

# Glenwood School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	115469
<b>Local Authority</b>	Essex
<b>Inspection number</b>	326203
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 February 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Greg Sorrell

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

The registered childcare, managed by the governing body, was inspected under section 49 of the Childcare Act 2006.

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	100
Sixth form	18
Government funded early education provision for children aged 3 to the end of the EYFS	0
Childcare provision for children aged 0 to 3 years	0
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr John Hunter
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Judith Salter
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	22 February 2006
<b>Date of previous funded early education inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>Date of previous childcare inspection</b>	Not previously inspected
<b>School address</b>	Rushbottom Lane New Thundersley Benfleet Essex SS7 4LW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01268792575

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<b>Age group</b>	3–19
<b>Inspection dates</b>	26–27 February 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	326203

**Fax number**

01268750907

<b>Age group</b>	3-19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Glenwood is a community special school for 100 children and pupils aged 3 to 19 years. The school caters for pupils with a complex range of learning difficulties and/or disabilities, all of whom have statements of special educational needs. Over two-thirds have severe learning difficulties and the remainder have profound, multiple learning difficulties. Significant numbers, up to one third have physical needs and over a third have a diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorder. The school roll is largely White British but other minority groups are present, some of whom require additional English language support. Four pupils are 'looked after children' and there are approximately twice as many boys as girls. The school is due to move into new accommodation in 2013. It works in partnership with local schools and colleges. It has achieved the Intermediate Healthy Schools Award and a local Silver Healthy Eating Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Glenwood is a good school. Some aspects of its work are outstanding. It is effective in meeting its aims and provides a safe, secure and happy environment. Learners thoroughly enjoy their education and their self-esteem and confidence improve considerably during their time there. Outstanding features of the school are the quality of care, guidance and support provided for the pupils and consequently their personal development and well being. The excellent working relationships with external agencies and specialist support, including therapists, have a strong impact on the learners' welfare and the progress they make. The school also works very closely with parents and carers who are wholly supportive of its work, as shown by the school's own surveys and the positive comments from those who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire.

Achievement in the main school is good. Although overall standards are very low because of the extent and nature of learners' special needs, the progress they make is good. On entry, all learners operate at lower 'P' levels, which are the levels that are below the standard National Curriculum levels in schools. However, achievement in the sixth form, where students' gain accreditation within the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network, is outstanding in relation to their starting points. They achieve marked success in a range of modules including independent living, work awareness and information and communication technology (ICT). Many also enjoy successful experiences of further education and supported work placements.

Learners' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects is outstanding. They appreciate the whole school's celebratory assemblies and the opportunities they are given to be actively involved in these. For example, they responded very well to the task of planning a party. Confidence gained in these situations prepares them well for a variety of situations, including, their dramatic performances given for the benefit of the local community. Attendance is good and absence is invariably due to medical needs. Behaviour is outstanding as is their regard for peers in the school community.

Teaching and learning are good overall and outstanding in the sixth form. Teachers and teaching assistants enjoy good relationships and work well together in class although they have few opportunities to share the planning of lessons. There is a good variety of activities with an emphasis on first hand experience. Staff use a wide range of methods to ensure communication is effective at all times. The curriculum takes good account of learners' needs although some opportunities for accreditation are missed in Key Stage 4. Lunch-times are used purposefully to support personal development, and especially to develop learners' ability to eat independently at meal times. Currently, after school activities are not provided, nor are there any residential opportunities such as those enjoyed in the past.

The headteacher and her deputy make a strong team. Leadership and management are good at all levels with clear roles and responsibilities. Systems for tracking learners' academic progress have much improved since the last inspection and the headteacher is rightly involving all other managers in its use. There is a strong ethos promoting achievement and high quality integrated care and education. Good self-evaluation has enabled the school to identify accurately its strengths and areas for improvement. Governors are effective in relation to premises and finance, although they are less involved with learners' progress and curriculum matters. The clear direction set for continued improvement shows there is good capacity to improve further.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

In recent years, all students have continued their studies in further education, training or care placements at the end of their last year and this represents excellent achievement. Occasionally, as a result of the school's provision, some students have also found employment in supported work places. The students achieve accreditation through the National Open College Network and the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network. Excellent teaching ensures successfully completed modules include independent living, work awareness, horticulture, ICT and sport and leisure. The curriculum is outstanding and includes accessing community facilities and local colleges of further education. As a result of excellent care, guidance and support, personal development is of similarly high quality. Students' maturity and self confidence are apparent across a range of different settings such as, for example, with those students who took part in the production of 'The Lion King' for the community. Leadership and management are outstanding. There is a clear direction and purpose, including at whole school level, to promote high quality provision and improved prospects for students after school.

## **Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

### **Grade: 2**

The provision for the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. The leadership, curriculum and teaching are good and the children are organised into teaching groups that carefully match their needs. As a result they make good progress in all the areas of learning and development. Music and singing are used well to teach children to listen, take turns, learn routines and enjoy themselves. Individual planning by the team of therapists and teachers to meet children's physical, emotional, behavioural and learning needs are excellent and parents share closely with the school in supporting their children to develop in these areas. As a result the children make excellent progress in their personal and social development which prepares them for learning. Assessment is thorough and the presenting of children's achievements is exceptional. Relationships and the management of children's challenging behaviour are also excellent.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

- Increase the amount of accreditation available for all learners, especially in Key Stage 4.
- Improve arrangements for teachers and assistants to jointly plan lessons.
- Ensure that governors monitor learners' progress and their curriculum as well as they support the school in all other areas.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Achievement in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good. This continues in the main school and is excellent in the sixth form. Standards are well below national expectations when children first enter the school because of their complex learning difficulties. As pupils move through the school they make outstanding progress in their personal development due to excellent multi-disciplinary assessment and planning which prepare them for learning. There is no significant difference in the achievement of different groups of pupils because teaching groups and individual plans are carefully matched to individual needs. Pupils also make good progress in meeting challenging targets in their individual education plans.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Personal development is outstanding. Relationships throughout the school are excellent which results in learners feeling safe and secure. They make excellent progress in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Learners thoroughly enjoy lessons, are well motivated and behaviour is excellent. Those who find concentration more difficult are outstandingly well managed by staff. Parents praise the school for its caring and friendly approach which helps their children to become as independent and confident as possible. Learners respond well to many opportunities to socialise and they clearly care for each other's welfare as shown, for example, in their spontaneous offers to become 'sighted guides' for those with visual impairment. School Council representatives discuss issues such as lunch-time activities, how to save energy at school and drama productions for the wider community. The very good personal, social and health education programme teaches learners how to keep safe and healthy. For example, widening their choice of food to include healthy options. Many benefit from the excellent programmes to support independent eating.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have high expectations of themselves and the learners. The staff have a good knowledge of the subjects they teach as well individual's likes and dislikes and how these may affect their attitudes to peers, adults and learning. This ensures that classrooms are purposeful learning environments where pupils are confident to learn. Attractive and informative displays adorn classrooms and corridors. Skilful use of picture-exchange, symbols and signing ensures communication is effective. Teaching resources are used imaginatively to provide first hand practical experiences that consolidate learning. For example, some older students learn about keeping themselves healthy through sensory experiences such as shaving, washing and massage. At all times, staff are sensitive to learners' needs and dignity. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together, although opportunities for them to plan lessons and learning activities in a collaborative manner are limited.

Teachers' management of time is very good and learners move from one activity to the next with minimum disruption. Where possible, learners record their own progress, for example, in physical education and this helps them to understand how well they are doing. In preparation for life after school, learners respond well to working out budgets for everyday living. Teachers make best use of the accommodation despite the limits posed by the absence of a specialist food technology room, sensory provision and soft play areas. The work of therapists makes a significant impact on learners' access to the curriculum.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of the curriculum is good. The school has worked hard to ensure the curriculum is relevant to the diverse range of special educational needs. The school has recently adopted a new planning framework for the main school and is seeking to develop the Key Stage 4 curriculum so that it provides increased progression to the studies in the sixth form. The new

planning format is effective although the revised content for Key Stage 4 is still at an early stage, for example, in relation to vocational programmes and accreditation. Attendance at local colleges of further education is limited to sixth form students. Good attention is given to learners' special educational needs, particularly through the provision of sensory experiences, and regular opportunities are provided to work in pairs and small groups. This promotes their ability to work with others and assists their personal development. Good opportunities are provided to develop learners' literacy, numeracy and ICT skills in all subjects. Staff training to help them support learners with autism has also had a positive impact on the structured learning for other groups. The provision of activities during lunch-time adds considerably to their personal development. Appropriate use is made of the local community to enable pupils to develop confidence in different settings.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school is extremely successful in providing all embracing support for learners and their families. The arrangements for care, guidance and support strongly reflect the school's community code, 'Together we will respect, care and make good choices'. Arrangements for safeguarding learners take full account of the most recent legislation. Those with challenging behaviours are well managed due to carefully crafted plans and consistent implementation.

Annual reviews and written academic reports, including those for 'looked after children' are of high quality. Parents' views are recorded, although as yet, there is insufficient provision for the learners' views of how well they have done. Data is used to extensively monitor progress and provide suitable interventions to maximise equality of opportunity. The detailed guidance for staff that encompasses individual personal and support strategies is exemplary. These strategies include physical needs incorporating hydrotherapy, behaviour and eating programmes. Wherever possible the staff work with learners and their families to devise ways in which they can be responsible for personal care and hygiene as another step towards independence.

The school works very closely with other agencies to provide 'joined up' planning to maximum access to learning. Therapists and medical staff integrate their support most effectively. Links with parents are very good and they made many very positive comments about the care and support provided by the staff. Comments included, 'As parents we feel looked after and consulted fully .... a fantastic school .... our child has come along in leaps and bounds .... the meeting before he started to attend helped him settle down: they knew him before he arrived.' The school does its best to manage school transport's access to the site and the headteacher is conscious of the need to minimise time spent by learners in vehicles before the start of the school day.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

The headteacher and leadership team lead by example and ensure that the school lives up its declared aims and values. There is a clear sense of direction and an appropriately delegated management structure. The school's self-evaluation is good and provides an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development. A good example of its effectiveness is seen in the review of its curriculum to ensure it meets the diverse and changing needs of learners. The quality of teaching and pupils' progress is maintained by regular monitoring and timely



intervention in learners' studies. The school's development planning addresses appropriate areas that are all designed to raise achievement and secure the well-being of learners. Leadership roles are distributed amongst senior staff to help drive forward improvement, especially now the headteacher ensures other managers use progress data more effectively in self evaluation. Other responses to the last inspection have resulted in improved assessment of learning and staff use of information and communication technology. The school's strong commitment to community cohesion is evident in its partnerships with local institutions and through the curriculum by such events as 'European Languages Day.' The governing body has a good blend of relevant experience and new recruits. Several governors make regular visits to gain first-hand impressions of the school at work. They make an excellent contribution to leadership and management with expertise in finance, premises and all care-related matters. Governors recognise that their monitoring role regarding academic progress and the curriculum requires more rigour. The school's finances are well managed and appropriately audited.

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**Annex A**

**Inspection judgements**

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<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>	2	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	1

**Effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage**

<b>How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?</b>	2	
How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	2	
How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children in the EYFS?	1	
How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	2	
How effectively is the welfare of children in the EYFS promoted?	1	
How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	2	

**Achievement and standards**

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	1
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	2	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2	

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<sup>1</sup>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.

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
The behaviour of learners	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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	1
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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1	
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

2 March 2009

Dear Children and Students,

Inspection of Glenwood School, Benfleet, Essex SS7 4LW

I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave to me and my colleague when we came recently to inspect your school. I can tell you that you go to a good school and it's very clear that you enjoy your lessons and do so well because the staff work very hard to help you learn and become as independent as possible. The quality of teaching and your curriculum is good in the main school and outstanding in the sixth form.

I think your behaviour is excellent as are the relationships you have with the staff and each other. You are very sensible when moving around the school especially where corridors and corners are tight! It's really impressive to see the way you look after each other especially when you see someone needs help. The school also helps your parents and carers so that they can help you at home too.

You make outstanding progress in the sixth form and good progress everywhere else. I know how much sixth formers enjoy visiting other colleges and having work experience. The teachers also plan exciting activities such as drama, swimming and horse-riding. These things help you with your confidence and also help you to stay fit and healthy.

I am asking your headteacher to do just a few things to help the school be even better for you. One is to look at ways of offering Key Stage 4 pupils more chances to gain awards for what they learn. Another is to see that staff get more time together to plan lessons, and finally, to encourage the governors to take a closer look at what you learn and how well you do.

Greg Sorrell

Lead inspector