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Mrs Leanne Bridgwood
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Bridgwood

Short inspection of Glenthorne Community Primary School

Following my visit to the school on 16 October 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 June 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 and your deputy were appointed shortly after the last inspection. Since then, the number of pupils the school admits in each year group has grown significantly. There are now two classes for each year in the early years and key stage 1. Leaders and governors have not allowed this expansion to distract them from their tight focus on consistently improving the academic, personal and social development of pupils. Pupils enjoy coming to school where they are safe and learn well. They have excellent manners and are respectful of each other and adults in the school.

You have high expectations of yourself and the staff. Leaders ensure that plans for improvement focus on the achievement of pupils. As a result, most pupils make at least good progress in a range of subjects across the curriculum. At the end of key stage 2, progress in reading and mathematics was well above national averages. Additionally, a high proportion of pupils leave key stage 2 having reached the standards typical for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. Last year attainment for pupils at the end of key stage 1 declined. You ensure that additional support is provided for this group of pupils so that they are now making better progress.

At the last inspection, leaders were asked to further improve the quality of teaching. You and other leaders regularly check the quality of teaching and learning by visiting lessons, looking at pupils' work and reviewing pupils' progress. Leaders have

an accurate overview of the quality of teaching throughout the school, including where it is outstanding and where further development is needed. Teachers appreciate the training and support they receive and are very clear that this helps them to improve their practice. Since the last inspection, several new staff have joined the school. Leaders work with newly qualified and less experienced teachers to provide professional development. This ensures that this group of staff develop the skills they need to be effective teachers.

Leaders were also asked to improve standards in writing. Over the last three years, a high proportion of pupils attained the standard expected for their age in writing. In addition, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher standard has been broadly in line with national averages.

Most of the parents and carers spoken to, or who responded to Ofsted's questionnaire, are positive about the work of the school. Parents said that their children are happy to come to school and that they are pleased with the progress they make. In addition, several parents talked about how well the staff support their children, who have additional needs. A small number of parents expressed some concerns about how well the school deals with bullying. They also had concerns about how pupils are chosen for leadership responsibilities in school. During the inspection, I did not find evidence that pupils are unhappy. The pupils I spoke to are confident that there is no bullying and they said if anyone was being bullied that an adult would deal with it. Pupils told me that they hold elections for some of the leadership posts, including head boy and head girl. They said that anyone can volunteer for a role, such as sports leader or eco-monitor. Pupils agreed that selections for the roles were fair.

Governors have an accurate overview of the strengths and areas for improvement. They make visits to school to find out things for themselves. Governors have appropriate training to help them carry out their role effectively. For example, they know how to analyse information about pupils' progress and attainment. Governors take their safeguarding duties seriously. They have up-to-date training and the chair of governors makes termly checks on the school's single central register of staff.

Safeguarding is effective.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose. All staff have regular training so that they understand the signs of abuse and they know exactly how to report any concerns. Safeguarding records are well organised and stored securely. Leaders have good professional relationships with a variety of external agencies, including social care, the police and the local family support team. The school seeks to provide additional support for families, where appropriate, to ensure the well-being of pupils.

You do all that you can to ensure that pupils are safe in school. In addition, you ensure that the curriculum teaches pupils how to keep themselves safe. For example, pupils understand how to stay safe online and how to cross roads, and older pupils learn how to use their bikes safely. Pupils have an awareness of the

risks that strangers can pose and they know that they need to talk to an adult about any worries they have. Pupils told me that they feel safe in school. They said that behaviour is usually good and that teachers apply the rules fairly.

Inspection findings

- My first line of enquiry was to find out how leaders ensure that pupils in key stage 2 make good progress in writing. I found that pupils have plenty of purposeful opportunities to write for sustained periods of time. Writing tasks are varied and are often linked to the topics that pupils are studying or to the texts that they are reading. Therefore, pupils are inspired to write because they can confidently draw on their wider knowledge of what they are writing about. Teachers have high expectations of the work that pupils will produce and of the vocabulary that they will include in their writing. As a result, most pupils put a lot of effort into their work and take care with presentation. Leaders make regular checks on pupils' progress and interventions are put in place for any pupils at risk of falling behind.
- Leaders ensure that all teachers know the starting points of the pupils in their class so that they can plan lessons to build on what pupils already know and can do. Teachers in key stage 2 have strong subject knowledge and they impart this well to pupils. Consequently, pupils have a secure understanding of the features of different types of writing. In addition, pupils have a good understanding of the grammar, punctuation and spelling that is appropriate to their year group. Pupils' books show that most can apply this knowledge confidently. However, some pupils make repeated errors with basic spelling and punctuation. This is not addressed well enough by some teachers and, as a result, some pupils do not produce work of the highest quality.
- My second line of enquiry was about the quality of teaching in key stage 1. In 2017, pupils' attainment declined in all subjects at the end of key stage 1. Leaders have set ambitious targets for outcomes for this academic year. Work in books shows that teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan tasks that build on what pupils achieved at the end of Reception. In addition, tasks are planned that interest and motivate pupils. For example, in Year 1, pupils were excitedly using descriptive vocabulary to write rhymes about slime. In Year 2, pupils were retelling a story that they had recently shared. Pupils are becoming confident writers and, as a result, most are making good progress.
- Leaders have implemented a curriculum that is broad and balanced. Pupils told me that they enjoy the topics, which have a main theme of history or geography. Teachers plan visits and 'inspiration days' that are linked to the topics to further develop pupils' experience and knowledge. Pupils apply and refine their reading, writing and mathematics skills in a variety of subjects. Pupils particularly enjoy science. Lessons are organised so that pupils can plan and carry out experiments alongside developing their knowledge and understanding of a wide range of scientific topics. As a result, the proportion of pupils who are working at the standard typical for their age by the end of key stage 2 in science is above the national average.
- Leaders ensure that pupils acquire subject-specific knowledge and skills. For

example, pupils in Year 5 and 6 demonstrated empathy for people who lived during World War Two. They also considered the impact of the actions taken by world leaders, during the war, on life today. Leaders have introduced a range of strategies that provide opportunities for pupils to develop a greater depth of knowledge in subjects across the curriculum. For example, teachers in Year 6 plan 'thinking questions' for pupils to reflect on and respond to. Leaders have firm plans in place to further develop opportunities for pupils across the school to acquire a greater depth of knowledge and understanding.

- Pupils develop a secure understanding of British values. They enjoy learning about different religions and they are respectful of different cultures. Pupils demonstrate an age appropriate understanding of democracy and individual liberty. They appreciate the opportunities that people who live in Britain have compared with some countries in the rest of the world. Pupils are well prepared for their future lives in modern Britain.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and those responsible for governance should ensure that:

- teachers address pupils' misconceptions about basic spelling and punctuation rules so that they avoid making repeated mistakes
- leaders continue with their work to develop the curriculum so that all pupils, including the most able, are sufficiently challenged in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum.

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

Yours sincerely

Jo Evans
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you and other leaders, parents and the chair of governors. I spoke to a representative of the local authority on the telephone. We visited classrooms and looked at pupils' work together. I also met with a group of pupils. In addition, I spoke to members of staff at various times during the day. I reviewed the school's website and documents, including the single central record and safeguarding systems. I also reviewed the school's self-evaluation, improvement plans, monitoring information and pupil progress and assessment information. I took account of the 106 responses by parents to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View. There were no responses to the staff survey or the

pupil questionnaire.