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Mrs Justine Roberts
Headteacher
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Dear Mrs Roberts

Short inspection of The Glapton Academy

Following my visit to the school on 27 September 2016, 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 your predecessor school was judged to be good in June 2013.

This school continues to be good.

The leadership team has maintained the good quality of education in the school since the last inspection. You took up the post of headteacher of Glapton Primary Academy in September 2016 and have made a positive start to the role. You have effectively shared your high expectations with pupils and staff and you are engaging well with parents. The pupils I spoke with know that you expect them to do their best and that teachers will help them if they need it. Leaders have ensured that staff care for pupils and ensure that they do their best. They ensure that staff provide pupils with a bright, attractive and well-organised environment in which to learn and play.

You have evaluated the performance of the school well. Leaders, governors and the academy trust know the school well and know what needs to be improved. You recognise that although standards achieved by pupils overall are good, too few of the most able pupils make sufficient progress in writing over key stage 2 and do not achieve the higher standard. Similarly, leaders understand that they must improve the attendance of the few persistent absentees if you are to improve attendance overall.

You have already formulated an effective plan to address your improvement priorities. In addition, you have ensured that school leaders, including the chair of the governing body and the director of schools (LEAD Academy Trust), share your evaluation and are equally committed to securing the necessary improvements.

Safeguarding is effective.

The designated leader for safeguarding ensures that staff are kept well informed about their duties to keep pupils safe and staff are alert to any signs that a child may be at risk of harm. They know what to do if they have concerns about a child's welfare. The safeguarding leader has ensured that staff understand their legal responsibilities with regard to the 'Prevent' duty.

Procedures to ensure that any visitors to the school are signed in and then supervised are effective. You and the office staff have ensured that the single central record of the checks and vetting of all staff working with pupils is complete and up to date.

The pupils I spoke with told me that they are happy at school. Pupils explained to me that they feel safe because they know there is an adult they can go to if they are worried. The vast majority of the parents I met with and all those who completed Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, the said that their children are safe and happy at school. You monitor attendance closely and intervene effectively when attendance declines. Consequently, attendance is improving.

Inspection findings

- According to the early provisional information available for 2016 and published information for 2015 and 2014, standards achieved by pupils in reading, since your predecessor school was inspected, have improved. More Year 1 pupils achieve the national standard in phonics than nationally, and pupils' achievements at the end of key stage 1 and key stage 2 are in line with the national average. The pupils read to me confidently and demonstrated well a fluency and comprehension appropriate to their age. They used their phonics knowledge effectively to read unfamiliar words.
- Leaders have effectively developed the knowledge and skills of staff. They have provided training, workshops and resources to help them to teach reading effectively. They have also set high standards for teachers, including some 'reading non-negotiables', such as a designated reading area in each classroom. In addition, leaders have enriched the reading curriculum by identifying opportunities to develop reading in other subjects and by commissioning an author in residence. Leaders have also worked well with parents so that they can help their children develop as effective readers. The phonics workshop for parents that I observed provided them with good advice, and the school staff answered their questions confidently and sensitively.
- Overall, outcomes for pupils are good in reading, writing and mathematics at key stages 1 and 2. However, according to the early provisional information available for 2016, the progress that Year 6 pupils made in writing from key stage 1 was below the national average. You have evaluated this effectively and have identified that it is the progress of the most able pupils that needs to be improved, so that more of them write at a greater depth within the national standard. You have acted promptly and effectively to address this, not least by setting challenging targets for pupils to achieve by July 2017. You have also

analysed pupils' performance and identified those areas of writing that need more curriculum time and better teaching. This has informed the support you provide to teachers.

- Overall, teachers and support assistants help pupils to learn effectively. They have good subject knowledge and provide pupils with clear explanations and demonstrations. They use subject-specific vocabulary accurately and use time in lessons well. Teachers and support assistants monitor pupils' learning carefully and intervene to enable them to make progress, providing additional explanation, prompts, support and encouragement. However, teaching is less effective for the most able pupils. Teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for these pupils to write at a greater depth in a range of styles, nor do they effectively support the most able pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling to their independent writing.
- You and school leaders recognise the importance of effective feedback in helping pupils to make good progress. You have evaluated the effectiveness of the marking policy and have revised it in order to provide pupils with more effective and consistent feedback. Evidence in the small sample of books I looked at and conversations I had with pupils suggests that this is already having a positive impact in the large majority of classes.
- Teachers' management of pupils' behaviour is effective and helps to sustain a calm, orderly learning environment. I observed no low-level disruptive behaviour when we visited lessons because all pupils were engaged in their learning. I also observed good behaviour at other times, including at lunchtime.
- Pupils I spoke with told me that should bullying occur they are sure adults will deal with it quickly and effectively.
- Leaders are taking effective action to improve pupils' attendance at school and overall attendance is improving. The attendance of pupils currently at the school is broadly in line with the national average.
- The attendance lead and the parent support worker monitor pupils' attendance closely and recognise that the attendance of boys, those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those in receipt of free school meals has been poor. However, they understand the key to raising overall attendance is working with the families whose children are persistently absent from school. Leaders and staff know these families well and employ effective strategies, including prosecution, to support and challenge parents to improve their child's attendance at school. Leaders also ensure that effective support is provided to pupils, such as rewards and breakfast and sports clubs, to encourage them to attend school on time.
- Leaders have worked effectively to improve communication with parents through newsletters, texts, informal conversations at the beginning and end of the school day, workshops, parents' speech bubbles in books, and 'come and share' mornings. Parents who responded to Parent View, and who spoke with me, reported that communication is good. For example, the school's expectations about attendance are clearly communicated and well understood by parents.

The school's website is up to date and provides parents with the information they need.

- Teachers' organisation of the early years classrooms supports independent learning very well and I observed children happily playing and learning on their own and with others. The relatively small outdoor learning environment, shared by the Nursery and Reception classes, makes it difficult for teachers to ensure a free flow of activities. However, teachers manage this well and I observed teachers and support assistants effectively helping children to learn during focused activities and when playing.

Next steps for the school

Leaders and governors should ensure that:

- the most able pupils are provided with the opportunity and support to write at a greater depth in a range of styles
- teachers support pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling to their independent writing
- appropriate support and sanctions are put in place to improve the attendance of those pupils who are most frequently absent from school.

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

Yours sincerely

Derek Myers
Her Majesty's Inspector

Information about the inspection

During the inspection, I met with you, senior leaders, including the English and mathematics leaders, the officer responsible for the single central record, the attendance leader, the chair of the governing body and the director of schools for the LEAD Academy Trust. I also met with members of staff and considered the responses to the staff survey. I reviewed a range of school documentation. You and I visited classrooms and learning areas to observe teaching, talking with pupils and looking at their work. I evaluated information about pupils' progress and attendance. I observed and talked with pupils in their classes and met with 12 pupils. I met with you and the designated safeguarding leader and reviewed your systems and processes relating to safeguarding. I looked at work from a sample of pupils. I met with a number of parents at the beginning of the school day and

considered their views alongside the responses from Parent View. I also reviewed the school's website.

During the inspection I followed four lines of enquiry:

- Is safeguarding effective?
- Have leaders effectively addressed the areas for improvement identified in the inspection report of the predecessor school, including reading and feedback?
- Do leaders recognise that pupils' achievement in writing at the end of key stage 2, based on early provisional information available for 2016, particularly that of the most able pupils, requires improvement? What steps have they taken to address this?
- How effective is communication between school staff and parents?