

# Glenwood School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109746
<b>Local Authority</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	337364
<b>Inspection dates</b>	6–7 July 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Godfrey Bancroft

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	83
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Rupert Groves
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Shirley Crosbie
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 January 2007
<b>School address</b>	Beech Road Dunstable LU6 3LY
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. Inspectors observed 12 lessons taught by 12 teachers. Meetings were held with parents, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. As well as observing the school's work, inspectors looked at notes of the governing body's meetings, information about pupils' progress, a variety of the school's policies and guidance documents, and 50 parental questionnaires.

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

- how well informed pupils are about their progress and about what they need to do to achieve their targets
- how the school helps pupils to improve their ability to communicate
- how well informed teachers are about the progress pupils are making and how effectively they use the available assessment data.

## Information about the school

This is a relatively small special school providing for pupils who have severe learning disability, profound and multiple learning disability and autistic spectrum disorder. The percentage of pupils known to be entitled to a free school meal is broadly average. The percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds is also broadly average with a small number coming from homes where English is known to be spoken as an additional language. All pupils have a statement for their special educational need and/or disability. The school holds National Healthy Schools Status.

**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?**

**1**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**1**

## Main findings

Glenwood School is an exciting place for pupils to learn. The curriculum is adapted superbly to meet the wide range of pupils' special educational needs, providing activities that capture their interest and ignite their enthusiasm for learning. Parents, carers and the pupils are rightly full of praise for the outstanding quality of education the school provides. Amongst many glowing comments one parent said, 'We are extremely lucky to have our child at such a great school.' Another parent said, 'Glenwood is a brilliant school. The staff are very dedicated to giving each child the best possible start in life.'

Pupils clearly enjoy their learning and achieve exceptionally well, making excellent progress from their various starting points, which in all cases are much lower than expected for their age at the time when they start school. Outstanding teaching and exceptional care, guidance and support help pupils, as far as possible, to overcome the challenges presented by the learning difficulties they face. Two key areas particularly stand out. First, the help that pupils receive to improve their communication skills and, second, the degree to which they are enabled to achieve independence and take responsibility. The combination of these features ensures they are prepared as well as possible for the next stage of their education and to face the challenges posed by adult life. This applies particularly to those pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder, who make exceptional progress in all areas of their learning. In the majority of lessons, pupils make remarkable progress. Just occasionally the pace of progress slows and is good, rather than outstanding. This happens when planning does not focus with sufficient precision on the individual learning needs of all pupils.

The governing body, senior leaders and staff are galvanised by the inspirational leadership of the headteacher to ensure that the high quality of provision is maintained. The school has risen to the challenges posed by its last inspection. All classroom-based staff are very well informed about how well pupils are doing and respond effectively to the slightest sign of any pupil, who for whatever reason, is not making the progress expected of them. Staff also ensure that pupils are well informed about the progress they are making and have a clear picture of what they need to do to meet their targets. The data gathered by senior leaders about the progress made by groups of pupils is also used very effectively to point the way towards things that the school could do even better. For example, whilst the vast majority of pupils achieve exceptionally well, the school has identified that those who have profound and multiple learning disabilities currently make good, rather than outstanding progress.

The school's self-evaluation is rigorous and accurate. Its track record for generating school improvement and the consistent promotion of exceptional progress provides a clear indicator of its excellent capacity to sustain improvement in the future.

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## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Make sure that all lesson planning matches the quality of the very best by focusing with greater precision on how activities will meet the learning needs of each pupil, particularly those who have profound and multiple learning difficulties.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**1**

Pupils are enthusiastic learners who are eager to do their very best. The majority make excellent progress in all areas of their learning. They acquire the basic skills of communication and number exceptionally well. They also develop ever increasing confidence when working with computers. As a result, pupils are prepared very well for the next stage of their education and for coping with adult life. Attendance is a little above average. Levels of unauthorised absence are low, although attendance is sometimes affected by the unavoidable medical absences experienced by some pupils. Pupils who have autistic spectrum disorder and those who have severe learning disabilities make remarkable progress in acquiring communication skills, whereas, the progress of those who have profound and multiple learning difficulties tends to be good rather than outstanding. This is a position that is recognised by the school and the headteacher and senior leaders are looking closely at ways of raising the progress of these pupils to match the exceptional levels achieved by other groups.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. Their acquisition of social skills is exceptional and their passion for art and design and music contributes very well to their spiritual development. Everything possible is done to ensure that pupils are safe and secure. For their part, pupils are very knowledgeable about how to stay safe, which is based on the excellent opportunities provided for them to develop independence and take responsibility. Pupils like nothing better than to help around the school and willingly take on tasks such as taking registers back to the office or helping to care for the chickens. They take great pride in being reporters and contributing to the newspaper, published each term, which explains school events to parents, carers and the community. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding and relationships with each other and with adults are excellent. The sensitivity shown and the care older pupils lavish on the younger children are admirable. In this respect the contribution that pupils make to the school and to the wider community is outstanding. Pupils are knowledgeable about the importance of eating healthily and taking regular exercise, although a few do not always apply this knowledge as well as they might.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

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

### How effective is the provision?

Teachers have high expectations of pupils' capabilities, frequently challenging pupils to work as hard as they can. For example, older pupils are often challenged by open ended questions, causing them to think carefully and to draw on their previous learning. This was seen to excellent effect in a science lesson when pupils responded very thoughtfully to the questions posed by their teacher. Lessons are typified by excellent relationships between pupils and adults and, for their part, pupils respond with great enthusiasm. The communication skills of pupils who are unable to speak are promoted effectively through the use of signing and symbols and other augmentative systems. Usually, activities are matched closely to pupils' learning needs and capture their interest. Just occasionally teachers' planning does not match activities precisely enough to the stage pupils have reached and the response to diminishing concentration and change of mood is sometimes not prompt enough. The assessment of pupils' progress is accurate and frequent. Pupils are involved very well in this process. In a food technology lesson, older pupils were able to explain what they felt they had done well and what might be even better next time. Careful consideration is given to how the outcomes from assessment influence the approach to providing the next steps in learning.

All the required elements of the curriculum are covered with thoughtful and imaginative modifications made to meet the full range of pupils' special needs. For example, to meet the needs of older pupils, they are taught English, mathematics and physical education in groups that fully reflect their particular needs and the stage they have reached. The balance between addressing pupils' academic development and their personal needs is planned extremely well with the two areas invariably being addressed very successfully

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at the same time. For example, no matter what the subject, every lesson is recognised as an opportunity to promote communication and independence. Superb use is made of the school grounds to develop pupils' coordination and physical skills and the sensory garden makes an exceptional contribution to the learning of pupils who have profound and multiple learning disabilities. The curriculum prepares pupils to play their part in the community. For example, the Glenwood cafe, in which pupils order and pay for food, prepares them for when they visit local restaurants for a meal. Similarly the school based 'sleepovers' and the residential visit to an outdoor education centre make a substantial contribution to the development of pupils' social skills and confidence.

Care, guidance and support are of exceptional quality. Parents, carers and pupils are confident that they will receive all the help and support they need. Significant consideration is given to pupils' views. For example, they are involved in the appointment of staff, an experience to which they attach great value. Parents and carers are kept very well informed about their children's progress and any problems that might arise. Liaison with support agencies leaves no stone unturned as staff strive to ensure that the provision made for each pupil is as good as it can be.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

This is a school in which the governing body, the headteacher, senior leaders and the staff all work together to drive school improvement. No one is complacent and all do their very best for all the pupils. Secure assessment information is used wisely to identify areas for development and any shortfalls in pupils' progress, as well as to set suitably realistic yet challenging targets. Senior leaders also work very effectively to maintain the high quality of teaching and to identify aspects that could be even better. The close teamwork of subject leaders and the supportive teaching partnerships play a significant role in this process.

The governing body fulfils its duties very well in every respect. They are passionate about the work of the school, celebrating its every success and raising its profile in the local and the wider educational community. They are also very well informed about all aspects of the school's work and are in the vanguard of the drive for constant improvement.

Engagement with parents and carers is outstanding, with the school doing all it realistically can to keep them informed about their children's progress and about

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developments in school life. A great deal of effective work is done to guide parents in ways of supporting their children's learning. Parents and carers, for their part, also do a significant amount to support the work of the school through fund raising and attending school events. A similar picture is evident in the way the school works with a wide range of service providers and support agencies to do all it can to promote effective learning. The school is rightly regarded as a beacon of good practice. It provides guidance through its outreach work for local schools and for schools abroad about how to provide the best possible support for pupils who have special educational needs. In other respects, the school's links with the local community and places further afield mean that the promotion of community cohesion is outstanding.

Arrangements for safeguarding are exemplary in every respect and the school is successful in its commitment to ensuring equality of opportunity for all and eliminating all forms of discrimination. The exceptional progress that pupils make and the high quality of provision mean that the school provides outstanding value for money.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## **Early Years Foundation Stage**

Provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is outstanding. The activities provided are matched very well to children's learning needs; they are varied and enriched by a wide range of outings and stimulating experiences. Teaching is outstanding, especially in the way it promotes children's personal, social and emotional development and communication skills. As a result, children are happy and absorbed in activities that interest them. Children receive a great deal of encouragement from all the staff and interaction between teachers and children is of high quality. Teachers make very good



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use of resources to appeal to children's curiosity and interests. For instance, bubbles and balloons were used exceptionally well to gain children's attention and give them a direct experience of the concepts of 'up' and 'down'.

Staff work very closely with therapists and specialist agencies, paying exceptionally close attention to children's individual needs. Care is outstanding and there are instances of exemplary sensitivity to the needs of children with medical conditions. Assessment is good. Staff have a detailed knowledge of every child and regularly observe and record information about children's attainment. This is used well in planning activities to promote the next steps in each child's learning. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and those children choose for themselves, as well as time spent indoors and in the outdoor area. Partnership with parents is good and there are excellent arrangements to ensure that children settle as quickly as possible when they start school. The teachers and staff work very closely together and are highly committed to making provision as good as possible for the children.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>1</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1

**Views of parents and carers**

Parents have overwhelmingly positive views of all aspects of the provision made for their children's learning.

### Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Glenwood 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 50 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 83 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	38	76	11	22	0	0	1	2
The school keeps my child safe	40	80	9	18	1	2	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	36	72	13	26	1	2	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	35	70	13	26	1	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	36	72	14	28	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	30	60	18	36	2	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	50	20	40	2	4	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)	25	50	21	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	39	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	31	62	14	28	1	2	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	32	64	15	30	1	2	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	39	78	10	20	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	39	78	9	18	1	2	0	0

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](http://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"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
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.**



8 July 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Glenwood School, Dunstable, LU6 3LY

First, I would like to say how much I enjoyed my time at Glenwood when I visited to undertake your recent inspection. I really appreciated the time many of you gave to talk to me and tell me how much you enjoy being at Glenwood. The inspection confirmed what you and your parents and carers told me, that Glenwood is an outstanding school.

It is clear that all adults, the governing body, all the staff and above all your headteacher, do everything they can to make sure you can learn as well as possible. For them, nothing is too much trouble. You all play your part as well. Your behaviour is excellent and I was most impressed by your hard work and enthusiasm during lessons. Equally impressive is the way in which you are all so willing to help and do jobs around the school. The progress you make in developing your communication skills and becoming independent young people is particularly impressive.

The school does a great deal of excellent work to support you in every way as you grow up. Even so, everyone at Glenwood is always looking for ways to make the school even better. With this in mind I have asked your headteacher and the staff to look even more closely at the activities they prepare for all your lessons and to make sure that you are able make excellent progress on each occasion.

I would like to wish you all the very best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Godfrey Bancroft

Lead inspector

\* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age

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