Glenwood School

Inspection Report

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Unique Reference Number	115469
LEA	ESSEX LEA
Inspection number	279602
Inspection dates	22 February 2006 to 23 February 2006
Reporting inspector	Mr. Mike Kell LI

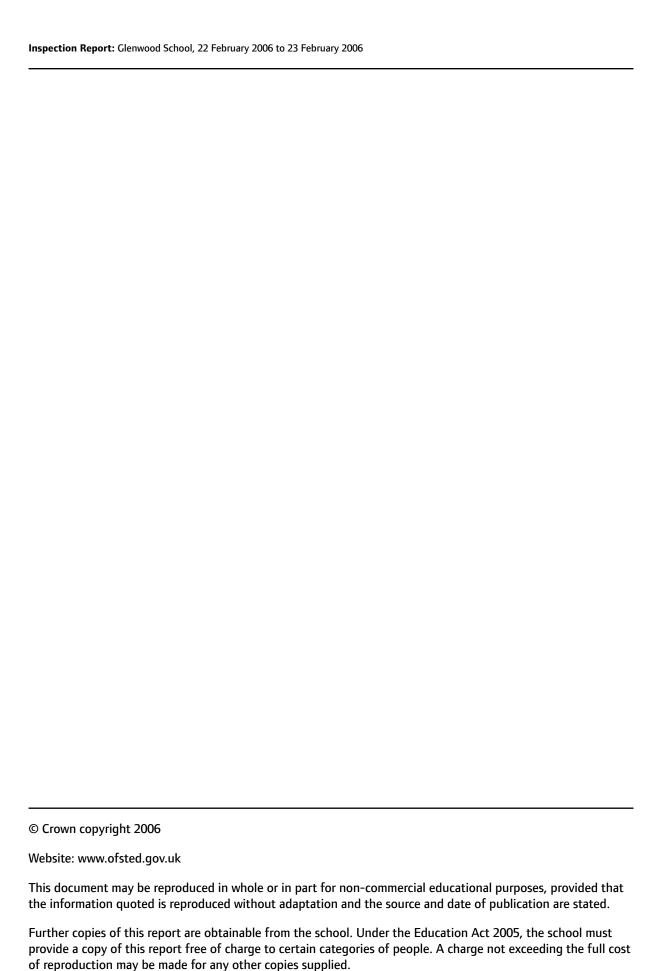This inspection was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	**School address**	Rushbottom Lane
School category	Community special		SS7 4LW
Age range of pupils	3 to 16		
Gender of pupils	Mixed	**Telephone number**	01268792575
Number on roll	97	**Fax number**	01268750907
Appropriate authority	The governing body	**Chair of governors**	Mr.Derek Curtis
Date of previous inspection	25 September 2000	**Headteacher**	Mrs. Judith Salter

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
3 to 16	22 February 2006 – 23 February 2006	279602

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Most pupils live in the Castle Point and Rochford areas of Essex. A few pupils travel from other parts of the county, and a small number live in neighbouring local authorities. Pupils' socio-economic circumstances are average. Pupil numbers have increased by over 20% since the last inspection. There are 10 classes. Pupils are grouped broadly by age, but two classes contain pupils who span a wider age range as they have additional physical and/or sensory needs. Six children are in the Foundation Stage, and there are 19 students in the post-16 department. There are twice as many boys as girls on roll. Because of the nature of their learning difficulties, pupils' attainment upon entry to the school is well below national expectations. All but two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. Most pupils are from a White British background, and the vast majority of pupils have English as their first language.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Glenwood School's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. This finding is different to the view of senior managers, who judged the school's effectiveness to be good. It is certainly highly effective in promoting pupils' personal development and in providing impressive levels of care, guidance and support. Pupils are provided with a satisfactory curriculum, although there is limited use of information and communication technology (ICT) and there are some shortcomings in planning. The curriculum is supported by good enrichment opportunities that include visitors into school and trips off site. Post-16 pupils' curriculum is well matched to their age. While some teaching is good, and sometimes very good, pupils learn satisfactorily overall. Lessons have many good features. Pupils' achievements and progress are satisfactory across the whole school, including the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. Lessons have a number of good features. However, limitations in assessment and recording procedures have an impact on the precision with which teachers can plan future learning. Senior managers are not able to make judgements that are rooted in a detailed analysis of comparative data, in order that all pupils achieve as well as they are capable. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed, but the very high standards identified at that time have not been maintained. Some internal changes partly account for this. The time spent on managing these has meant that senior managers have not been similarly vigilant in monitoring other features of the school's work in a robust, organised and systematic way. They are aware of the improvements needed and remain committed to ensuring that Glenwood School provides the best possible levels of education and care. There is good potential for them to achieve this. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school should do to improve further

- Use assessment data to check that different groups of pupils are doing as well as they are capable and to examine whether there are differences between the progress made by pupils with the same levels of attainment. - Develop the curriculum to extend the use of ICT and to introduce a whole school sex and relationships education programme. - Refine teachers' assessment and recording procedures and their skills in planning more precisely the subject-specific understanding that they want pupils to develop. - Introduce a systematic cycle of monitoring procedures that are to be carried out by senior managers and subject leaders.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Pupils' levels of attainment remain significantly below national expectations as they move through the school. They make satisfactory progress compared with their prior achievements and against their individual targets. The school's reading project, which it introduced in 2004 for a sample of pupils, is beginning to have a positive impact on

developing these pupils' skills in reading text alone, rather than when it is also supported by symbols. Senior managers are becoming increasingly aware that the school does not have sufficiently refined systems for ensuring that all pupils are achieving to their full potential. There is some slackness in the cycle of assessing and recording individual pupils' very small gains in learning, and then articulating precisely what it is anticipated they will learn in future lessons. Consequently, teachers do not always provide challenging activities that very closely match individual pupils' needs and learning support assistants are not always informed about exactly what to monitor and record. Senior managers do not yet analyse comparative data to make sure that all pupils make the progress that might be expected of them. For example, there are no routine comparisons of the relative performance of different groups of pupils or pupils of similar attainment.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils enjoy school. This is evident in the high attendance rate and the greetings and smiles as pupils arrive. Pupils feel happy and well cared for. They behave well and show positive attitudes, and much of this is due to the support they receive and the interactions they have with adults. All aspects of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding are encouraged routinely. Assemblies promote spirituality particularly well, and music is used extensively to create different atmospheres. Adults work successfully to enhance pupils' social awareness and to develop their appreciation of right and wrong. Many subjects promote pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures. The school works hard to improve pupils' knowledge of healthy and safe lifestyles. Consequently, some pupils now have a better understanding of healthy food and an awareness of safety in routine daily activities. However, the absence of a structured programme for teaching sex and relationships education reduces the school's effectiveness in teaching pupils about remaining safe. Pupils are encouraged to participate in the school community, and their contributions should be enhanced when a school council has been established. Close liaison with the Connexions service, local colleges, some local employers and national bodies such as Mencap combine to prepare pupils well for leaving school.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Pupils are taught satisfactorily overall, although they learn very well in some lessons. All lessons are characterised by very high quality relationships and good support for individual pupils. Classrooms are organised and pupils are managed very well. This enables many pupils to follow well-established classroom routines. However, pupils do not make sufficient use of switches and other electronic communication aids. This reduces some pupils' ability to participate fully in lessons. Teachers' planning shows what it is anticipated that individual pupils will learn. In the best lessons, these planned

learning outcomes relate closely to the subject and they are based on detailed evaluation of pupils' prior learning. Consequently, teachers feel confident about giving their pupils challenging activities. Learning support assistants have a clear understanding of the purpose of the activities they are managing. At these times, adults monitor pupils' learning very closely and measure their success in achieving individual learning targets. Pupils' learning is less effective when teachers' planning lacks precision, which in turn is based on limited information from prior assessment. On these occasions, teachers do not focus sufficiently tightly on identifying the subject-specific knowledge or awareness that pupils should develop. Therefore, learning support assistants do not have the direction they need to evaluate and record small gains in subject-based learning as well as pupils' acquisition of basic communication and personal skills.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

Pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. Post-16 pupils follow a good curriculum that is well structured to meet their age and capabilities. Some externally validated accreditation, such as ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network), is available and there is a good focus on work-related learning and developing pupils' social awareness. Good use is made of local community facilities and links with local schools and colleges. Pupils of compulsory school age follow a curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. However, its overall effectiveness is reduced by the accommodation, the limited use of ICT and some ineffective planning. The absence of sensory and soft play areas reduces learning opportunities for pupils with the most complex needs. More opportunities could be provided for pupils to use ICT, including communication aids. Some of the time devoted to the personal, social and health (PSHE) programme is not sufficiently well planned. The programme also suffers from the lack of whole school sex and relationships planning. There is good provision for curriculum enrichment through visits, visitors into school and some lunchtime clubs.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

School managers lead by example in the care and respect pupils are given. This underpins the strength of relationships throughout the school. Staff know the pupils and their families extremely well and parents appreciate the very good support they receive. There are thorough child protection procedures. Partnerships with medical and therapy staff are very significant contributory factors to the care that pupils receive. On the negative side, there are no covered walkways between the main building and many classrooms. Therefore, many pupils have to endure significant discomfort in bad weather. Pupils receive good guidance and support. Staff are beginning to involve them more in understanding how successfully they have learned and what they need to do to improve. Senior staff recognise that this is an area for further development. The school provides pupils with good information about the options

that may be open to them when they leave school. As a result, pupils and their families are able to make informed career decisions prior to pupils leaving school.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

Senior managers are very committed to the school and maximising its effectiveness. This is evident in the externally-conducted review that the school itself commissioned last year. There are some good and innovative features of leadership and management. Senior managers have developed very influential links with other agencies, parents and other schools and colleges. These partnerships make significant contributions to pupils' development and well-being. The school's inclusion in the local authority's 'new model special schools' initiative reflects senior managers' readiness to develop the school further. The school's mechanisms for identifying its priorities are satisfactory, and staff, governors and parents are involved in the process. However, more could be done to display these priorities so that they remain at the forefront of managers' thinking and staff can see the progress being made. The very high standards identified at the previous inspection have not been maintained. Since then, senior managers have absorbed local and national initiatives willingly. Simultaneously, they have managed staff changes and associated professional development requirements efficiently. However, other features of leadership and management have slipped. Although teachers' classroom performance is monitored, this is not always done with sufficient rigour and structure so that the monitoring focuses very precisely on particular features of teaching and learning. A particular shortcoming in management is that assessment data is not being used in any meaningful way. Consequently, the relative progress of different groups of pupils is not tracked, and managers do not compare the achievements of pupils with similar levels of attainment. Managers are aware of the changes they need to implement, and they have the determination and capacity to achieve their aims.

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19

Overall effectiveness

	School Overall	16-19
How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	3	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

	School Overall	16-19
How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards[1] reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

	School Overall	16-19
How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	2	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

	School Overall	16-19
How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

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[1] 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

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

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
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
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
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
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
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
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
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

Thank you for the welcome you gave Ann and I when we visited your school. We would like to tell you about what we learned from our visit about the quality of education you receive. You make sound progress in gaining new knowledge and skills. We thought you behaved very well in lessons and around the school. You work very hard. The adults in your school look after you well and they try very hard to get you ready for leaving school. You enjoy and gain much from the many trips and visitors to school. We have given Judi and Carol some ideas about how they can make your school better. We think that you need to use computers more, and that your teachers need to check very carefully what you have learned. I am sure that Judi and Carol will make these changes so that lessons are even more exciting and fun. We wish you the very best in the future.