



Glenburn Sports College

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 119758
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 280652
Inspection dates 15 May 2006 to 16 May 2006
Reporting inspector Mrs Ruth James HMI

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

Type of school	Secondary	School address	Yewdale
School category	Community		Southway
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Skelmersdale, Lancashire
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01695 724381
Number on roll	838	Fax number	01695 557379
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Cllr Donna Duffy
Date of previous inspection	1 December 1999	Headteacher	Mr Robert Flood

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	15 May 2006 - 16 May 2006	280652

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Glenburn Sports College is a specialist Sports College for 11 to 16 year olds located in Skelmersdale. It is slightly smaller than average. Most of the students are of white British heritage with a very small number from minority ethnic heritages. Very few students have a first language other than English. Most students come from the immediate locality which includes many relatively disadvantaged areas. The proportion of students with additional learning needs is above average and the number with a statement of special educational need is much higher than average.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

Glenburn Sports College is a satisfactory school with many good features. The new headteacher and senior team provide strong and effective leadership. They have focused staff on improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising achievement. Achievement and standards are satisfactory overall. Students achieve good results in vocational courses, but in mathematics progress is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although many lessons are good. Good use is beginning to be made of the wealth of data about students' ability and prior attainment, but the marking of students' work needs to be more focused on helping students to improve. Most students behave well, have positive attitudes and enjoy school. Their personal development is good overall. Sports status has improved the number and breadth of extra-curricular sports opportunities which benefit many. Attendance is improving, partly because of appropriate vocational pathways at Key Stage 4 which meet students' needs. Nevertheless, attendance remains stubbornly below national average despite numerous other initiatives to tackle it. The school cares well for students, and gives particularly good support to those who are vulnerable or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The school's capacity to improve is good. Evidence of improvement can be seen in the improving outcomes of teaching and learning observations, improved attendance, reduced exclusions and the Key Stage 4 curriculum developments. The school's self-evaluation was largely accurate in its analysis. Governance is good.

What the school should do to improve further

- Improve teaching, learning and standards in mathematics.
- Improve the consistency of marking to ensure that students understand what they need to do to improve their work.
- Improve the attendance of the minority of students who do not attend school regularly.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Students' attainment on entry to the school is below average. At Key Stage 3, standards are below average. The proportion of students achieving Level 5 or above improved significantly in English in 2005, but declined in mathematics and science. Students make satisfactory progress overall in English and science during Key Stage 3. Progress in mathematics is unsatisfactory.

At Key Stage 4, the proportion of students attaining five or more A* to C grades at GCSE has improved, but standards remain below average. Students do particularly well in GNVQ intermediate ICT. Students also do better in GCSE science and English literature than in their other GCSE subjects, and boys do better in physical education. The proportion of students gaining five A* to C grades including English and mathematics is well below the national average and is particularly low for boys. Overall

progress in English is satisfactory, but it is unsatisfactory in mathematics. Generally, students who started at the school with average attainment do better than those with higher or lower Key Stage 2 test results. The proportion of students who do not get any GCSEs is about average, but many of these students do achieve other certificates and awards. These include sport and fitness, and key skills awards. Most students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make at least satisfactory progress and some do very well.

Taking into account prior attainment and contextual factors which can affect performance, students make good progress overall by the time they complete their education at the school. The school is in the top 10% of all schools nationally using this value added measure. However, the unsatisfactory progress of students in mathematics means that achievement and standards are satisfactory overall.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

The vast majority of students appreciate school, behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. The challenging behaviour of a small minority of students can occasionally adversely affect learning. The school has many strategies in place to deal with inappropriate behaviour, and there are fewer exclusions than in previous years. Many students participate in extra-curricular class activities, particularly in sporting activities, including dance. Attendance is below the national average, despite strenuous efforts by the school which have led to year on year improvement. Specialist sports status is used well in the promotion of healthy lifestyles. Students engage in at least two hours of physical activity each week and there is an improving choice of healthy eating options at lunchtime. Students take on responsibility by serving on various school councils, organising events and raising money for charity. Vocational and enterprise education and work experience placements provide good opportunities for students to develop the personal qualities needed for employment. Students are courteous and relationships with one another and with staff are good.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and many lessons are good. The school now has effective procedures for managers to monitor and evaluate accurately the quality of teaching. A training programme for all teachers, underpinned by a well conceived teaching and learning policy, has increased awareness of what constitutes good teaching and of the different ways in which students learn. Consequently, the proportion of good teaching is increasing, and weaker areas are supported to improve.

In most lessons, students are set clear objectives so they know what they are to learn and how it links to previous and future work. They make progress by means of tasks and activities which are matched to their capabilities and take account of their varied

learning styles. Teachers' clear explanations, often supported by visual illustration or practical demonstration, help their understanding of ideas and techniques. In the best lessons, teachers' expectations are higher, the pace is faster, students at all levels are really stretched and there are more opportunities for independent learning. Progress is restricted where teachers do not make regular checks on learning or where teacher-led activities predominate, with students passive for long periods.

The school has rightly identified assessment as an area for development. There are inconsistencies in students' awareness of their targets, and in the effectiveness of teachers' marking. Students do not always get enough guidance on how to improve their work.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good overall, with a number of particular strengths. The differing needs and aspirations of students in Years 10 and 11 are met through the provision of curriculum 'pathways' that allow them to follow various combinations of courses, taken both in and out of school. Core subjects can be supplemented by additional academic or vocational courses or by a variety of activities such as work placement, Key Skills, the Duke of Edinburgh Award and working in local primary schools. These students say they are much more motivated by a curriculum which accredits their achievements, develops their personal skills and improves their employability. All pathways ensure that students are involved in work related learning.

The variety and quality of extra-curricular and enrichment activities are much appreciated and enjoyed by the high proportion of students who participate and whose personal development is enhanced as a result. In particular, opportunities for involvement in sport and the creative arts are very good. The provision of additional activities for gifted and talented students has enabled the school to meet its Excellence Cluster targets for GCSE A* and A grades in the last two years.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The school is a caring and supportive environment. Policies and procedures to safeguard students are in place. These are understood and used by staff. Students feel safe and know who to turn to for help when required. Systems for risk assessment and for ensuring safe working practice are thorough. Very effective partnerships with outside agencies and very good support systems in school provide good care for vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Guidance on options and careers helps students make informed decisions about their futures. The school works hard at raising students aspirations. Good links with partner institutions smooth the transition at each stage of the students' education. The systems for tracking and guiding students' personal development and welfare are good but they are less effective in tracking academic progress. Many students know how well they are doing but some need more help to understand how they can improve and meet their individual targets.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The headteacher provides strong leadership and a clear vision for the school. The recently reconstituted senior team is very effectively helping him to convert this vision into reality with a constant drive to improve teaching and standards. Staff morale is good and teachers speak enthusiastically about the greater clarity in the roles and responsibilities of senior and middle managers. The acquisition of Sports College status has improved provision for the school's own students and those in its partner schools. The programme is well regarded locally. It is well led and managed and is continuing to raise standards and opportunity, particularly in physical education. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well. They monitor its performance effectively.

The school runs smoothly on a day to day basis and the atmosphere for learning is good. Development planning is good. It has a high profile and sets a clear agenda for change and improvement. It seeks to build on sound practices and raise achievement where it is not high enough, for example, in mathematics. Managers at all levels understand clearly what needs to be done to secure further improved outcomes. Evidence of these is emerging successfully through thorough monitoring and evaluation. Teachers say that challenging behaviour is now tackled much more effectively than previously, and there is clear evidence of rising standards. Managers and teachers are now making better use of the wealth of data on attainment and ability. The school gives satisfactory value for money rather than good, because there is currently still room for improvement in teaching, learning and achievement.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

Inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

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	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	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

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	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

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	3	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	4	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	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

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?	2	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

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?	2	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	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

Alexandra House

33 Kingsway

London

WC2B 6SE

T 0207 421 6800

F 0207 421 6707

Ofsted helpline

08456 404045

The School Council

Glenburn Sports College

Yewdale

Southway

Skelmersdale

Lancashire

WN8 6JB

16 May 2006

Dear Students

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed visiting Glenburn Sports College. We were able to visit lessons and to talk to a number of you and to the staff. We also looked at the results of questionnaires sent in by your parents. The majority of your parents are supportive of the school.

The school's GCSE results have improved, although they are still below average. Many of you do well in GNVQ Intermediate ICT. Most of you make good progress in many areas during your time at the school. However, your progress in mathematics is not as good as it should be. You need to try especially hard in mathematics to learn as much as possible and achieve the highest grades that you are capable of. Too few boys get five GCSE grades A* to C including both English and mathematics, so boys need to work hard to catch up with the girls. Some of you benefit from other qualifications and awards which help to show what you have achieved.

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although many of your lessons are good. You enjoy lessons where there are plenty of activities for you to participate in, especially when you find these challenging. Your progress is assessed and monitored but some subjects do not do this as well as others. We have asked the headteacher to work with staff to do more to help you understand how well you are doing and how you can improve your work in all your subjects.

You have a good choice of pathways and courses at Key Stage 4, including GCSEs, vocational courses, work placements and other activities. The school provides a good range of interesting extra-curricular activities for you, especially in sports, and a lot of you participate in these. The school cares for you well, especially those who have particular needs.

Most of you enjoy being at school. You behave well and are polite. Attendance at your school is not as good as it should be. Many of you do attend regularly, but some do not and they miss

out on important work. All of you need to attend school regularly to ensure that you learn as much as you can. Your parents can help in this.

Your headteacher knows what he wants to do. He has worked hard with the staff to make improvements and more are planned. We feel confident your headteacher and staff can make your school even better. We are sure that you are willing to put in the hard work, which will help to improve your opportunities when you leave school. We wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely

Ruth James HMI

Lead Inspector