



# Castlegreen Community School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 108878  
**LEA** Sunderland  
**Inspection number** 278069  
**Inspection dates** 7 November 2005 to 8 November 2005  
**Reporting inspector** David Smith

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Craigshaw Road
<b>School category</b>	Community special		Hylton Castle
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 19		Sunderland, Tyne and Wear
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 5535335
<b>Number on roll</b>	155	<b>Fax number</b>	0191 5535338
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mrs Helen Graham
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	1 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 19	<b>Inspection dates</b> 7 November 2005 - 8 November 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 278069
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

This is a large special school. It has 155 boys and girls aged between 11 and 19 years. Some 115 pupils have moderate learning difficulties and 40 are experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A very high percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals and 23 are in public care. Few pupils are from minority ethnic groups or speak English as an additional language.

## **Key for inspection grades**

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Castlegreen gives its pupils in Years 8 to 11 a satisfactory education. This matches the school's own evaluation of its effectiveness, but the self-evaluation is not consistently effective. The pupils are happy at the school, behave well and their personal development is good. Parents are very satisfied with the education and care provided. There are good opportunities for pupils to take part in and enjoy vocational courses. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in other subjects and their achievement in art and design is good.

The senior managers are keen to lead improvements and are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and has dealt with most of the areas that needed improvement. However, there is a continuing weakness in the effectiveness of the coordination of some subjects. The external accreditation available in Years 10 and 11 is not challenging enough for some pupils. Also, too few opportunities are provided to use information and communication technology (ICT) in other subjects. The capacity for further improvement is satisfactory. The middle management role is not strong enough. Value for money is satisfactory.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Provide training and time for subject coordinators to monitor and improve the quality of teaching and learning across the school.
- Increase pupils' access to ICT in other subjects, improving training for staff and the ICT resources in classrooms.
- Provide more challenging external accreditation to meet the full range of pupils' abilities in Years 10 and 11.

## Achievement and standards

### Grade: 3

#### Grade for sixth form: 2

It is not appropriate to compare the standards of pupils' work with all schools nationally. Achievement is satisfactory for pupils in Years 8 to 11. Achievement in Years 8 and 9 is variable, due to inconsistencies in staff's expectations. The performance of some pupils in their national tests at the end of Year 9 shows that they have the potential to study general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) courses but, although achievement in Years 10 and 11 is satisfactory, overall there is a lack of challenge in the courses for higher ability pupils. Literacy is developed well and numeracy is satisfactory. However, too little use is made of ICT in other subjects to extend pupils' learning. Pupils and students make good progress towards challenging personal targets. They make particularly good progress in art and design and achieve well. The school ensures that all groups of pupils, for example, those in public care, make adequate progress.

Post-16 achievement is good. The wide range of external accreditation at post-16 is carefully matched to students' abilities and, as a result, they achieve well. In an English lesson, for example, students were inspired and made outstanding progress in analysing and commenting on the images in a poem. Parents overwhelmingly agree that their children are making good progress.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral and social development is good overall, rather than outstanding as judged by the school in their own evaluation. Attendance, for example, is good post-16 but is only satisfactory in Years 8 to 11. Moral development is taught particularly well and expectations of behaviour are high. Pupils are, in general, polite and considerate. Their attitudes and behaviour are good and exclusion is rare. Effective action is taken to reduce bullying and racism.

Meal times are positive social events but the short break restricts opportunities for extra-curricular activities. However, the extensive range of residential visits is a strength and, in particular, helps boost social development. Pupils' self-confidence and respect for others are promoted effectively and relationships are good. Students thoroughly enjoy taking part in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme and this encourages them to become mature young people.

Cultural development is good. For example, in art and design, pupils work in the styles of other cultures and, in particular, enjoyed their study of Islamic architecture. A high priority is placed on developing a generally safe environment and to limit, for example, the dangers of movement between the two sites.

The school council makes a positive contribution to school life. Healthy lifestyles are promoted. For example, pupils are encouraged to exercise regularly and the school council is discussing increasing healthy options on the lunch menu. Work-related learning and vocational courses provide good opportunities to prepare pupils for achieving economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

##### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall for pupils in Years 8 to 11. It is good post-16 rather than satisfactory as judged by the school. Pupils enjoy their lessons and, where they make particularly good progress, for example, in art and design, teaching is enthusiastic, well informed and has very high expectations. Inspired teaching encourages post-16 students to make excellent progress in their GCSE English course. The effective management of pupils' behaviour is a strength of teaching across the school. Literacy skills are effectively promoted in other subjects and pupils are

increasingly confident in the accurate use of correct terms, for example, in naming the components of a car. The use of assessment is satisfactory and the school is developing its capacity to track pupils' progress to set more challenging targets.

Sometimes work set is not matched to pupils' abilities; as a result, they become restless and their achievement is unsatisfactory. The contribution of the learning support assistants is variable. Where it is good they boost pupils' learning. At other times their impact is limited and pupils are not fully challenged to make the best of their abilities.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

The quality of the curriculum and other activities for pupils in Years 8 to 11 is satisfactory rather than good as judged by the school. The curriculum for pupils in Years 8 and 9 meets statutory requirements including the provision of careers education. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have individual timetables and staff ensure that they have the correct balance of subjects. However, the higher ability pupils do not have access to sufficiently challenging external accreditation courses and, as a result, their achievement is satisfactory rather than good. Some pupils have the ability to study these courses in Years 10 and 11 rather than waiting until they are older. Appropriate courses are provided to educate pupils about sexual health and alert them of the dangers associated with smoking and substance abuse. Pupils have good access to the vocational courses and work-related learning. One pupil, for example, was very pleased with his work placement and commented that he was tired yet happy following his time at work. The school's facilities are used extensively in the evenings for Castlegreen pupils but, more particularly, to educate pupils from partner mainstream schools.

The quality of the curriculum and other activities is good post-16. Each student has a carefully designed timetable that meets their needs effectively. Students respond positively to the challenge of appropriate external accreditation. They have access to an extensive range of vocational opportunities. For example, the school has very good facilities for motor vehicle engineering and hairdressing and access to these courses helps to motivate students from this school and their mainstream partners. Students also attend local colleges, for example, to study horticulture. The work-placement programme is exceptional and develops students' understanding of the challenges of maintaining employment.

Pupils and students are involved in a good range of enrichment opportunities. Enterprise projects help to promote their understanding of the economy and involvement with the HMS Ocean Project makes a major contribution to the richness of the extended curriculum.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

There is a good range of systems to promote a generally safe environment. Pupils and students relate well to staff and have the confidence to discuss issues of concern with

them. Pupils are provided with clear advice on how to improve their behaviour and good behaviour is rewarded. The care, guidance and support for vulnerable pupils are a strength and ensure that they achieve as well as their peers. Pupils' emotional needs and learning needs are well catered for. Health and safety, and risk assessments are in place. Child protection procedures are clear and recent training has kept staff up to date with procedures. Staff have received appropriate training for the management of pupils' behaviour but the recording of physical intervention incidents is not rigorous enough.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Parents have confidence in it. The headteacher works hard to meet the demands on his time and is increasing his delegation of responsibilities to other staff. The senior management team has a good range of skills and provide effective role models for pupils and staff. Their influence helps to develop good teamwork across the school, for example, in improving the leadership of the mathematics department. They also ensure that all pupils have equal access to the curriculum and activities. They face a number of challenges, including the requirement to educate an increasing number of pupils experiencing social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Despite this, their planning provides a clear vision to move the school forward and, in general, the staff share their ambition for continual improvement.

The chair of governors knows the school well and is fully aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors meet their statutory responsibilities and provide adequate support and challenge, overall. Performance management is in place and the outcomes adequately inform professional development. The very high quality accommodation on the senior site helps to provide a stimulating learning environment. There are sufficient staff and resources, overall, and their management contributes to satisfactory value for money.

The quality of teaching and learning is monitored by the senior managers but this role has not yet been devolved to subject coordinators and this limits the effectiveness of their work. Also, weaknesses in staff's attendance slow down school development and limit the capacity for further improvement which is, as a result, satisfactory.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	3	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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9 November 2005

Dear Pupils and Students

Mrs Lock and I thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your school. You were very polite and made us welcome. Thank you for talking to us about your work and activities.

This is what we found out about your school.

The students in post-16 have a good curriculum, make good progress with their learning and achieve well.

Your personal development is good and you behave well.

Your opportunities to take part in work experience are exceptional.

You are able to enjoy a wide range of interesting practical courses in school and at colleges.

Your parents appreciate the work the school does.

You make good progress in your literacy skills in other subjects.

We are impressed with your work in art.

I am sure you appreciate the good care and guidance you receive from staff.

Even though we thought your school was satisfactory, we asked your head teacher to improve these things.

We are aware that you work hard and enjoy your work. However, we are suggesting that some of you can do even harder work and, in particular, some pupils in Years 10 and 11 should have the opportunity to sit more challenging exams.

We think you should have more opportunities to use your ICT skills in other subjects.

We understand that teachers are busy, but they need to spend more time helping each other to make lessons better.

I hope that you will continue to work hard, enjoy your learning and help the head teacher and staff make your school good in every way.

David Smith (Lead Inspector)

Annex B