

Glebe School

Hawes Lane, West Wickham, Bromley, Kent, BR4 9AE

Inspection dates 12–13 November 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Outstanding	1
	This inspection:	Outstanding	1
Leadership and management		Outstanding	1
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Outstanding	1
Quality of teaching		Outstanding	1
Achievement of pupils		Outstanding	1
Sixth form provision		Outstanding	1

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- There is a very strong culture of learning in the school. The Glebe School vision is summed up in the words 'We believe we can', and this reflects a palpable ethos of high expectations and high challenge.
- Parents, staff and students are all extremely positive about the school. Students enjoy coming to school and attendance rates are exceptionally high.
- The achievement of students is outstanding. Their needs are extremely well catered for and all groups of students, including disadvantaged students, make rapid or very rapid progress. Those with the highest level of learning need make exceptional progress, particularly in literacy, and also in the sixth form.
- Teaching is outstanding. Teachers succeed in capturing students' interest and are extremely skilful at overcoming students' barriers to learning. As a result of a strong focus on students' personal and social development, they make sure that students are very well prepared for the next stage of their education or training.
- The behaviour of students is excellent, both around the school and in lessons. Those who find difficulties with everyday social communication are extremely well supported, and learn to treat each other, and the adults with whom they work, with respect and kindness. They come to lessons ready to learn.
- The arrangements for keeping students safe are excellent and all statutory requirements for safeguarding and child protection are met.
- The sixth form is outstanding. It is extremely well led and provides excellent tailored programmes of learning that are highly effective in meeting the needs of the students, including the most disadvantaged and most vulnerable.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The senior leadership team is well respected and highly effective, while leaders in charge of subjects and year groups are playing an increasingly important role in shaping the direction of the school.
- The range of subjects and activities offered is very carefully designed in order to meet students' individual needs. It ensures that students make rapid progress in the core subjects of English and mathematics. It also ensures that students have access to a wide range of opportunities through work in class and the very many enrichment activities. By the end of Year 11, the majority of students achieve success in a range of GCSE and other qualifications.
- Governors are extremely effective in holding senior leaders to account and play a very important part in maintaining and improving even further the very high quality of education provided by the school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 21 lessons. This includes nine lessons jointly observed with the headteacher.
- Inspectors discussed with students their work and what it was like to be a student at the school.
- Inspectors looked at students' work and examined records of their progress over time.
- Meetings were held with the headteacher, senior and middle leaders, other teaching and non-teaching staff, governors and a representative of the local authority.
- Inspectors looked at a range of documentation, including the school's self evaluation and development plan, various policies, information about students' progress, minutes of meetings, monitoring records, and records of attendance and students' behaviour.
- The inspection team took account of the views of staff, students and parents, including 14 responses to the Ofsted Parent View on-line questionnaire as well as the school's own parental surveys. Inspectors also considered the responses to a staff questionnaire which was completed by 51 members of staff.

Inspection team

Steve Williams, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Jackie Blount

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Glebe is a secondary special school.
- All students have a statement of special educational needs. The school caters for a range of primary needs, including moderate learning difficulties, speech and language difficulties, severe learning difficulties, specific learning difficulties, physical disabilities, visual impairment and behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. A significant and increasing proportion have an autistic spectrum disorder. The school is gradually receiving more students with complex learning needs.
- Boys outnumber girls in the school. Around three quarters of the students are boys.
- Around half of the students are eligible for pupil premium funding and this is well above the national average. This is government funding to support the learning of students eligible for free school meals and those who are looked after by the local authority.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is around the national average, and a small minority of students speak English as an additional language.
- The majority of Year 11 students and some members of the sixth form attend Bromley College for one day a week.
- There is currently a building programme underway to enable the school to cater for an increased number of students.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Help students to make even more rapid progress in this excellent school by:
 - developing more opportunities for students to improve their numeracy skills in subjects other than mathematics
 - ensuring teaching assistants always help students to learn as well as keeping them focused on their work in lessons.

Inspection judgements

The leadership and management are outstanding

- The vision for the school expressed in the words 'We believe we can' underpins the work of the headteacher and senior leadership team, reflecting the ethos of high expectations and high challenge. They are supported by an excellent team of middle leaders who make a significant contribution to the strategic direction of the school and provide highly effective management on a day to day basis.
- The school has an accurate view of its many strengths and those areas that could be further developed. Middle leaders undertake, annually, self-evaluations of the aspect of the school (subject area or year group) for which they hold responsibility, and these self-evaluations provide important drivers for improvement.
- There are excellent systems for managing the quality of teaching and learning. Staff are very well supported and there are secure links between staff performance and pay progression.
- The curriculum is exceptionally broad, covering the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, religious education, physical education, information and communication technology and a range of optional subjects, including art, music, drama and Spanish. There is a good choice of work-related subjects for older students. Across the school, there is excellent provision for students' personal and social development. Students in Year 11 and in the sixth form have the opportunity to attend the local college for one morning a week. Their attendance and progress are monitored rigorously and they make good progress.
- Students' timetabled curriculum is enriched by extensive opportunities to engage in a wide range of activities which contribute to their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, inculcate self-esteem and self-confidence and prepare them for life in modern Britain. These include trips and visits and have recently included a residential experience as part of the Year 7 induction programme as well as a Year 11 geography field trip to Mount Snowdon.
- The school develops cultural links through a strong focus on performing arts and international links with other schools which help to develop the multicultural dimension of education, reflecting the school's equal opportunities policy, which senior and middle leaders and governors take very seriously. The school's programme of personal and social development, religious education and assemblies actively promotes British values of tolerance and respect for people of different cultures and different faiths.
- Leaders are very active in ensuring that students are well supported when they start at the school, with a very effective induction programme which eases their transition. They also ensure that they are effectively prepared for the next stage of their lives when they leave the school, by focusing on developing the skills they need for transition and providing careers education, information, advice and guidance through the school's transition co-ordinator and external agencies as appropriate.
- The local authority holds the school in high esteem and its successful collaborative work is helping to improve the quality of provision in the local area.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- Governors are very supportive of the school and are highly effective in holding senior leaders to account. They are knowledgeable about the key indicators of success in relation to the achievement of students at the school and are effective in their monitoring of achievement. They know what is done to reward good teaching and tackle underperformance because they understand the information they receive on teaching and performance management and provide the appropriate level of challenge.
- Correct safeguarding and child protection procedures are followed and there is appropriate regard for health and safety procedures, including risk assessments. The member of the governing body with responsibility for safeguarding monitors all aspects very effectively.
- Governors operate a careful and judicious management of the school budget. Because of the current building programme, the school is somewhat restricted in its own capacity to spend money on desirable minor capital projects; as a result, the school is currently projecting a slight but unavoidable underspend. Governors effectively monitor the use of additional funding, which is having a positive impact.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

Behaviour

- The behaviour of students is outstanding, both around the school and in lessons.
- There are very well established systems in place to manage behaviour and to inculcate in students positive attitudes towards adults, towards each other and towards learning. These systems are applied consistently and students are aware of them. As a result, there are very few instances of poor behaviour, and fixed term exclusion, as a sanction for the most serious breaches of the behaviour policy, is extremely rare.
- The school's approach towards managing behaviour goes well beyond that of providing sanctions for poor behaviour and positive encouragement for students to behave well. It involves a sophisticated approach of working to improve behaviour over time and embedding improved behaviour once it has been developed. For example, one Year 11 student was able to describe articulately how his behaviour was out of control when he started at the school and was able to reflect on how well he could manage his behaviour nowadays. The school is highly effective in teaching its students the difference between right and wrong.
- Students who find difficulty in behaving appropriately, for example because of their autistic spectrum disorder, are dealt with extremely supportively and sensitively and are taught to treat others with respect and kindness. For example, in a social skills lesson, one student was seen spontaneously giving really meaningful compliments to one of his peers. Students are actively encouraged to respect, recognise and take account of the needs of others as part of the active promotion of equality of opportunity in the school.
- Students have excellent attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. The home-school worker works assiduously to encourage students to come into school and links with outside agencies to ensure that students attend. As a result, attendance is exceptionally high compared to other special schools and above the average for mainstream secondary schools.

Safety

- The school's work to keep students safe and secure is outstanding.
- Correct safeguarding and child protection procedures are followed and there is appropriate regard for health and safety procedures, including risk assessments.
- Students feel very safe in school and report that bullying is rare. They have an excellent understanding of how to stay safe. Students are aware of different types of bullying and know what to do if they or their peers experience bullying. They learn about e-safety and the dangers of being influenced by others in a bad way because of their relative vulnerability.

The quality of teaching

is outstanding

- Excellent teaching enables students to make outstanding progress. Teachers take responsibility for supporting the personal and social development of the students and developing their literacy skills through their teaching as well as instilling an interest, and promoting rapid progress, in their own subject area.
- Teachers know their students extremely well and have high but realistic expectations of what they can achieve. This is very effective in raising aspirations.
- Teachers are very effective in providing targeted support in their lessons for the lowest attaining students, notably through the school's literacy programme. Teachers are also particularly effective in providing a real challenge for the most able students in English, particularly in reading and in mathematics.
- Teachers have very good specialist subject knowledge and this helps them to inspire their students and develop a love of learning.
- Teachers mark work thoroughly and often provide extensive written and oral feedback. Teachers keep careful assessment records and use these to plan work for their students.
- Just occasionally, teachers do not always take up opportunities to develop numeracy skills as rigorously as they do in the case of literacy skills.
- In most lessons, teaching assistants provide excellent support. They know the students well and are highly effective at keeping the students on track. Occasionally, they miss the opportunity to help students to learn by giving them direct learning support.

The achievement of pupils

is outstanding

- Students enter the school with low levels of prior attainment. They secure places at the school following the recommendations of the local authority special needs panel.
- Students gain many more qualifications than is typical in a special school. At Key Stage 4, nobody leaves

without at least one nationally recognised qualification and many of the students gain as many as five or more GCSEs, alongside other qualifications. In the sixth form, students secure a range of qualifications which they accumulate over the period they remain on roll (one, two or three years).

- The progress that students make is exceptional. All groups, including disadvantaged students eligible for additional funding, make rapid or very rapid progress while at the school, in line with, and sometimes better than, the others. Students from different ethnic backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve very well. Progress is carefully tracked, so that any student whose rate of progress slips back is supported and helped through any difficulties encountered.
- In English, students make very rapid gains in their reading, writing, speaking and listening. In the first three years at the school, regular testing of students' reading ages shows a very strong trend of improvement. By the time they reach Year 11, many are able to be entered for a GCSE examination and the overwhelming majority are successful. The more vulnerable students in the sixth form make massive strides in all aspects of English, the rates of progress being well above national figures.
- In mathematics, regular testing confirms a very rapid rate of progress. Although a minority of those Year 11 students entered for the GCSE examination in the previous summer were unsuccessful, this does not reflect a decline in standards. Observations of students at work in mathematics lessons, scrutiny of their work, examinations of teachers' progress records and discussions with students confirm that the improvement in mathematics since the previous inspection has been sustained.
- Students make exceptional progress in science and in a range of other subjects, including art, PE and geography. They make good progress in the subjects studied at college. They make considerable gains in their self-confidence and self-esteem, as well as developing skills for independence.

The sixth form provision

is outstanding

- The prior attainment of the students entering the sixth form is usually very low, and the purpose of the sixth form is to provide suitable programmes for those who have reached the end of Year 11 and who are not yet ready to move on to mainstream destinations such as the local further education college. A small number of students join the school at sixth form level from elsewhere, where the provision at Glebe School is judged by the local authority to be appropriate to their needs.
- The students in the sixth form benefit enormously from the small environment with the strong focus on developing social and communication skills and the basic skills of English and mathematics. Their timetable includes programmes that help them to become independent travellers and prepare them for independent living and the world of work. They have the opportunity to attend college and undertake volunteering work in school and in the wider community as and when they are able to manage this.
- The quality of teaching in the sixth form is excellent. The teachers have a very clear knowledge and understanding of the needs of their students. They are very skilful in devising work that will be helpful in preparing them for transition to the next stage of their lives when they leave school.
- Students gain self-confidence and self-esteem and make huge strides in their literacy and numeracy skills while in the sixth form at Glebe School. This is because of the carefully crafted programmes of study, developed specifically to meet individual needs and the care, guidance, support and skilful teaching they receive.
- Students feel safe in the sixth form and know this is an environment where they can develop their skills for independence safely and with the right level of support from staff. They have excellent attitudes to learning and they are highly supportive of each other. Their behaviour is exemplary.
- The sixth form is extremely well led. The head of sixth form is very effective in her management of a dedicated team of staff who will go the extra mile to support the students. She closely monitors the impact of the provision on the students' progress, adjusting and refining provision as appropriate. She ensures that each sixth former is on an individually tailored programme that meets his or her needs and makes the transition to the next stage of their education, training or employment at the appropriate time, after one, two or three years in the sixth form.

What inspection judgements mean

School	Grade	Judgement	Description
	Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
	Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
	Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	101700
Local authority	Bromley
Inspection number	448130

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation special
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	150
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	16
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Judy Armstrong
Headteacher	Mr Keith Seed
Date of previous school inspection	26–27 May 2010
Telephone number	020 87774540
Fax number	N/A
Email address	admin@glebe.bromley.sch.uk

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