

The Glead Girls' CAL & Technology College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	120712
Local Authority	Lincolnshire
Inspection number	358827
Inspection dates	18–19 January 2011
Reporting inspector	Ann Wallis

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Girls
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	893
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	137
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Joy Hancock
Headteacher	Janet Daniels
Date of previous school inspection	3 October 2007
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 36 lessons and observed 34 teachers. They held meetings with members of the governing body, staff and students. They observed the school's work, and looked at students' books, safeguarding documents, students' progress data and other documentation. They analysed 81 questionnaires from parents and carers and also those from students and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas:

- To what degree is self-evaluation by the governing body and leaders and managers at all levels sufficiently accurate and robust to bring about and sustain school improvement?
- Are the curriculum and links with partners as good the schools' self-evaluation form suggests?
- How effective are the school's efforts to raise attendance?
- How well is best practice shared to reduce variations between subjects in the quality of teaching and learning and assessment?

Information about the school

The school is average in size. It is a non-selective school which draws students from a large rural catchment area where approximately one third of girls go to selective grammar schools. An average proportion are from minority ethnic groups, but an above average proportion speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students who have special educational needs and/or disabilities are well above average. The school has dual specialist status for technology and applied learning. It became a Trust School in March 2010. The school has gained Healthy School status and has gained a range of awards including the Chartermark and the International Schools Award.

The headteacher took up her post in January 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

This is a good school, which has improved since it was last inspected. The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory. Girls' attainment has risen and their progress has accelerated. Governance has improved markedly. The school monitors its work carefully. Self-evaluation is rigorous and the governing body, leaders and managers know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. The very recently appointed headteacher has a clear vision for the school and this is already being communicated effectively to students and staff. Appropriate priorities for improvement have been clearly identified, including raising attendance levels and eliminating the remaining inconsistencies across the school in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. The school has good capacity to improve further.

Girls make good progress to reach broadly average standards in examinations at the end of Year 11. Most enjoy learning and achieve well. Teaching and learning have improved since the last inspection, and are now good. In most lessons learning is checked regularly, work proceeds at a brisk pace and the tasks set are matched closely to the needs of students. Teachers know their students well and, together with effective teaching assistants, give them constructive individual help to achieve their goals. Students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language benefit greatly from the timely extra help they are given to enable them to achieve as well as their peers. However, in a minority of lessons students make slower progress because teachers' expectations are lower, learning is not checked regularly and they have fewer opportunities to assess their own and each other's work. There are some examples of good and improving assessment procedures and helpful feedback being given to students, but there are considerable variations in its effectiveness across the school.

Students behave well. Most have mature attitudes to learning and are keen to succeed. They take on responsibility willingly and are keen to help others. The good care, guidance and support they receive contribute well to their personal development. They have a clear understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They put forward their opinions, for example on how to improve their school uniform, and are confident that their voice is being heard. The school's efforts to improve attendance have been successful; levels have risen rapidly and are now broadly average, but a small minority of students do not attend regularly enough to get the full benefit of their education.

The school's dual specialist status in technology and applied learning has a positive impact on its work. It particularly helps to enrich the curriculum and to enhance the range of good partnerships the school makes. Its beneficial effect is seen in the good outcomes students achieve, particularly in design technology and vocational courses.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Iron out inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment across the main school and in the sixth form, by:
 - ensuring that all staff provide equally high levels of challenge to students
 - sharing good practice across the school
 - reviewing students' learning at the end of each lesson and giving them more opportunities to assess their own and each other's work
 - improving the quality of assessment and feedback so all students are clear about how to improve their work.
- Raise levels of attendance by:
 - evaluating current strategies and reinforcing those which are proving to be effective
 - working even more closely with the small minority of parents and carers whose children do not attend school regularly.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

In lessons most students concentrate on the task in hand and work hard. In a typical lesson, Year 7 geography students were very engaged in their learning and discussed their information and ideas enthusiastically as they analysed data about different countries. In a small number of lessons, teachers' expectations were lower and the pace of work slower so some students drifted off task and learning time was lost. The quality of work in students' books and files and displayed on classroom walls confirms the good progress they are making. The school's own detailed progress data also indicate that students are on track to achieve their challenging targets this year. Students enter Year 7 with attainment which is below average, and there are fewer higher attaining students than is usual. From these starting points students achieve well, and Year 11 students attained standards in examinations which were broadly average in both 2009 and 2010. The proportion of students attaining five A*-C GCSE grades including English and mathematics rose in 2010, and the school's upward trend of the last three years in overall attainment continued.

Students behave well in classrooms and around the school. Most are kind and respectful to each other and to staff and visitors. They are clear about the difference between right and wrong and understand their rights and responsibilities. Their basic skills are satisfactory and they benefit from good opportunities to take part in work experience, especially through the wide range of vocational courses they are able to study. They have a sound preparation for the next stage of their education and for future work. The school is well aware of the attendance issues, and has suitable plans to evaluate and refine current strategies to improve attendance.

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Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

In the majority of lessons observed, teachers' expectations were high, tasks varied and interesting, and explanations clear so students made good progress. For example, in a mathematics lesson students were very clear about how well they were doing because the teacher reviewed their learning regularly and encouraged them to reflect on their own learning and that of others. Marking and feedback to students are often precise and helpful so that they know how to reach their targets. However, the use of assessment information is more variable than the quality of teaching, and students do not always get the help they need to improve their work.

The curriculum is broad and includes a good balance of both vocational and academic courses which are well matched to the needs of students. It is reviewed regularly to ensure that this balance is maintained. Skills courses equip Year 7 students well for learning. The wide choice of courses for students in Years 10 and 11 reflect the school's specialisms, and are enhanced through creative partnerships with other schools and colleges. Students enjoy a wide range of extra-curricular activities, particularly in sport and the arts.

Students appreciate the way the school provides a welcoming and supportive learning environment, especially for the high number with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are at an early stage of learning English. Case studies of individual students show that the school works diligently with outside agencies to ensure

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they get the specialist help they need, including encouragement to attend regularly. The quality of the information and individual guidance provided to help students make the best choices regarding future courses and careers is good. Close links with other schools and colleges ensure that students' transition between different stages of their education is a smooth one.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

The governing body, and leaders and managers at all levels know what is needed to improve the school further, and successfully communicate this vision to staff and students. Teaching and learning are monitored regularly and have improved since the last inspection, often as a result of good professional development for all staff. The role of senior and middle leaders and managers is now being developed further to ensure they are all fully involved in monitoring the work of their departments and to eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of teaching, learning and assessment. Governance is good. The governing body is now involved in determining the strategic direction of the school and provides support and challenge in equal measure. The school promotes equal opportunities well and consequently all groups of students make equally good progress. Racial discrimination of any kind is not tolerated. All safeguarding arrangements are firmly in place and staff and governors are well trained and knowledgeable about, for example, child protection and safer recruitment procedures. The school's contribution to community cohesion is good and it has evaluated the impact of this work. Close links with the local community are extended by links with institutions overseas. Links with different communities further afield in the United Kingdom are developing well.

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These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

This recently established sixth form is satisfactory and improving. Students appreciate the excellent facilities the new buildings provide, such as the well-equipped hairdressing salon. They are equally appreciative of the good care, guidance and support they receive. The curriculum offers a range of largely vocational courses which meet the needs of current students well. The limited data available so far, learning in lessons and work seen all indicate that overall students make satisfactory progress to reach broadly average attainment in the courses they study. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. In the best lessons students make good progress because teaching is authoritative and tasks are varied and engaging. For example, in a BTec Sport lesson students were seen to be enjoying learning as they enthusiastically discussed the relative merits of advertising material for different sports. However, not all lessons are of this quality as yet. Leaders and managers have clear ideas about how to improve and develop the sixth form. The sixth form leader is making increasing use of assessment data to track students' progress and the quality of teaching and learning is being monitored more closely to eliminate inconsistencies in the quality of lessons.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account: Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

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Views of parents and carers

The large majority of parents and carers are pleased with the education the school provides. They particularly appreciate the way in which the school keeps their children safe. A few parents and carers commented that there are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching across the school. Inspectors followed up their concerns and found this to be the case, although the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Inspectors also followed up a number of individual concerns, but they followed no particular pattern.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of students registered at The Gleed Girls' Technology College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school. The inspection team received 81 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 893 students registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	23	54	67	5	6	3	4
The school keeps my child safe	23	28	55	68	2	2	1	1
My school informs me about my child's progress	18	22	52	64	9	11	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	17	21	53	65	9	11	2	2
The teaching is good at this school	14	17	51	63	9	11	3	4
The school helps me to support my child's learning	15	19	48	59	14	17	2	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	7	9	56	69	15	19	1	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	15	19	48	59	9	11	2	2
The school meets my child's particular needs	15	19	49	60	13	16	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	12	15	49	60	14	17	5	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	4	5	53	65	15	19	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	11	14	54	67	10	12	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	21	26	47	58	7	9	4	5

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



20 January 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of The Gleed Girls' Technology College, Spalding, PE11 2EJ

Thank you for the warm welcome you gave the inspection team when we visited your school this week. We are particularly grateful to those of you who gave up your time to discuss with us your experience at school. Please thank your parents and carers for filling in our questionnaire. You go to a good school, and here are some of the things we liked most about it:

Your academic achievement is good.

You behave well, take responsibility willingly and know how to stay safe and healthy.

The care, guidance and support you receive and the curriculum you follow are good.

Teaching and learning are good and the school is led and managed well.

The effectiveness of the sixth form is improving.

This is what we have asked the staff to do in order to improve your school further:

Make sure that the quality of teaching and learning is consistently good across the main school and in the sixth form, particularly by improving the use of assessment so that you always aim high in your work and are clear about exactly how to improve it.

Work closely with the parents and carers of those of you whose attendance is low, to ensure that all of you attend school regularly.

You can help your school to improve further by attending as often as possible, continuing to behave well and working with your teachers to achieve the very best you can.

Yours sincerely

Ann Wallis

Lead inspector

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