

Glebe School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	101700
Local Authority	Bromley
Inspection number	286151
Inspection dates	26–27 June 2007
Reporting inspector	Greg Sorrell

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	177
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs J Armstrong
Headteacher	Mr K Seed
Date of previous school inspection	13 May 2002
School address	Hawes Lane West Wickham BR4 9AE
Telephone number	020 8777 4540
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

Glebe gained specialist special school status for Cognition and Learning in September 2006. It originally only provided education for students with moderate learning difficulties but now these students represent approximately three quarters of the roll. The intake is now more complex and other special educational needs represented in the school include severe learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder and behavioural, social and emotional needs. All have statements of special educational needs. The majority of students are of white British origin and other ethnic groups include black African, black Caribbean, Asian and a number of students from traveller backgrounds. 13 students have English as an additional language and ten students are and;quot;looked afterand;quot; by the local authority. There are nearly twice as many boys as girls on roll. From September 2007 it will provide education for students who are post 16. It has received awards for its sports and careers provision, in addition to recognition as a Healthy School. It is in the process of being re-awarded Investors in People status.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Glebe is an excellent school. The students' progress in relation to their starting points is excellent. The students enjoy being at school and this helps them to achieve very well in national tests and gain a wide range of accreditation in courses including GCSE and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network. (ASDAN). The students' personal development is outstanding and this prepares them well for life after school. Their behaviour is good and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The school ensures that all students know about staying healthy and how to look after themselves and the environment.

Teaching and learning are good. The teachers and teaching assistants know the students well and plan relevant lessons with a very strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and practical experience across the very rich curriculum. Excellent use is made of the school's grounds to support learning, particularly in the development of ecological and economic awareness. Significant refurbishment and extension to the premises enhance the existing provision for learning.

The overall quality of care, guidance and support provided for students is excellent. School procedures and very effective liaison with external agencies ensures all students' welfare is appropriately safeguarded. Teachers' use of assessment is good. Careers education and guidance in addition to significant work related learning and enterprise education prepare the students very well for leaving school. Students benefit well from a good range of personalised intervention. These include speech and language therapy, literacy support and creative experiences including drama that improve their communication skills, and which help them to access all the opportunities provided for them.

Leadership, management and governance are good. The headteacher continues to show excellent leadership and is well supported by the leadership team in maintaining improvement since the last inspection, for example, consistently high results and gaining specialist school status. The school's capacity for further improvement is therefore good. The headteacher and departmental managers have a good understanding of the school's effectiveness and individuals' achievements although there is a need to extend this analysis for all groups of learners. They are preparing appropriately for the provision for post 16 students next term. The school surveys staff, students and parents about their views of what works well and suggested areas for improvement. Parents overwhelmingly endorse the work of the school and welcome the support network enabled by staff.

The governing body gives excellent support on personnel, student welfare and finance issues although their role in systematically evaluating students' achievement requires further development. The school's specialist status work with other partners is highly regarded.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend the analysis of achievement data in relation to students' different special educational needs and include governors more fully in the process.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

The students' achievement is outstanding as a result of consistently good teaching, an excellent curriculum and outstanding care, guidance and support. The standards attained are inevitably

well below average given the nature of the students' special educational needs. However, the students make excellent progress as evidenced by the school's performance alongside the highest achieving schools nationally. The students make excellent progress in relation to their individual academic targets as well as other personal targets in their individual education plans (IEPs.)

In relation to their starting points, Key Stage 3 students achieve well in national tests in English, mathematics and science. Key Stage 4 students achieve very well in accredited courses including GCSE, unit awards and ASDAN life skills. They also achieve very well in work related learning and enterprise education. The school's analysis of achievement data shows no significant difference in achievement between boys and girls or those from different backgrounds or ethnic origin. The analysis of achievement by different special educational need is yet to be fully completed.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Pupils' personal development is outstanding. Their good attendance and behaviour support their very good progress. Students enjoy their learning and take part enthusiastically and maturely in committees, such as the school and eco councils. They have an extremely keen interest in environmental affairs. Their profits from participation in a local farmers' market and their ideas to spend financial awards gained through environmental competitions support their economic awareness particularly effectively. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. They understand that there are different world faiths and others have different beliefs to themselves. They have a very good appreciation of the needs of others, seen in their own sponsorship of a child in Bangladesh. They understand healthy and safe living well. They know, for example, that it is important to wear light clothing and a helmet when cycling and the need for regular exercise. They develop a very good understanding of the world of work through the career guidance and work experience.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching is good. The best is outstanding, for example, in drama where specialist expertise develops the students' abilities in English and particularly their language, communication skills and self confidence. The key features include good subject knowledge, effective planning, high expectations and clear explanations of what is to be learned. All teachers have a good knowledge of literacy and numeracy at appropriate levels. On rare occasions, these features and the typically good pace of lessons are not so evident, due to insufficient opportunities to practise skills. Particularly effective use is made of teachers' specialisms in practical and creative subjects, for example, information and communication technology (ICT), art, music, technology and vocational studies. Visiting specialists from outside the school make a most significant contribution to students' learning in drama and sports.

Individual progress is assessed and monitored carefully. Increasingly, staff make effective use of interactive whiteboards to support learning although opportunities to use ICT in some lessons are missed.

Relationships with students are strong and are strengthened by regular praise and prompt feedback to reinforce learning. Most students know what targets are held for them and understand their approach to learning is assessed and all respond well to this monitoring. The students' attitude to learning is a major influence on how well they do academically and socially. Teaching assistants support learning well. Although they do not routinely plan with teachers, they are adequately briefed before lessons. A number have had additional training and hold responsibilities for working with specific groups of students, including those on the autistic spectrum.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 1

The curriculum is excellent and has many outstanding features including ensuring that students' experience as much inclusion as possible in all school-based and off-site activities as possible. The school continues to focus upon basic skills in literacy and numeracy alongside the students' personal development by the provision of several exciting curricular initiatives. It has maintained the strengths identified in the last inspection.

In Key Stage 4 the curriculum contains a rich vocational emphasis in addition to enabling accreditation at entry level in all subjects and in GCSE English, mathematics, science, art and geography. The schemes of work are supplemented by accredited ASDAN studies and a wide variety of work-related opportunities that promote economic well-being. Opportunities for integrating students are many and include attendance at local schools and a successful link with a local college of further education provides rich social and academic experiences.

Lunch-times activities, weekend and annual residential school journeys for every student are excellent extensions to the curriculum and do much to enable the students to grow in confidence and independence. Excellent use is made of the local community for work related learning such as selling own produce at the Farmers' Market and many experiences with local employers. Staff also make good use of the school's excellent specialist accommodation which will provide even better facilities following completion of the building project.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Staff's very good knowledge of the students supports their social and academic progress very well. Assessment systems are very much improved since the last inspection. Students' progress is tracked very effectively through regular assessments and these are analysed well for individual students, by gender and ethnicity to plan future learning. However, the school's use of achievement data to compare the relative performance of groups with different special educational needs is much less secure. Links with parents are very good and support staff's knowledge of students' needs. Excellent links with professional external agencies, such as social services, counselling and the school nurse, speech and language and specialist counselling ensure excellent support for students' general well-being. The careers provision and work experience are outstanding and support pupils' understanding of future work possibilities and courses they need to attend. Health and safety and child protection arrangements are well considered and ensure students know how to look after themselves. The files on individual students are well maintained and ordered. They provide an easy reference to support individuals' personal and learning needs. Good use is made of students' targets which are readily available to staff and students themselves.

Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school. The parents of students on the autistic spectrum welcome the support network provided. All parents acknowledge that their children enjoy school and feel the school is well led and managed. Several added comments via their pre-inspection questionnaires. These included, 'The staff work very hard and they are supported by an excellent headteacher it's wonderful to see my child grow in confidence my child is now sitting exams only because she's at Glebe it's a family environment.'and;quot;

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The headteacher continues to provide excellent leadership and management. The leadership team provides good support with particular strengths evident in developing the curriculum as a specialist school. The headteacher has identified the need to audit the curriculum to ensure it meets the increasingly diverse and complex needs of the students and the impending sixth form provision. The school is constantly seeking to extend the students by developing exciting curriculum initiatives such as the sustainable development programme and enterprise education. The school has good systems to induct new staff and all benefit from performance management targets focussed on raising the achievement of students. School development planning is comprehensive and involves all staff. Subject evaluation is undertaken by middle managers and in most case these procedures are effective in enabling the school to have a widely based evaluation of the school's performance.

The recently re-structured governing body provides good support. Some governors have particular expertise and this is used to good effect, especially in relation to finance and students' care and welfare. Their role in the school's self-evaluation is developing well, although their overview of achievement requires further development. Financial matters are well managed and appropriately audited. The school is successfully meeting its targets in relation to its specialist school status. For example, the provision of support for vulnerable students in local mainstream schools is well regarded as being effective.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	1
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

Achievement and standards

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

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

5 July 2007

Dear Students

Inspection of Glebe School, West Wickham, BR4 9AE

Thank you for helping me and my colleague, Peter, get to know your school this week and for giving us such a warm welcome. I am pleased to say that you go to an excellent school. There are many outstanding features at Glebe and your achievements and personal development are among them.

The headteacher leads the staff very well and they all work very hard to keep all your lessons just right and to improve the school even more. The teachers and teaching assistants make sure that your lessons help you to learn in lots of different ways. They provide you good lessons that enable you to improve your reading and gain success in a wide range of subjects.

There are lots of things that help you to prepare for leaving school. Things like your school journeys, time at college and exciting enterprise projects. Especially good is the amount of time you spend doing practical activities, for example in sport, music, and art. Your work in geography, eco studies and Spanish also gives you a really good view of the world beyond school and may even help you when you go on holiday! You are able to make your views known and I know you appreciate the improvements being made to your school buildings and grounds. You get on well with the staff and you behave well. This helps everyone to show the right attitude to learning. We could see that you are happy to be at school and your good attendance also shows this. You have lots of lessons, including swimming, games and outdoor education to keep you strong, fit and healthy. Your school meals are especially healthy and, it's clear, tasty too! You obviously enjoy your lessons, especially using computers and practical subjects. I was impressed by the range of produce you had grown in the quadrangle.

I'm asking Mr Seed to do a couple of things. One is to make even better use of the information the school has about your achievements and then to see that the governors are also more closely involved in knowing just how well you do in lessons and at college.

I wish you lots of luck in the future and thank you again.

Yours sincerely,

Greg Sorrell Lead Inspector