

INSPECTION REPORT

GLYNE GAP SCHOOL

Bexhill On Sea

LEA area: East Sussex

Unique reference number: 114686

Headteacher: John Hassell

Reporting inspector: Ian Naylor

20906

Dates of inspection: 22 - 24 January 2002

Inspection number: 1963302

Short inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Maintained
School category:	Special
Age range of pupils:	2 to 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Place Hastings Road Bexhill On Sea East Sussex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr Catharine Hollman
Date of previous inspection:	June 1997

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Glyne Gap is an East Sussex County Council mixed day community special school for 96 pupils with severe and profound learning difficulties aged two to nineteen years. The majority of pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds. No pupils require English as an additional language teaching. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs and very low attainment on entry. Thirty five per cent of pupils have profound and multiple learning disabilities (PMLD). Twenty five per cent of pupils are at the severe end of the autistic spectrum. Fifteen per cent of pupils have a very significant sensory impairment. These are increased figures since the previous inspection. Higher attaining Post 16 students receive their education in an annex, three miles from the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an extremely effective school, exceptionally well led and managed, with very good teaching that has many excellent features, in which the majority of pupils make at least very good progress in their achievements. Headteacher, staff and governors work in harmony to create the highest possible standards. There is excellent value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- There is exceptional leadership and management by the headteacher, senior staff and the governing body.
- The quality of teaching and learning is consistently high and is sustained and promoted by the excellent liaison between teachers and teaching assistants and the extensive staff professional development programme. The excellent relationships within school significantly support pupils' learning. These factors are key to very high overall achievement and progress by pupils.
- Personal social and health education (PSHE) is given very high priority within the curriculum and is very successful in promoting pupils' personal development, particularly in their communication and social skills.
- Opportunities for involving all pupils in relevant activities (inclusion) both on and offsite are exceptional.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- There are no areas of immediate concern to inspectors.
- The school nevertheless should endeavour to maintain the priorities for development it has identified in the school development plan in order to sustain and raise still further the very high standards that are already present. For example, the work to extend the use of P Scales for the measurement of pupils' achievement is an extremely significant development. It is not yet completed and does not give the information on progress in all subjects in a way that can be analysed and used to predict trends.
- The school should also continue to review current practice to further improve its provision, including its approach to homework.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been excellent improvement since the previous Inspection in July 1997. All the key

issues have been addressed and the majority completely satisfied with the exception of the nursery. Planning for a purpose built nursery is very advanced. The school development plan has improved further with a very high success rate of targets achieved. Teaching of a modern foreign language has been dropped from the curriculum to make way for more relevant subjects. Registration and all other statutory requirements are fully met. All pupils now receive a full programme of religious education. Infant and Nursery classrooms have been soundproofed. New toilet blocks have been provided for PMLD pupils. There are greater expectations by staff of pupils' achievement and these are supported by new curriculum plans in all subjects for pupils aged two to fourteen, which embrace new National Curriculum requirements and revision of plans for pupils aged 14 to 19 that now include accreditation. A new assessment system based on 'P' Scales (an assessment system for pupils with learning difficulties) has been introduced. There is now more precise monitoring of teaching and learning through subject leadership and the senior management team. Individual education plans (IEP's) have been refined still further. Training for information and communications technology (ICT) is much stronger. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are now in place. Arrangements for improving the quality of teaching and learning through looking at the performance of teachers (Performance Management) have been successfully implemented.

STANDARDS

The table below summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	by Year R	by Year 6	by Year 11	by Year 13	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	A	A*	<i>Excellent</i>	<i>A*</i>
Reading	A	A	A	A*	<i>Very good</i>	<i>A</i>
Writing	A	A	A	A*	<i>Good</i>	<i>B</i>
Mathematics	A	A	A	A	<i>Satisfactory</i>	<i>C</i>
personal, social and health education	A	A*	A*	A*	<i>Unsatisfactory</i>	<i>D</i>
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs	A	A	A	A*	<i>Poor</i>	<i>E</i>

Achievement and progress are very good across the school and excellent at Post 16. They are especially good in communications skills, speaking, listening, signing and use of Picture Exchange Communication System (PECs). By Year 6, pupils are making excellent progress in PSHE; this progress is sustained through to Year 13. Achievement is very good in mathematics, science and information technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. There is a superb response by pupils to school. There is a real willingness to learn and participate. Pupils get genuine enjoyment and a huge sense of success from all activities. They know they are valued as individuals by staff.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Consistently of a very high standard. Often exemplary.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Highly successful relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves help to cement enormous gains in individual personal skills, particularly those of communication, self-confidence and self-reliance.
Attendance	Very good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1–6	Years 7–11	Years 12–13
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good	Very good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

A quarter of all teaching is excellent, and it is very good overall. It is never less than good. Teaching in English, in communication skills and in PSHE is excellent. It is very good in mathematics and ICT. Particular strengths of teaching are the very high expectations of pupil success, high quality planning, with detailed knowledge and understanding of the individual needs and requirements of pupils. Activities are carefully matched to the next step in learning for each pupil. There are excellent relationships between staff and pupils. This helps staff to create an extremely positive learning environment that gives recognition to achievement and places high value on pupil's contributions. There is exceptionally good teamwork by staff. As a consequence of this high quality teaching, pupils' learning is very good. Pupils work very hard and concentrate for significant periods. Pupils understand what they have to do to make progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Excellent. The curriculum is extremely sensitive to the individual needs of pupils and offers exemplary practice in the way it addresses National Curriculum requirements and also provides a further range of exciting and highly relevant learning opportunities. The curriculum supports pupils' skills of self-advocacy, independence and communication particularly well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent across each of these areas. The schools' approach creates a highly effective learning environment and provides rich experiences for pupils both in and out of school to help social development and to further their understanding.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Excellent. All procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are of the highest order. There is extensive liaison with other professionals and agencies. Arrangements for inclusion of pupils within school and offsite are extensive, and very supportive of their achievement. The measurement, recording and reporting of academic achievement, personal development and progress are of exceptional quality. An Additional Needs Committee of staff and a special liaison panel with health and social services, help to give high quality support to all pupils.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher has outstanding qualities of leadership. There is a very talented senior management team. The whole staff team is highly motivated and dedicated. The management at all levels is of a high order.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Excellent. All statutory requirements are met. Governors have an exceptional understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They implement policies and procedures that sustain high standards in all aspects of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent. There are very rigorous arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning, and the curriculum. The process of school self-review is well established.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. There are very rigorous arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning, and the curriculum. The process of school self-review is well established.

Parents are kept very well informed by the school in all matters to do with their child's progress through regular newsletters, annual reviews, and for example when setting termly individual child goals. Home schoolbooks are a good source of regular communication between parents and staff. The recent appointment of a Personal and Family Adviser is having a positive impact upon additional advice and support that the school is able to give to families.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The high quality of the learning environment and their child's achievements.• Their child is very happy to come to school.• Relationships in school are remarkably good.• There is a very high quality of leadership.• Teaching is very good.• Very good information is given about their child's progress.• School has high quality liaison with outside agencies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no significant areas that parents identified for improvement. They are very happy with all that the school provides.• A small number of parents want to see homework more clearly defined.

Inspectors fully agree with the positive views of parents. The staff create many opportunities at an individual level for pupils to complete work at home with the support of parents and accede to parental requests for more formal homework.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

There is exceptional leadership and management by the headteacher, senior staff and the governing body.

1. The high standard of leadership and management has been sustained since the previous inspection. The headteacher displays outstanding qualities of leadership and management across all areas of the school. He was described by parents at the meeting as a great leader who creates a superb school atmosphere and someone who is very well regarded in the school and by other local schools. Inspectors agree entirely.
2. The headteacher presents a very clear picture to staff of the way in which the organisation of the school can support the most effective teaching and learning by pupils. He uses his extensive knowledge of special educational needs, and of the latest national and local educational initiatives, to bring a cohesion and sense of purpose to all school activities. He is a very able communicator who uses this skill to enthuse, inspire and motivate staff and pupils to give of their best. He works very closely with governors, parents, external agencies such as health and social services, and with colleagues from other similar schools to ensure that the most up to date information is available to teachers on curriculum, assessment and the personal care of pupils. He delegates responsibility extremely well at all levels but retains a personal interest and detailed grasp of all school issues.
3. The headteacher gives superb direction to the educational aspirations of the school. This is illustrated by the plans to build, in conjunction with a local college of further education, a new further education department for students with severe and profound learning difficulties, which will ultimately supersede the current provision at the school's further education annexe, Rose Cottage. Also by the proposals and funding that has been already dedicated to creating and building a nursery as a joint project with the adjacent primary school and with the full support of the local education authority.
4. The headteacher and senior staff are instrumental in creating the exemplary spiritual moral social and cultural development (SMSC) in the school. This is done by making SMSC part of the planning for the curriculum at all levels. They also monitor closely how each element is taught. This adds significantly to the positive climate for learning and personal development.
5. Headteachers from the consortium of similar specials schools are used by the headteacher to help measure the quality of teaching, curriculum and assessment at Glyne Gap, and in particular, the use of the P-Scales. This gives very strong validation to the work of the school.
6. The headteacher and senior staff undertake regular lesson monitoring observations, each term, of all teachers using Ofsted Inspection Framework criteria. These observations are recorded and evaluations shared with teachers as part of their Performance Management review. Every member of staff has a Performance Management appraisal interview each year. There are weekly meetings by the Senior Management Team (SMT) with teachers (on a rota basis) to discuss learning and progress of pupils in their class and strategies for improving their teaching and the quality of pupils' learning.

7. Staff development is ongoing, extensive and relevant to the school priorities for development. The school development plan (SDP) has a list of the latest proposals for training to compliment the various aspects of school improvement. There are detailed and rigorous induction procedures in place for new staff.
8. There are two Advanced Skills Teachers (AST) in the school who have recently been awarded this status by an external assessor. Both already give support to teachers in local schools and to the training programme for Glyne Gap staff. Their skills make a significant contribution to teaching and learning in the school.
9. Staff, including the headteacher, give support through in-service training to local schools about learning disabilities and special educational needs. The headteacher has been a qualified Ofsted Team Inspector for many years, and governors allow him to carry out two inspections per year. He uses these opportunities as valuable in-service training for himself and to bring new ideas into school. He is also an accredited External Adviser and has acted in this capacity in a number of schools. This further enhances the monitoring skills that he possesses which are of benefit to the school.
10. Leadership and management are further supported and enhanced by a range of well-organised management activities. The SMT is a very experienced and knowledgeable in special educational needs. Responsibilities and duties of the SMT are very clearly defined and carried out to give the best support to areas such as curriculum, professional development of staff, further education and inclusion. The SMT provides a focus to the rest of the staff about school improvement and the raising of pupil achievement.
11. The deputy headteacher, in particular, gives exceptional direction and support to the day-to-day management of the school and very effective support to relationships between all staff. She routinely monitors all Annual Reviews and Annual Reports for pupils prior to the annual review meeting with parents and checks these for consistency and accuracy of assessment across all the subjects.
12. There are, in addition, leaders for each of the departments in school, infant, juniors, seniors and further education. The whole staff team is highly motivated and dedicated to the pursuit of the highest possible standard of education for the pupils. The management at all levels is of a high order. Performance Management requirements by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), for setting performance targets for teachers, are in place. These are successful in helping teachers to review their practice. An external adviser has visited twice to help the governors in setting annual performance targets for the headteacher. These targets for teachers and headteacher are highly supportive to pupils' learning and achievement and to the overall leadership of the school.
13. There is a highly structured system of teacher team leaders in place who help to measure and support the performance of teachers and the quality of their teaching. Management of the subjects is very good. Each subject has a co-ordinator who is responsible for curriculum, quality of teaching, assessment and the day-to-day management of the subject, including spending decisions for new resources. This improves the level of organisation and planning for teaching and ensures that learning is consistent and relevant to pupils' needs.
14. Teaching assistants have good job descriptions that also include defined duties for specific areas that are in addition to their general responsibilities for working alongside teachers in classrooms. For example, one teaching assistant is School safety Officer and Senior First Aid Person. Teaching assistants undertake these duties extremely thoughtfully and conscientiously and by doing so are more deeply involved in the general life of the school. This has a significant overall impact upon the learning environment.

15. The governors play an integral role in determining the policy and management of the school. There are regular meetings of the Governing Body for premises, local resource management and school development, which includes personnel, finance, resources, pupils and curriculum. These committees have terms of reference and meetings have agendas and minutes are taken. Governors receive detailed reports from the headteacher that help them to make sensible decisions and to implement policies and procedures that sustain high standards in all aspects of the school.

16. All statutory requirements are met. Since the previous Inspection governors have instituted their Action Plan and carried this through to completion. The exception being the accommodation for the Nursery, which has had to wait for plans for a new building to be agreed by the local education authority and for the necessary funding.

17. The chair of governors is a very experienced governor and as a former paediatrician has expert knowledge of the health needs of pupils with learning disabilities. She puts this knowledge and experience to good effect. For example, together with the headteacher she has been responsible for creating a regular medical clinic at the school, with local doctors and consultants available to parents and carers. This considerably speeds up the process of referral and appointments and also has the spin-off effect of improving school attendance, as pupils need less time out of school to attend clinics off-site.

18. All governors have an exceptional understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and share the responsibility for school improvement with the headteacher and staff. Governors have very rigorous arrangements for evaluating the quality of teaching, learning, and the curriculum. The process of looking critically at the school's overall performance is well established.

19. The SDP very effectively sets priorities for school improvement. It is an extremely detailed and comprehensive document that incorporates strategic planning over time and a maintenance plan to renew and approve policies. There is specific planning across school development, curriculum, professional development, resources, assessment and recording. Each section of the SDP has a governor or senior member of staff identified as the person or group of people who will measure its progress, and how successful it has been. The SDP includes an annual audit and commentary by headteacher and senior staff of its overall effectiveness. The SDP also identifies and tries to resolve staff training needs and establishes the connection between high quality teaching and learning and a well-trained workforce.

20. Governors are careful to obtain the best value for money in their purchase of any services. They have regular discussions with and reports from the headteacher about this. The headteacher and school finance administrator also present school budget accounts to the full governing body for their scrutiny and approval. There are efficient financial controls and very good procedures for financial administration. Priorities for spending are determined in the SDP.

21. Very effective use is made of funding from central government. There is extremely good attention given to providing best value in all spending decisions and across all areas of the school's work. The school office provides excellent support to staff and is in the forefront of contact with parents, who are very appreciative of the welcome and help given by office staff.

22. The very high quality of teaching, very good achievement of pupils, very good levels of financial management and the exceptionally strong leadership and management that provides comparatively favourable costs per pupil, lead to the school providing excellent value for money.

The quality of teaching is consistently high and is sustained and promoted by the excellent liaison between teachers and teaching assistants and the extensive staff professional development programme. The excellent relationships within school significantly support pupils' learning. These factors are key to very high overall achievement and progress by pupils.

23. Of the 46 lessons observed, a quarter was excellent, the rest were very good, except for three that were good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is of the same standard across all year groups. Teaching in English, in communication skills and in PSHE was excellent. It was very good in mathematics. In the other subjects seen during the inspection on the basis of a small sample of lessons, teaching was very good in ICT, science, religious education, music and physical education. Teaching involving inclusion and integration is excellent, as is that for specific special educational needs such as autism.

24. The quality of teaching has been sustained at a very high level, and has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teaching is now very good overall and a large proportion shows exemplary practice. There are a various factors that combine to make teaching so successful. Some of these stem from the approach of the whole school to pupil welfare; others depend upon individual qualities of expertise and knowledge amongst teachers. Some depend upon the united approach to teaching taken by all staff.

25. The school sets a high standard of expectation for pupil achievement in whatever they are doing. The entire ethos of the school is about seeking to increase pupils' awareness, understanding and knowledge of the world about them, and it achieves this through its rich and varied curriculum, which actively seeks inclusion for pupils at all levels of ability, and excellent promotion of pupils' SMSC development. Teachers, therefore, have a very solid platform from which to work and consequently very high expectations of pupil participation, behaviour, learning and achievement permeate all lessons.

26. These high expectations are reflected in the exceptionally high quality of planning used by teachers. Lessons are meticulously prepared with great thoroughness and attention to detail, with an excellent choice and range of activities that are presented to pupils. Planning takes account of subject material and curriculum requirements, but also, most importantly, constantly seeks to meet pupil's individual needs. Lesson planning is further supported by the school's other planning, assessment and recording arrangements, so that teachers have access and contribute to individual education plans and arrangements, termly goals, behaviour plans and other associated pupil assessment.

27. Teachers consistently use this information to support the achievement of pupils in a positive manner that further underpins the extensive knowledge and understanding of pupils' needs that teachers bring to their teaching. These qualities combined with very good and often excellent subject knowledge, mean that teaching is always relevant and is closely matched to the varied and often rapidly changing learning needs of each pupil.

28. There is an exceptionally high level of teamwork across the school and in classes. One of the best qualities of the leadership of the school is that it inspires a close working partnership between staff. The best example of this is the very close rapport between teacher and teaching assistant. The school's approach is one of encouraging all staff that work in the classrooms to share the responsibility for teaching and learning.

29. All staff work collaboratively and co-operatively in a seamless approach to teaching which is to the mutual benefit of pupil welfare. This close bond establishes a high order of relationships between staff and those that they have with pupils, which in turn enhances the relationships between pupils themselves reinforcing their positive attitudes to school and to their learning.
30. There is a calm and friendly atmosphere in all classrooms and about the school. Staff possess deep insight into pupils' needs. This includes information about family and siblings, which is often used to help pupils relate to significant events in their lives. Staff treat pupils with respect and with dignity at all times, recognising the uniqueness of the individual.
31. Pupils with special educational needs are exceptionally well taught. They make excellent progress. The quality of the well-adapted National Curriculum and the assessment of pupils' progress are outstandingly good and key factors in pupils' progress.
32. The teachers, in conference with parents and professionals, carefully assess pupils' immediate special needs. Physical problems, communication needs, and PSHE form the basis of attainable specific goals that each pupil works towards each term.
33. Assessment procedures for these and all National Curriculum subjects are exceptionally comprehensive, detailed and precise. As a result, lesson planning can focus exactly on the attainment of individual pupils with the next step in their learning readily apparent. The teaching of pupils with special education needs has a strong and effective multi-sensory dimension that helps them to learn. Well-tried techniques such as Treatment and Education of Autistic and related Communications handicapped Children (TEACCH) and Picture Exchange Communication System - the exchange of picture cards (PECS) help non-vocal and autistic pupils in their learning.
34. The very high quality of the teaching means that the learning of pupils in lessons is very good. Pupils understand the routines of lessons very well and show interest in all that they do. They work hard and sustain concentration for significant periods. This capacity to work for long periods was most noticeable with students at Post 16. Many pupils are able to recognise their own achievements and know how they might improve.
35. All pupils and students make considerable gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. For a few pupils, particularly those with profound and multiple learning disabilities, the new gains in these areas within a lesson may be small. A very small group of pupils have regressive conditions but the rate of regression for these pupils is slowed because of the quality of the teaching and care that they receive.
36. Such a combination of exemplary working practices has the effect of creating a superb learning environment for pupils across the whole school. Further support to this is given to this learning environment by the way in which staff interact and liaise with other professionals such as physiotherapists, speech and language therapists and staff from other external agencies, all of whom make a vital contribution to meeting pupils' individual learning needs.
37. A significant factor contributing to the expertise and knowledge of teachers and teaching assistants is the high quality training that they receive across a range of areas, and the way in which this training is then put into practice. There is an extensive programme of in-service training at the school that is extremely well managed by the deputy headteacher and the co-ordinator for continuing professional development, with the guidance of a professional development committee that has representatives from both teaching and other staff groups.

38. Training is linked very closely to the priority needs of the school as determined in the SDP. All teachers are highly qualified with long experience and very good practice. In addition, two teachers are Advanced Skills Teachers (AST), with exceptional skills and expertise in teaching and the ability to support and advise other teachers.

39. Teachers and teaching assistants have undertaken training programmes for a range of skills and activities that enhance the quality of their teaching. Many of these occur regularly as part of a pattern of twilight sessions each term. Other training is completed externally on specific courses run by local or national training providers. These include, for example, the use of Maketon signing, PECS and TEACCH.

40. Many staff have undergone training through the auspices of central funding for ICT, attaining qualifications through CLAIT (accredited training for use of ICT). This type of training has given huge support to the delivery of the curriculum and in particular to supporting individual needs. Other training is undertaken to help staff acquire or revise skills in meeting pupils' welfare needs. These include for example courses on Lifting and Handling, Aromatherapy, Halliwick swimming technique, and Resources and Behaviour relating to Epilepsy. Particular attention is given to the induction and training of new staff.

41. The net result of these training programmes is that there is a highly skilled workforce at the school that supports the highest achievement of pupils. An example of this is shown in the increased use and knowledge of ICT by staff, which has improved considerably since the previous inspection, and this has had a dramatic impact upon the achievement of pupils.

42. An illustration of the use of ICT to support and to record learning is seen in the very good use of digital photography by staff (and by some pupils) to make a pictorial record a pupil's achievement in the Zig-Zag books (photographic records and examples of pupil's work) which are compiled for parents each term.

43. Teachers and teaching assistants have very good behaviour management skills that they use in the classroom to good effect, especially when coping with the challenging behaviour of some pupils with autism. The result of this is that there are comparatively few incidents of aggressive behaviour or of exclusion.

44. The application by staff to this extended training regime also demonstrates that they are committed and constantly striving to improve or revise their knowledge and skills to the benefit of pupil welfare and to continue to raise the standard of education that is provided.

45. A number of examples of excellent or very good teaching serve to illustrate the qualities described above. A lesson in the Nursery, about creating a musical story, showed high quality collaboration between the class teacher, teacher assistants and specialist music teacher. This established excellent working relationships between staff and fostered those with the children.

46. The planning was highly effective in supporting this very creative session. Staff were consistent in their management of behaviour, use of signing, and praise for children's achievements. Consequently there was excellent learning by children who showed very good listening skills and joined in the signing of 'hello' and 'goodbye'. They clapped their hands and stamped their feet in time to the music, making choices for the music they wished to hear. They understood fast and slow beats in the music.

47. An excellent lesson in English with higher attaining pupils in Years 4 to 7 had a very well planned literacy session with exemplary planning for the individual needs of pupils. There were very clear learning objectives. The teacher's standard of reading the big book "*Who is at the door*" by Jonathan Allen, was both excellent and engaging of pupils' attention. She

used skilful questioning, using signing and speech, eliciting very good responses from pupils, showing that they had understood the storyline and could interpret clues to it from the pictures.

48. The learning of a pupil with visual impairment was well addressed by the use of tactile based activities. The teacher and teaching assistants further held the class attention by dressing-up 'to scare the wolf' and presented specific pieces of dialogue from the story. The whole lesson had a buzz of activity, was challenging, brisk and concluded with an excellent session to check on pupils' recall and learning. Learning and achievement were excellent. Pupils could predict what might happen next in the story and describe characters and events. They used speech and signing to good effect to make themselves understood.

49. An excellent geography lesson for pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities in Years 7 to 9 on the topic 'Our World' combined many elements of the PSHE programme as well as engaging pupils' literacy skills. There were excellent relationships between staff and pupils and a very good balance of the use of praise and of challenge. The lesson was highly organised with very good use of resources that were attractive and accessible. There was a lively interaction between staff and pupils. As a result of this combination of high quality features, excellent learning occurred in social as well as communication skills by pupils.

50. Pupils were aware of the goals set by staff. A particularly strong feature of the lesson was the encouragement of pupils to do things for themselves. At the start of the session each of the pupils was given a small task to complete, reading a dinner menu, collecting numbers and so on.

51. The use of PECs by staff was most effective as was the management of the behaviour of a pupil with autism who integrated very well into the whole class session. The teaching placed particular emphasis on encouraging pupils to treat one another with respect. Pupils could name one another and communicate 'thank you's' and show appreciation for the effort made by other pupils.

52. In a lesson at the annexe with higher attaining student's aged 16-19, the teacher planned a highly effective session involving students in the Team Enterprise Programme as part of the school's involvement with the Education Business Partnership. This was an extraordinarily engaging session in which the preparation and opportunities presented created dynamic learning from every student.

53. The extremely high quality of teaching and commitment by all staff to raising standards has meant that achievement and progress is very good across the school and excellent at Post 16 (Year 13). It is exceptionally good in English, particularly for communications skills, speaking, listening, signing and use of PECs.

54. All pupils are very well supported by the National Literacy Strategy, which has been introduced very effectively. For example, by Year 6, pupils identify initial letter sounds, sort picture words, and complete a lotto game based on story they have heard. They appreciate and follow a story from a Big Book using the pictures as clues. Profound and multiple learning disability (PMLD) pupils can acknowledge greetings by staff using a Big Mac electronic communicator. By Year 13, students can write simple sentences about their work experience placement. They listen to and follow instructions about safety at work.

55. Achievement is very good in mathematics, where the use of the National Numeracy Strategy by staff has promoted pupils' skills particularly in mental arithmetic. By Year 6, pupils can count to 10 using a number square and recognise some number patterns to help

them count in two's. They can match shapes and have the concept of *big* and *little*. By Year 11, pupils can recognise coins up to £1 and understand addition of money. By Year 13, students can use money to buy a cup of coffee at a café, and understand about counting the change.

56. By Year 6, pupils are making excellent progress in PSHE. This progress is sustained through to Year 13.

57. Achievement and progress are also very good in science and ICT, religious education, music and physical education. There was insufficient evidence from lesson observations to make a judgement of achievement and progress in the remaining subjects.

58. In 2001, external accreditation for students 16-19 included four students achieving Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Awards; 15 students attained grades in the ASDAN Towards Independence awards (a nationally recognised programme of study for students with learning difficulties); 13 pupils took part in the British Trampoline Federation Awards gaining Levels 1-4; seven pupils achieved success in the ASA Swimming awards for distance swimming or water skills. These are very creditably successes and compare very favourably with pupils and students in similar schools.

59. In addition, the schools own figures on achievement and progress are continually analysed by a multi-disciplinary staff team, and inspectors have verified these results. Each term, each individual pupil's progress is measured by analysis of individual education plan (IEP) targets. Staff then agreed an overall progress rating. Twenty-five per cent of pupils achieved an average of very good progress or above for the previous three terms. Eight-six per cent of pupils achieved an average of good progress or above during the same period. Eighty per cent of pupil progress objectives were achieved during 2001.

60. Every pupil has a number of IEP targets (goals) that are discussed with parents at the beginning of a term, and evaluated and sent to parents at the end of the term. Staff set some 390 goals altogether, each term. The latest rate of fully achieved goals stands at 55 per cent. The rate for partially achieved is 36 per cent. This rate represents very good progress, as the goals set are very challenging.

61. Pupils make consistently very good progress at each Key Stage. This is shown by an analysis by inspectors of Annual Reviews, Transitional Reviews and Annual Reports, individual education plans, termly goals, pupil Zig-Zag books, National Record of Achievement Profiles, and the many certificates and awards given by the school.

62. For example, internal awards are given across many areas of achievement in music, horse riding, water skills, world experiences. During an Achievement Assembly in the week of inspection, a pupil with profound and multiple learning disabilities was presented with the school's '*Worker of the Week Award*'. Parents at the meeting with inspectors remarked upon their child's progress saying they were delighted with it, and commented that they had not expected their child to make such exceptional progress when they first joined the school.

Personal social and health education is given very high priority within the curriculum and is highly successful in promoting pupils' personal development, particularly in their communication and social skills.

63. The curriculum for PSHE is excellent. There is a detailed policy and scheme of work that is followed rigorously for each department of the school. The school regards PSHE as a key curriculum area alongside communication skills and numeracy.

64. The school timetable, therefore, reflects this approach and is skilfully planned with every opportunity taken to make formal lessons in PSHE, whilst at the same time not detracting from time for the subjects of the National Curriculum. For instance lessons are scheduled daily for all pupils aged five to sixteen, before morning break and either before or straight after lunch.

65. Lunchtime is also used very much as a time for PSHE and there is careful individual planning by staff to help pupils in their eating and social skills. Younger pupils up to age 16, have *circle time* or similar times for quiet reflection and to promote social interaction and personal development. Older pupils at Post 16 have larger elements of PSHE built into their timetable specifically to build their confidence, promote their life skills and their independence.

66. These planned opportunities represent exemplary provision and are a powerful combination that raises pupils' levels of learning and achievement considerably across not only PSHE, but also in other subject areas. Staff view PSHE as complementary to much of what takes place in the rest of the curriculum, and that in fact without the support of PSHE to develop the social, communication and life skills of pupils, their approach to other subjects would be far less effective. There is scarcely a part of the school day that is not recognised as an opportunity to further the progress of teaching and learning in PSHE.

67. In a *Circle Time* lesson for pupils in Years 4 to 6, pupils could recall the charity activities they had undertaken during the day when they had sorted arrange of saleable items and put them into to bags and then delivered them to the charity shop. Pupils received school 'star awards' from their teacher for their efforts, and celebrated those of others.

68. A superb illustration of learning in a planned PSHE session was observed when eight students held a School Council Meeting at the Further Education annexe. The chairman (a pupil) greeted everyone and shook hands with him or her. They discussed and compared the achievements of all the students in the Post 16 classes.

69. All participants in the meeting were very appreciative of other people's efforts. They listened carefully to what each person had to say, congratulated every speaker and asked sensible questions. They helped to draw up rules for the use of the snooker table and discussed how they could keep their common room and kitchen area clean and tidy. They

held a lottery and then concluded their meeting with a moment of quiet reflection. Pupils learnt skills of self-confidence, social interaction, and how to behave in a formal meeting.

70. There were numerous examples of an exceptional level of planning by staff for PSHE in the preparation for mealtime and the eating of lunch by pupils. Exemplary teamwork was present at all times, for example, staff assisting PMLD pupils by liquidising food and performing small medical tasks. As a result pupils responded well and co-operated fully with staff and could carry out simple tasks themselves such as washing hands and many could use the toilet with minimum support.

71. In other mealtime sessions for higher attaining pupils of all ages as part of the PSHE programme, there was excellent use of PECS and signing by pupils to help them make choices about cutlery and food. Staff ensured that each pupil's IEP was followed.

72. Careful attention was given to the seating arrangements to facilitate both support to each pupil by staff as required, but also a partnership with another pupil. This resulted in a very pleasant dining room atmosphere in which pupils were achieving success in developing their eating, communication and social skills. There was an obvious effect on behaviour at these times, which was always excellent.

73. Post 16, PMLD and autistic students successfully take part in a weekly coffee-shop activity set up by staff in their classroom as part of their social relationships training within the PSHE programme. They learn to associate with pupils and staff who visit the coffee shop as customers, and some help with simple tasks in running the coffee shop.

74. Higher attaining Post 16 students take part in careers education lessons as part of their work for the ASDAN Towards Independence course. They learn, for instance, to use effective communications that they will need in everyday interactions such as listening carefully to what other people say, and following instructions. Non-verbal students made excellent progress through using PECs and by signing.

75. In the Senior School department, pupils in Years nine to eleven take part in work related learning activities. This involves them in undertaking jobs that are relevant to the work of the class, such as helping to lay tables for junior or senior lunch, making drinks, washing up, running the morning café. Pupils enjoy these tasks and carry them out successfully and take great pride in their accomplishments.

76. Several pupils have specific work experience placements in school. For example, an autistic pupil works for several hours each week alongside the school caretaker and helps him to undertake simple maintenance and repair tasks. The caretaker reported to inspectors that the pupil had only started work experience this term but was already confident in his use of certain tools and understood basic safety rules.

77. Another senior pupil is the Senior Student, elected by all the other pupils. These elections are conducted formally with every pupil given the opportunity to vote. The Senior Student has certain duties to perform, such as helping to give out achievement awards in assembly, and has a weekly meeting with the headteacher to negotiate these. This teaches very good social and communication skills to the Senior Student, and helps all pupils to gain an understanding of living in a community.

78. The school organises a number of very successful residential visits in which pupils take part in a range of activities. These are designed to reinforce their independence and social skills. The marvellous digital photographic record by staff (and pupils) of these visits and activities, made into displays in classroom and corridors and also used in Zig-Zag books, serves to record and to remind pupils of their achievements and to inspire others.

79. Two after-school clubs, one a percussion band and the other a youth club, afford excellent opportunities for older pupils and students to promote their communication skills and social interaction with other students and adults. Unfortunately because of the distance that many pupils live from the school, the school and parents find it difficult to support more of these after school activities.

Opportunities for inclusion both on and offsite are exceptional.

80. The programme of inclusion and integration in the school is of a high quality and makes a direct contribution to the learning, achievement and progress of many pupils. There is an excellent policy. This embraces the principle of educational access and the recognition and celebration of pupils who have diverse needs.

81. Inclusion is a clear priority within the SDP in terms of providing the opportunities, funding and staffing to make it work.

82. The timetable is carefully constructed to facilitate the inclusion of individuals into alternative activities to support pupils' learning. Profound and multiple learning disability (PMLD) and autistic pupils are taught alongside other pupils for significant parts of their timetable and join in activities such as, physical education, swimming, assembly and meal times. This fosters their social development and communication skills.

83. Twelve pupils are successfully integrated into their local neighbourhood school or college. For example, one pupil integrates successfully with a local primary school class for one afternoon each week. He wears the uniform of the receiving school, and is made very welcome by the other pupils who enjoy having him. An IEP is produced just for this exercise. The assigned teaching assistant, class teachers, and headteachers of both schools liaise exceptionally well with one another, and with parents, to ensure the success of this integration.

84. A pupil from another local primary school is included on a weekly basis in a class at Glyne Gap. Four classes integrate with peer groups in different neighbourhood schools at least weekly. Three groups of pupils from different mainstream schools join Glyne Gap pupils at least weekly, for swimming, for example.

85. Various numbers of students from the local secondary schools and college of further education undertake work experience placements or do voluntary work in the school on a regular basis.

86. A number of students from Glyne Gap have vocational work experience placements in the local community. These placements are with local supermarkets, riding schools, horticultural centres, or colleges of further education.

87. A 19-year-old student has recently begun a link-placement at a local college of further education. He has already made good progress in learning the difference between school lessons and those at a college, where he is associating with a wider age range of students on a catering course in a more adult environment than that of school. He was able to show that he could follow instructions to make lasagne, when helping the chef and fellow students to prepare a lunch for forty other students. He was calm and very positive about his experiences and stated that he enjoyed being at the college.

88. The school used funding provided, as a result of it attaining Beacon Status (A DfES initiative to recognise pupil achievement) in 1998, to set up a series of initiatives with local schools around the concept of inclusion/integration. This is known as the GAP Project. An indicator of its success is that the local education authority (LEA) has since taken over many of the principles and the organisational role for this work.

89. Several staff from Glyne Gap give advice and support to local schools on integration, class and behaviour management and the development of language skills. There is a fortnightly liaison meeting with six primary schools. Many of these schools use the Glyne Gap P-Scales as part of their assessment procedures for special needs pupils. There are regular joint training sessions for staff. This work enables the school's aims for inclusion to be realised.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

There are no areas of immediate concern to inspectors. The school nevertheless should endeavour to maintain the priorities for development it has identified in the school development plan in order to sustain and raise still further the very high standards that are already present. For example, the work to extend the use of P Scales for the measurement of pupils' achievement is an extremely significant development. It is not yet completed and does not give the information on progress in all subjects in a way that can be analysed and used to predict trends. The school should also continue to review current practice to further improve its provision, including its approach to homework.

90. The school has established clear priorities for development in its SDP. These should be addressed thoroughly to sustain the rate of school improvement, and in particular, the high levels of performance and success of pupils.

91. The achievement of pupils is very strongly supported by the high quality of record keeping and assessment that is kept in the school. The school has a range of very good methods for measuring pupils' achievement and progress, for example, individual education plans. However, it is the introduction of the use of P-Scales that has given teachers a much more accurate and reliable means of measurement.

92. Together with its partners in the local special school consortium, the school has been evaluating the use of the P-Scales and ways of refining their descriptions of pupils' progress and how teachers should apply them in the classroom. Revised and extended versions of the P-Scales have been produced by the consortium for many of the key subject areas such as English, mathematics, ICT and PSHE. These have particular relevance to pupils with profound and multiple learning disabilities as they break down the curriculum into the small steps necessary for them to achieve in order to move their learning forward.

93. A great deal of work is being conducted to evaluate the use of the P-Scales, for example, the electronic storage and retrieval of the information. However, there is still some way to go before the school has sufficient data to be able to draw conclusions about overall performance of pupils in the school and to be able to use this information to set challenging targets to bring about further whole school improvement. Once completed, however, the school's approach to assessment using the P-Scales should become a

powerful instrument for the measurement and comparison of performance by pupils of all ages and abilities.

94. A minor area for improvement surrounds the perception of a few parents about homework. They feel that they do not have sufficient information about it, and want a more formal approach to homework. The school works very closely with parents and there is a lot of joint work between teachers and parents to support pupils' learning. For example, the very good use of home-school books, and the involvement of parents in goal setting each term. Parents may request homework, and the teachers are always happy to comply. There is scope, however to make all parents aware of the school's approach and expectations regarding homework.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

95. In order to sustain and extend still further the effectiveness of management and of teaching, the following points for development should be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan, by the governors, headteacher and staff:

- Extend the use of the P-Scales for the measurement of pupil achievement, and use the data to set whole school and individual pupil targets.
- Review current practice to improve the school's approach to homework.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	46
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	12	31	3	0	0	0	0
Percentage	26	68	6	0	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one two, percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	96
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	48

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence	%	Unauthorised absence	%
School data	3.5	School data	0

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	91
Any other minority ethnic group	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR–Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	15.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6.3
Average class size	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Education support staff:

YR–Y13

Total number of education support staff	32
Total aggregate hours worked per week	887.5

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	1210558.00
Total expenditure	1229404.00
Expenditure per pupil	12545.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	55,981.00
Balance carried forward to next year	37,135.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

96
43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	86	14	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	24	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	59	33	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	37	10	7	10
The teaching is good.	83	12	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	74	26	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	19	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	76	22	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	76	21	0	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	81	19	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	74	18	0	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	32	2	2	12