

Glenesk School

Independent School

Inspection report

DCSF Registration Number	936/6181
Unique Reference Number	125377
Inspection number	330555
Inspection dates	2–3 July 2008
Reporting inspector	Ian Hartland

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 162A of the Education Act 2002 (as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005).

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Purpose and scope of the inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under section 162A of the Education Act 2002, as amended by schedule 8 of the Education Act 2005, in order to advise the Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school

Glenesk School is an independent day school for boys and girls from two to seven years of age. The school was first established in 1925 and became a charitable trust in 1977. It became part of the Cognita group in 2005. The school is located in the village of East Horsley in Surrey. There are 160 pupils in total on the school roll with 69 in the Reception Year and Years 1 and 2. The school aims *'to create a secure, purposeful and caring school, which is an exciting environment for today's children and yet provides a sound preparation for the future.'* It believes *'in equal opportunities for all children...irrespective of social background, culture, race, gender or ability.'* The vast majority of pupils are of White British heritage. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need, but a small number have learning or behavioural and emotional difficulties. The school also caters for able and gifted pupils. The school prepares pupils for entry into independent preparatory schools. The school's nursery provision was inspected by Ofsted's Children's Services in June 2008. The school was previously inspected by the Independent Schools Inspectorate (ISI) in 2002. This is the school's first published report by Ofsted.

Evaluation of the school

Glenesk provides a good education and outstanding care. Parents and pupils are overwhelmingly positive about the school and the pupils are very happy. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and for their welfare, health and safety is outstanding. The quality of the curriculum and of teaching is good and as a result, the pupils become confident and articulate learners who make good progress. They are very well equipped both personally and academically to enable them to transfer to the next school of their choice. The school meets all of the regulations.

Quality of education

The school's curriculum is good and encompasses a wide range of interesting activities and experiences across the school. It is broad and balanced and well supported by clear policies and guidance in high quality schemes of work. Effective planning supports teaching well. The curriculum provides for all pupils to make good progress and to gain good skills in literacy and numeracy. In addition to the good

basic skills, pupils acquire very good teamwork and communication skills that prepare them very well for their future lives and the next stage of their education. The small number who have learning difficulties are catered for well.

The Foundation Stage curriculum systematically builds on children's skills and knowledge through play and investigation. In the main school, all National Curriculum subjects are taught along with religious education (RE) and French. Pupils use computers, available in each classroom, regularly and teaching in two classrooms is enhanced by the use of interactive whiteboards. The effective personal, social and health education programme (PSHE) promotes pupils' personal development very well. Pupils enjoy and value the excellent range of extra-curricular activities and events, such as a football tournament and an under sevens cross-country event. A very wide range of clubs, outings and educational visits, which enliven pupils' learning, are organised for each year group.

The quality of teaching and assessment is good overall. In the Foundation Stage, good lesson planning and teaching, the effective use of resources and the children's desire to learn, results in them making good and often very good progress. The children benefit from a wide range of interesting and well-planned activities to promote their learning. In the infant part of the school, lesson planning is securely based on longer term planning. Teachers successfully create a purposeful and lively atmosphere for learning. They are particularly successful in fostering the pupils' enjoyment of school and their highly positive attitudes towards learning. This is amply demonstrated by the high levels of engagement in all learning activities. The pupils respond positively to instructions and are very eager to answer questions and to offer their views. The pupils' behaviour in lessons is excellent.

The small classes ensure the teachers come to know each pupil well. As a result, in lessons, pupils feel very safe and comfortable and they receive good individual support when in need of help and guidance. Pupils needing additional help are well supported, if necessary with one-to-one tuition by specialist staff. They usually concentrate very well in lessons and are keen to complete the tasks, except when the teaching does not demand their full concentration. Teaching is usually characterised by strong relationships between pupils and teachers, good subject expertise and lessons which generally proceed at a brisk pace. The pupils are well managed, receive clear instructions and explanations and regular praise and encouragement.

Where teaching is occasionally less strong, questioning allows pupils to call out their answers in a somewhat uncontrolled way. On a few occasions, the teaching style does not foster the development of independent learning skills, for example, when a teacher is too eager to interrupt work with further comment, even when the pupils are completing a set writing task. Teaching does not always allow pupils sufficient opportunities to resolve difficulties in learning for themselves so that they can become more confident in their own abilities to make progress without always having to depend on the immediate support of the teacher.

The school uses an appropriate framework for assessment. Marking is regular in most subjects. At best, for example in English, it sometimes provides helpful comments about how the work can be improved. Pupils of all ages, including the more able, those who find learning more difficult and those who are more vulnerable, gain knowledge and make good progress and some make very good progress.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils

Pupils' personal development and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Regular assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to come together as a whole school to learn and worship. However, there are some missed opportunities for them to sing and to think about how the assembly theme might influence their own lives. A quiet garden created in the school provides a suitable place for reflection. The school effectively promotes pupils' developing self-confidence. Their self-understanding is developed well through discussions, for example, when they are encouraged to consider the impact of their actions on others. Pupils growing self-belief is further supported through opportunities to participate in activities, such as assemblies, sports day and prize-giving.

Pupils enjoy their lessons very much and they show very enthusiastic and highly positive attitudes in lessons. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is outstanding. Pupils' understanding of right and wrong and respect for each other is well supported through aspects of the curriculum, including PSHE. Attendance is very good. The pupils' concern for others in the wider community is amply demonstrated through their support for a wide range of charities. Pupils acquire a good general knowledge and appreciation of public institutions and services in England through, for example, the wide range of school visits. They are strongly encouraged to learn about other cultures in an atmosphere of tolerance and respect. They learn about different faiths and cultures represented in Britain in RE lessons, through celebrating religious festivals such as Diwali and Chanukah, and through reflecting on diverse ways of life in PSHE. Through these experiences, they are exceptionally well prepared for the next stage in their education.

Welfare, health and safety of the pupils

Provision for the pupils' welfare, health and safety is outstanding. Their welfare and general well-being is given a very high priority, supported by a comprehensive series of detailed policy documents. A safe, healthy and strongly nurturing environment has been created for the pupils. They have regular opportunities for exercise and very good use is made of the school's swimming pool. Healthy food, all of which is organic, some of which is grown at the school, is provided at lunchtimes. There is an appropriate behaviour policy with a suitable system of sanctions to deal with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. There have been no serious incidents, which have led to sanctions. Pupils report that there is no bullying. Staff supervise pupils very diligently. There is appropriate provision for first aid with most staff qualified to

administer it. First aid boxes are appropriately stocked and accidents carefully recorded. The child protection policy meets requirements; there is a designated officer and the staff have received the required training. The necessary provision for fire safety has been made and equipment is regularly checked. The health and safety policies are appropriate and include risk assessments for the building and for outings. The school correctly maintains an admissions register and attendance registers in accordance with requirements. The school meets the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002 having already made good provision to increase accessibility with plans in place to improve access further.

Suitability of the proprietor and staff

All of the necessary checks to ensure the suitability of staff to work with children have been carried out, including obtaining information from the Criminal Records Bureau. The school's current recruitment and recording procedures comply with the most recent guidance by maintaining a single central record of checks on all staff.

School's premises and accommodation

The accommodation encompasses two converted and considerably extended houses. The school provides a safe, attractive and eminently suitable learning environment with purpose-built classrooms. All are of a good size and are more than adequate for the number of pupils in each class. The buildings and environment are in a good condition and are very well maintained. The school possesses a number of specialist facilities including a large hall/gymnasium, an indoor swimming pool and a good-sized library. There are appropriate facilities for pupils who are unwell.

Provision of information for parents, carers and others

A range of useful information, which meets all the regulations, is contained in the prospectus and other documentation. The prospectus includes an expression of the school's aims and ethos, a list of all staff, arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions, and the provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language or who have special educational needs. It is made clear to parents and prospective parents that a range of school policies is available on request.

The vast majority of parents report that they are very happy with the quality of the information they receive and with the progress that their children make. They receive two detailed written reports each year, one at the end of the autumn term, and another at the end of the summer term. These reports provide a good amount of information on most of the subjects taught.

Procedures for handling complaints

The school has a written complaints policy, which sets out the procedures it will follow in the management of any complaint. It contains information on all of the specific elements required by the regulations. There have been no formal complaints from parents.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

The school meets all of the Education (Independent School Standards) (England) Regulations 2003 as amended January 2005.

What the school could do to improve further

While not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- ensure that teaching fosters the development of pupils' independent learning skills.

School details

Name of school	Glenesk School		
DCSF number	936/6181		
Unique reference number	125377		
Type of school	Primary		
Status	Independent		
Date school opened	1925		
Age range of pupils	2–7		
Gender of pupils	Mixed		
Number on roll (full-time pupils)	Boys: 37	Girls: 32	Total: 69
Number on roll (part-time pupils)	Boys: 38	Girls: 53	Total: 91
Annual fees (day pupils)	£7,725-£8,610		
Address of school	Ockham Road North East Horsley Leatherhead Surrey KT24 6NS		
Telephone number	01483 282329		
Fax number	01483 281489		
Email address	Head@gleneskschool.co.uk		
Headteacher	Mrs S Christie-Hall		
Proprietor	Cognita		
Reporting inspector	Ian Hartland		
Dates of inspection	2–3 July 2008		