum. Pupils learn how to be tolerant, treat others with respect and value difference. Pupils say, 'We look at British values in class, especially PSHE [personal, social, health and economic] education lessons. We always come back to it.'
- Leaders ensure that pupils study a broad and balanced curriculum. Pupils' work demonstrates that they are making good progress in a range of subjects. For example,

the employment of a specialist French teacher has had a demonstrable impact on the quality of work and progress seen in pupils' books. However, there are inconsistencies in the standards in pupils' work across the curriculum. In some classes, pupils lack the opportunities to develop their writing skills across a wide range of subjects.

- Senior leaders, including governors, identify that some of the subject leaders' roles are underdeveloped. Although subject leaders ensure that teachers are teaching the required content in each subject, and books demonstrate that pupils are generally making good progress, they have limited responsibility for monitoring pupils' progress and attainment in their areas of the curriculum.

Governance of the school

- The quality of governance is good. Governors have benefited from support and training provided by the trust. They are clear on their roles and responsibilities and effectively hold leaders to account for the quality of education at the school. Minutes from governors' meetings demonstrate how governors ask pertinent and challenging questions to satisfy themselves that standards are high and money is well spent.
- Following the example of the chair of the governing body, governors are taking an active role in upskilling themselves in various aspects of school life. As a result, they fully understand the work the school does well and the areas that need to improve further.
- Governors are working effectively with senior leaders to formulate plans for improvement through the school's development plan. They know what needs to be done and how they are going to achieve it.
- Governors ensure value for money. Staff pay progression is closely linked to pupils' outcomes and the performance of all staff, including the headteacher, is monitored and reviewed to ensure that the school's performance management processes match the policy.

Safeguarding

- The school's arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- The headteacher has established a culture of vigilance. Staff live by the mantra, 'It could happen to anyone, anywhere.'
- The school's designated safeguarding leads are diligent and effective in their roles in ensuring that the welfare and safety needs of children and pupils are well met. They work well with external agencies to ensure that pupils and their families receive the support they need quickly.
- Leaders ensure that staff receive high-quality training and regular updates on matters relating to child protection and safeguarding. Staff have up-to-date safeguarding knowledge, including on preventing radicalisation, internet safety and bullying. Staff know the signs to look for to identify pupils at risk of harm. Adults report concerns appropriately and in a timely manner.
- Leaders, including governors, regularly check to ensure that all policies are up to date and comply with the latest statutory guidance. The records which detail that staff are safe to work with children are meticulously kept, as are the files and meeting notes

which relate to pupils and children known to social care and other external support agencies.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan and teach lessons that are interesting and relevant. They ask questions that make pupils think hard, challenge misconceptions and encourage pupils to explain their understanding. As a result, pupils make good progress in most lessons over time.
- Teachers track pupils' progress regularly to identify emerging gaps in knowledge. Teachers use this information well to make sure pupils who are falling behind benefit from timely and effective interventions. Leaders' precise monitoring ensures that interventions that are not working are changed quickly. Consequently, pupils who are falling behind are helped to catch up.
- Leaders have introduced a systematic approach to the teaching of reading which has led to excellent progress for pupils from their different starting points.
- Teachers typically use assessment information well to match learning activities to pupils' needs. In most lessons, this is helping pupils make good and at times rapid progress over time. On occasion, when work is too easy or too hard, a few pupils disengage from their learning and make slower progress.
- Teachers direct teaching assistants effectively to ensure that pupils are well supported in their learning. Teaching assistants successfully use a range of resources and strategies to adjust learning to help pupils understand new concepts and make good progress.
- Teachers expect pupils to work hard. Adults have high standards of expected behaviour and the vast majority of pupils respond well. Consequently, teachers use lesson time effectively to maximise the progress pupils are making.
- Mathematics is taught well, not just in mathematics lessons, but across the curriculum. In the best examples, teachers use innovative and imaginative ways to develop pupils' reasoning and problem-solving skills. For example, in a Year 6 reading lesson pupils were using their data handling skills to plot characters' stress levels against time, based on chronological events within chapters.
- Teachers are not effectively ensuring that pupils consistently transfer the quality of their writing, presentation and handwriting skills from English to other subjects. The opportunities for pupils to practise their writing skills for a variety of purposes and audiences is underdeveloped in some year groups.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils are proud of their school and of the values the 'Glemsford scales' teach them. Pupils talked eloquently about the large display of the 'scales' in the school's entrance

hall. Pupils stated: 'These scales remind children how to act and support each other, to balance out what you want with what others want. To treat others the way you want to be treated yourself.'

- Pupils celebrate their uniqueness and show appreciation of the values of others. This was clearly seen in the displays of pupils' work around the school which celebrate pupils as individuals.
- From the moment children enter the Nursery they are supported and encouraged to become independent learners. This continues right through to Year 6. Pupils explained the learning process in class as: 'First you try yourself, then you look at the posters; if you still can't do it, you ask a friend and after that you ask the table and the teacher.'
- Pupils are encouraged to be reflective thinkers and adventurous learners. The school council members explained how their house names 'Armstrong', 'Livingstone', 'Scott' and 'Columbus' are reminders for them to approach their learning in an adventurous and positive way. The vast majority of pupils were seen displaying this approach in lessons, taking risks, challenging themselves and being resilient and persistent if they made mistakes.
- Teachers and guest speakers deliver lessons and assemblies which help pupils understand how to stay safe and look after themselves and others. Consequently, pupils have excellent knowledge on how to stay safe online. 'Digital leaders', Year 5 and 6 pupils who are advocates for internet safety, help and support younger children to navigate the internet safely.
- Although adamant bullying rarely occurs, pupils could explain the different forms of bullying and say what they would do if it did happen.
- Leaders ensure that older pupils develop a sense of responsibility. Year 6 play leaders, who support Reception children at playtime, and the affectionately named 'cutter-up-arsers' who assist younger children in the dining room, are positive role models. This is evidenced by the fact that the Year 5 pupils aspire to take on these roles.
- Pupils feel valued and listened to. Leaders acknowledge and act on pupils' suggestions. For example, the school council described how their idea to have golden tickets for good lunchtime etiquette has been implemented and how they helped to develop part of the trim trail on the playing field. As a result, pupils are confident to express their opinions and enjoy positive relationships with staff at school.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school environment is welcoming, orderly and calm. Children and pupils treat each other, adults and school property with respect. Teachers establish these positive behaviours from the early years. Pupils tidy up after themselves, saying please and thank you and holding doors open for each other and adults as they walk around the school.
- Leaders work effectively with external providers to improve pupils' social skills, emotional development and behaviour. This is a contributing factor to the improvement in behaviour at the school, which is now good. There are effective communication

systems in place for tracking the attendance and progress of pupils who attend alternative provision as and when the need arises.

- Pupils' conduct and self-discipline around the school, during breakfast club and in lessons is good. Pupils are keen to learn, not afraid to take risks and support one another in a learning environment that is safe and motivating. Occasionally, in lessons, pupils can become distracted. When this happens, low-level disruption does occur. The school's records of behaviour show these incidents are reducing.
- Leaders monitor attendance closely and are working effectively with families to reduce absence. Attendance for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities remains lower than average but for all other groups, attendance is now at or above the national average.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Leaders' focus on teaching explicit reading skills has had a demonstrable impact. Pupils' progress in reading by the end of key stage 2 was in the top 10% of schools nationally in 2017. The proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding the expected standard in reading was above the national average in both key stage 1 and key stage 2.
- Across all year groups, pupils demonstrate an enjoyment of reading. Pupils read widely and often. The most able pupils show a deep understanding of complex concepts. For example, in Year 6 a group of most-able pupils described the levels of reading like an iceberg 'At the top you are just reading the words, under the surface you are interpreting meaning but deep at the bottom you are really understanding concepts like authorial intent.'
- A higher proportion of pupils now achieve, and exceed, the expected standards in reading, writing, and mathematics. In 2017, outcomes at key stage 1 and key stage 2 were at or above the national average with the exception of key stage 1 writing. Work in pupils' books shows they are making good progress and developing skills and knowledge relative to their age and starting points in a range of subjects.
- Pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points. This is because leaders track their progress carefully and implement effective intervention and support to meet their needs. Across the school, in the vast majority of lessons, pupils receive work which is carefully planned to ensure that they understand the task and make the progress they are capable of.
- Across almost all year groups, disadvantaged pupils' progress is improving considerably. Leaders are ensuring that the differences between the outcomes of pupils who are disadvantaged and other pupils nationally are diminishing. Class teachers produce detailed individual plans for pupils and teaching assistants, then deliver individual support to pupils to help them make quicker progress. The individual support given in reading has been particularly successful.
- In 2017, the proportion of most-able pupils who attained at a higher standard in reading, writing and mathematics, particularly at key stage 2, was above the national average. Across all year groups, the most able pupils continue to make good progress in a range of subjects including in English and mathematics.
- Attainment in writing for most groups and pupils has improved. Over time, pupils have made good progress in writing by the end of key stage 2. Inspection evidence

demonstrates that most pupils currently in school continue to make good and sometimes better progress due to the good-quality teaching they receive.

- Teachers have made spelling, punctuation and grammar a central focus of their work. In 2017, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard was above the national average. Current pupils are making accelerated progress in this area of the curriculum.

Early years provision

Good

- Teaching, learning and assessment in the early years is good. Staff work well together to support children to develop reading, speaking and listening, writing, mathematical, social and physical skills. Children in the early years, including the Nursery, have their needs met well. Over the last three years there has been a consistent improvement in the proportion of children who achieve a good level of development and in 2017 this rose to above average.
- The addition of the Nursery provision for two-year-olds is having a positive impact on the rate of children's development. Higher proportions of children are entering Reception with development typical for their age and making good progress throughout Reception. Children are well prepared when the time comes to enter Year 1.
- Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are safe and well cared for. Their personal development is paramount and staffing levels are suitable. Children are encouraged to be independent. As a result, they quickly develop self-help skills and settle into the daily routines.
- Leaders have established high levels of consistency across the early years provision. Children's behaviour is well managed and children thrive in the nurturing and caring learning environment. They share and play cooperatively together, are polite and celebrate each other's good work on the 'wow tables'.
- The early years leader uses innovative and outward-looking ideas to provide parents with opportunities to engage in their children's learning. The electronic 'class story' not only provides parents with valuable information about what children have been learning but also explains practical ways in which parents can promote and develop that aspect of learning at home. This approach has a notable impact on children's progress. For example, following advice on the 'story scribing' approach to writing, children returning pieces of writing from home are now writing more confidently.
- Teachers and early years practitioners use assessment information effectively to identify gaps in children's knowledge. They carefully organise activities which help to facilitate good and better progress in the core areas of learning. There is a particularly strong emphasis on developing children's use of language. Often, from low starting points, children make rapid progress in their development of speech, language and communication.
- Leaders have identified and are addressing the slower progress of some children, in particular boys, who are reluctant writers. While staff set up and guide children to a range of writing activities in the inside space, the outside space is not always as stimulating.

School details

Unique reference number	141406
Local authority	Suffolk
Inspection number	10036092

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

Type of school	Primary
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	253
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair	Mrs Claire Martin
Headteacher	Mr Ben Jeffery
Telephone number	01787 283200
Website	www.glemsfordprimaryacademy.co.uk
Email address	info@glemsfordprimaryacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Glemsford Primary Academy converted to become an academy school in January 2015. The school is now part of Samuel Ward Multi-Academy Trust. The school has its own local governing body which includes a representative from the trust. The school also works in collaboration with the trust's school support team. When its predecessor school, Glemsford Community Primary School, was last inspected by Ofsted it was graded inadequate.
- There have been changes to staffing since converting to an academy, including the restructuring of the senior leadership team and the appointment of a new headteacher.
- The school is slightly smaller than the averaged-sized primary school. The Nursery provision provides education for two- to four-year olds. Children attend the Nursery in a combination of part-time or full-time sessions across either a morning and/or afternoon.

- As part of the school's wider provision, two breakfast clubs are run every morning, one for Nursery-aged children. Pupils and children also have the opportunity to attend a variety of after-school clubs.
- Almost all the pupils come from White British backgrounds. The proportion of girls is higher than the national average.
- A much lower proportion of children than nationally speak English as an additional language.
- The proportion of children who have SEN and/or disabilities and those who have a statement of special educational needs or education, health and care plan is below the national average.
- The proportion of children for whom the school receives the pupil premium funding is broadly in line with the national average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which are the minimum levels expected for pupils' attainment and progress.
- 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.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching in all classes, including many jointly with the headteacher and the assistant headteacher. During these observations inspectors spoke with pupils to gather their views on how they felt about school and find out what they were learning.
- Pupils were also observed during breaktime, lunchtime and assembly. Two inspectors met formally with pupils to gather their views and one inspector listened to a number of pupils reading.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher; deputy headteacher; the assistant headteacher, who is also the special educational needs coordinator and designated senior lead for child protection; all middle leaders; the chair and members of the local governing body; and a representative from Samuel Ward Multi-Academy Trust.
- The lead inspector had a telephone conversation with the deputy headteacher from an alternative provision which provides dual placement for pupils who have SEN and/or disabilities. Discussions explored a wide range of aspects of leadership and management, pupils' achievement and various other areas, including attendance and safeguarding arrangements.
- The inspectors looked at a wide range of school documents, including: the school's self-evaluation of its current performance and its plans for improvement; information relating to the safeguarding of children; the school's most recent information on the attainment and progress of pupils and children; minutes of meetings of the local governing body; and the school's most recent information relating to the attendance and welfare of pupils and children.
- The inspectors spoke informally with parents at the start of the first day of the inspection. Account was taken of the 53 responses to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, including 29 parental texts, as well as the 21 responses to the staff questionnaire. Inspectors did not receive any responses from the pupil questionnaire.

Inspection team

Kerry Grubb-Moore, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
Paul Hughes	Ofsted Inspector
Lynn Lowery	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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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