

Inspection of Glendinning Academy

Sandringham Road, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 4HD

Inspection dates: 3 and 4 July 2023

Overall effectiveness	Good
The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Not previously inspected under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

What is it like to attend this school?

Staff at Glendinning create an atmosphere that is calm and productive. Pupils get the care and support they need to overcome challenges. Staff have high expectations for every pupil and, as a result, pupils achieve well.

Pupils' behaviour is good. They understand the school's values and know the difference between right and wrong. Pupils accept each other's differences and comment, 'At this school there is a celebration of autism, staff understand us, it is part of who we are.'

Pupils are happy. They enjoy warm relationships with staff. Pupils have a strong sense of belonging, which helps them feel safe and well cared for. As a result, they attend school regularly.

Pupils actively participate in the wider opportunities on offer. These help to develop pupils' skills and confidence in many areas, such as outdoor education, music and sports. Pupils take part in these activities regularly, firm favourites being paddle boarding and other water sports. Through these and other activities, pupils develop their independence and social skills, which prepares them for their future destinations.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The principal leads Glendinning with passion and determination. Everything staff do is for the benefit of pupils and to help them realise their potential. The curriculum is ambitious and well planned. Leaders think carefully about the knowledge pupils need in each subject. Pupils access learning experiences across many national curriculum subjects, including science, history and art. For example, pupils could talk about their interest in history, particularly the impact of the Tudors on religion. However, leaders acknowledge that systems to show what key knowledge pupils remember in some subjects are not fully in place. As a result, pupils' recall of prior learning is patchy. This stalls the progress they make in these subjects.

Leaders consider reading to be the bedrock of pupils' education. There is an expectation that every pupil will become, at the very least, a functional reader. Pupils start phonics early. They use this knowledge well when they read. Staff receive training in the teaching of phonics and early reading. Leaders provide regular support and guidance. Staff appreciate this supportive approach. It gives them the knowledge and confidence to teach early reading with skill. Pupils who struggle have the additional help and support they need to improve their reading skills.

Personal, social and health education (PSHE) is threaded throughout the curriculum. There is a focus on relationships, personal safety, and physical and mental well-being. Older pupils know how to keep their bodies safe. Staff encourage pupils to express their personalities and celebrate differences.

Pupils behave well. From the moment they start in school, adults focus on pupils being able to manage their own behaviour. Staff are skilful in spotting any changes in pupils' demeanour. Staff respond to these changes with sensitivity and care.

Adults in the school are justifiably proud of the nurture and care they provide for pupils. This is seen from the moment pupils arrive at school. Staff greet pupils with a smile and a warm welcome.

Adults told inspectors how they love working at Glendinning. They comment on the 'team spirit' and 'family feel'. They appreciate the training, from within the school and from the trust, which develops their knowledge and skills.

Trustees know what is working well and what needs to improve. They hold leaders to account effectively for the quality of education and care.

Many parents are extremely happy with the quality of education and care the school provides for their children. However, some parents expressed concerns about the number of staffing changes and the impact this has had on their child's education.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Leaders take safeguarding seriously. They ensure that everyone in the community stays alert and hold fast to the view that 'it could happen here'.

Staff know pupils well, which helps them to notice changes in behaviour that could signal a concern. The designated safeguarding lead ensures that staff have the information they need to recognise and report signs of abuse.

The safeguarding team liaises with other agencies well so that pupils get the required help. The curriculum raises pupils' awareness of safeguarding risks. There are thorough procedures to secure the safe recruitment of staff.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Leaders have not established systems of assessment that clearly show what key knowledge pupils remember in some subjects. Therefore, pupils' recall of prior learning is inconsistent. Leaders need to ensure that staff use assessment effectively to check what pupils know and remember across all subjects.
- Some parents expressed concerns about the number of staffing changes and the impact this has had on their child's education. Some parents do not think their child is achieving as well as they should. Leaders need to build on the work that

has already started to strengthen links with parents so that any concerns raised are dealt with quickly.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

School details

Unique reference number	147840
Local authority	Devon
Inspection number	10256602
Type of school	Special
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	7 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	118
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Chris Jenkins
Principal	Sam Gilronan
Website	www.wavemat.org
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Glendinning Academy is a special school for pupils with communication and interaction needs.
- The school opened in September 2020 and is part of the Wave Academy Trust.
- The school moved to its current permanent site in January 2021.
- The school has undergone significant expansion, with an additional six classes since it opened. Consequently, there has been a considerable growth in the number of staff working at the school.
- The school uses one unregistered alternative provider that offers therapeutic provision.

Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors met with the principal, assistant headteachers and other school staff.
- The lead inspector held telephone calls with the chief executive officer and three members of the trust hub.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these subjects: early reading, mathematics and PSHE. For each deep dive, the inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors sampled pupils' work across a range of subjects, including science, art and religious education.
- The lead inspector listened to pupils across the school read to an adult. Story time was visited in Year 9.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's safeguarding documentation, including the safeguarding checks carried out on staff working at the school. They considered how well the designated safeguarding lead acts on concerns about pupils' welfare and safety. Inspectors talked to pupils, staff and trustees about how the school keeps everyone safe.
- The lead inspector considered key documentation, including school development plans and the school's self-evaluation.
- Inspectors observed pupils' behaviour in lessons and during social times. An inspector met with leaders to discuss and scrutinise how they respond to behaviour incidents and pupils' attendance.
- Inspectors considered the responses to the online survey, Ofsted Parent View, including free-text replies and emails received during the inspection. Inspectors spoke with parents at the start of the school day. They also considered responses to the staff questionnaire.

Inspection team

Jen Southall, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Mark Burgess

Ofsted Inspector

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