

Glendale Middle School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122352
Local Authority	Northumberland
Inspection number	340132
Inspection dates	16–17 June 2010
Reporting inspector	Paul Hancock HMI

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

Type of school	Middle deemed secondary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	9–13
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sue Burston
Headteacher	Miss Ruth Bull
Date of previous school inspection	30 November 2006
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. The inspectors visited 11 lessons and held meetings with governors and staff. Inspectors met and talked with pupils in lessons and around the school. They observed the school's work and looked at 70 questionnaires completed by parents and carers, and others from pupils and staff. Pupils' work and school documentation such as safeguarding information and records of pupils' progress were examined.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- how far the school has improved overall effectiveness from satisfactory to good since the last inspection
- the extent of improvement in achievement, teaching and assessment practice, particularly in English and boys' writing
- the impact of improvement in leadership and management on the achievement and progress of all groups of pupils including boys and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

Information about the school

Glendale is a small middle school located in a rural part of north east Northumberland. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and the number with a statement of special educational needs is above average. All pupils speak English as their first language and there are very few from minority ethnic groups. The school has specialist status for Technology and holds the Sportsmark and Healthy Schools awards.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

Glendale is a good school which has improved since the last inspection. The impact of change can be seen in rising achievement, higher quality teaching and more robust leadership. The school's evaluation of its own performance by senior leaders is accurate and capacity to improve is good. Improvement since the last inspection has been driven by good leadership, management and governance. Revised systems for monitoring and evaluating the school's work are ensuring accountability at all levels and resources are effectively deployed to achieve good value for money. Ambition is firmly embedded to continue driving the school forward in the right direction.

Inspection evidence confirms the view that achievement of pupils is good and attainment is above average by the time they leave the school in Year 8. Attainment in science and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2 was above average in 2009. Achievement in English has improved although results in 2009 were not as high as they were in mathematics, partly because of weaknesses in boys' writing. The strategies to raise achievement in English have made a good impact and different groups of pupils are being challenged to learn more effectively. Boys, girls and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are making good progress as a result and specialist school targets have been met. The school has made raising attainment further a high priority. It is right in the ambition to ensure intervention strategies are effective in raising achievement for all groups of pupils.

Lesson observations confirm the school's own evaluation that the vast majority of teaching is good and better. Assessment practice is good and has improved since the last report. Information is used well to support and improve pupils' work. Behaviour is outstanding and contributes significantly to the quality of learning. Care, guidance and support are good and pupils say they feel very safe in the school. The curriculum is good and enriched every week with activities such as a project on China, studying the forest environment and orienteering. The school's strategy to promote community cohesion and the contribution made by the pupils to the school and community are good.

Attendance is good and has improved since the last inspection. The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles is outstanding. Other outstanding aspects of the school's work include partnerships to promote learning and the extent to which the school promotes equality of opportunity. The vast majority of parents and carers are highly complimentary about the school; as one wrote, 'I have nothing but praise for this school and I am very pleased with my child's progress.'

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure attainment in English is always good by further improving writing across the school.
- Ensure achievement is raised for all groups of pupils in every subject by:
 - monitoring and tracking individual performance in more depth
 - making sure effective intervention strategies are in place for all groups of pupils.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Achievement is good and attainment is above average when pupils leave the school in Year 8. Challenging targets are used to drive learning and ensure all groups of pupils, including those with special needs and/or disabilities, make good progress. Achievement is best in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2. The school knows achievement in English is not as good, for example, some boys are not writing as well as they should. Inspection evidence confirms recent changes in subject delivery are making an impact. Boys' writing is improving and attainment is rising although there is more to be done before standards in English match those found in mathematics. Targets for the Technology specialism were met and attainment in design and technology is above average.

Attitudes to learning are good because pupils listen carefully and concentrate for long periods of time. They are keen to do well and motivated to succeed in everything they do. Behaviour is outstanding and pupils say they feel very safe in school. Their understanding of what constitutes a healthy diet and lifestyle is another outstanding feature. All take part in physical, sporting and other activities beyond lessons and many adopt healthy lifestyles. During the inspection, more pupils from this school attended an area athletics competition than much larger schools and nearly all succeeded in going through to the finals.

Attendance is good and enrichment activities make a good contribution to preparation for future lives. Pupils' sense of spiritual, moral and cultural responsibility is well developed and their sense of social responsibility is a strength. Pupils also make a good contribution to the school and the wider community through their activities, which are democratically organised. For example, during an assembly the school council presented a range of charities and asked pupils to vote for those they wished to support next year.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment ¹	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is consistently good and better, confirming the school's own evaluation. Teachers check pupils' understanding frequently and change learning activities to make sure needs are well met. Good working routines are established and the best teaching uses clearly understood targets. This results in pupils working confidently with a clear understanding of their own achievement. The teaching is less successful when work is not matched closely enough for all pupil needs in the same class. Assessment practice has improved. Teachers make sure pupils know how well they are doing and provide clear, detailed steps for improvement.

The good curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of activities. Interests are well served because staffing arrangements make sure pupils are taught by specialists wherever possible. Partnerships are good and the school's specialist status provides additional support.

Pupils make the best of opportunities the school offers because the good care, guidance and support helps them to do this. Good transfer arrangements between schools help the pupils to settle in quickly. Partnerships with health and other agencies are strong and ensure a diverse range of needs are met.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

Clear vision and robust action by the headteacher and senior leaders together with good governance has made sure the school has improved since the last inspection. The requirements to continue the upward trend of improvement are well known, capacity is good and the right action is taken to tackle any weaknesses. Resources are well deployed and value for money is good.

All forms of discrimination and barriers to learning have been very effectively tackled and the school's promotion of equality of opportunity is outstanding. The safeguarding procedures which pervade all aspects of the school's work are another outstanding feature. Vetting procedures for adults working in school and for the identification and support of pupils who are most at risk are frequently monitored. Safeguarding arrangements fully meet current government requirements.

The school's promotion of community cohesion is good and links have a positive impact, for example, with local community groups and a partner school in China. Channels for parents and carers to communicate with the school and partnerships to promote learning are good.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	2
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

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Views of parents and carers

The response from the very large majority of parents and carers agreed that the school is well led, keeps their children safe and that they were happy with their child's experience at the school. A very small number of parents and carers were concerned about the large size of some classes and pupils not making the progress they should in all subjects. These concerns were investigated during the inspection. Evidence confirmed that class size was not impacting on learning. The school is taking the right action to make sure the progress of all groups of pupils is good in every subject.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Glendale Middle School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 70 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 150 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	32	46	36	51	1	1	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	45	64	25	36	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	28	40	30	43	12	17	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	43	34	49	5	7	1	1
The teaching is good at this school	35	50	33	47	1	1	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	24	34	37	53	7	10	1	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	33	47	35	50	1	1	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	31	44	33	47	2	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	28	40	34	49	5	7	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	39	56	27	39	3	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	22	31	38	54	6	9	1	1
The school is led and managed effectively	33	47	32	46	2	3	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	37	53	29	41	1	1	2	3

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



18 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Glendale Middle School, Wooler, NE71 6QG

Thank you for all your help when I inspected the school with my colleague. Please would you pass on my thanks to your parents and carers for returning the questionnaires and say we took all their views into account. I thought you might like to know what we thought about your school.

- Glendale is a good school which has improved since the last inspection.
- Attainment, achievement and the quality of learning are good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- You feel very safe and well cared for, guided and supported.
- Your behaviour in school is outstanding.
- The senior leadership team, governors and staff are making the right improvements to help you make progress more quickly.

Your teachers and the staff want to make the school even better. To help them do this, I have asked if they would:

- Raise your achievement further in every subject by monitoring and tracking how well you are doing in more depth.
- Make sure your attainment in English is always good by continuing to improve the quality of your writing.

I know the staff would appreciate your help and I wish you every success in all you do in the future.

Yours sincerely

Paul Hancock

Her Majesty's Inspector

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