

Glyn Technology School

Inspection report

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|-------------------------|--------------------|
| Unique Reference Number | 125304 |
| Local Authority | Surrey |
| Inspection number | 328333 |
| Inspection dates | 14-15 January 2009 |
| Reporting inspector | Maria Dawes (HMI) |

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

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|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Type of School | Comprehensive |
| School category | Foundation |
| Age range of pupils | 11-18 |
| Gender of pupils | Boys |
| Number on roll | |
| School (total) | 1568 |
| Sixth form | 350 |
| Appropriate authority | The governing body |
| Chair | Mr Douglas French |
| Headteacher | Mr Jon Chaloner |
| Date of previous school inspection | 15 March 2006 |
| School address | The Kingsway Ewell Epsom KT17 1NB |
| Telephone number | 020 8716 4949 |
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|--------------------|--------------------|
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

Description of the school

The Glyn Technology School is a considerably larger than average boys' comprehensive school situated in an area of north Surrey. Since the last inspection, it has grown by over 300 students. The large sixth form is now co-educational, and there are currently a small proportion of girls on roll. The large majority of students are of White British heritage with a small proportion of students from Mixed or Asian backgrounds. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, mostly with moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, social and emotional difficulties, is well below the national proportion. The school has been a specialist technology school since 1994 and a Training School since 2004.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

Since the last inspection Glyn Technology School has made rapid improvement. This is now an outstanding school which not only allows students to reach exceptionally high academic standards but to develop into mature, well-rounded young people prepared for the next stage of their education and life. One parent summed up this view when commenting, 'I not only feel that the school teaches the boys well academically, but they also teach them how to be respected and valued members of society.'

Students receive an excellent education and embody the school aim of 'Learn - Achieve - Enjoy - Succeed' through their positive attitudes and exemplary behaviour. The enactment of the school's vision to ensure that every person is highly valued and expected to achieve their potential is evident in all members of the school community. A key factor in the school's success is the exemplary leadership of the headteacher and his senior leadership team. Judicious staff appointments, together with excellent arrangements for performance management and staff development, have resulted in exceptionally good subject leadership and improved teaching, and thus learning.

This is a highly inclusive school, putting the needs of students at the forefront of its work. This has led to students' outstanding personal development and well-being. Relationships between all members of the school community are a strength resulting in a cohesive, purposeful and happy community where students enjoy working and learning. This is further supported by the culture of celebration that has been engendered. As one member of staff said 'The use of praise makes this a happy place to be!' Students have an excellent grasp of the diversity of life in Britain, and there is tremendous tolerance and appreciation of the beliefs of others. They work closely with a range of local groups, such as a local football club. However, the school recognises that there is more to be done to further develop the impact of these interactions.

A robust system for monitoring and evaluating teaching, including in-house teacher training and development opportunities for all staff, has been effective in driving up standards in teaching and learning across departments. All lessons are expected to include the 'Glyn 10', a range of strategies to enable good learning to happen. The school knows, however, that there are still aspects that need to be improved, and is now focusing on training activities which help teachers to better match activities to students' individual abilities and to develop more skilful questioning techniques to raise the level of learning.

There is a wide range of systems in place to support students both personally and academically. Since the last inspection, provision and support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities has improved considerably, and is now very strong. The tracking and monitoring of students' progress are very rigorous, and there is increasingly rapid and effective intervention when there is evidence that they are underachieving.

The curriculum is good throughout the school, although currently limited for some older students, and some regret the lack of choice available to them. This has been identified by the senior leaders, and a broader enhanced curriculum is being developed. Students are actively encouraged to broaden their horizons through the extensive range of extra-curricular activities, enrichment opportunities and trips. For example, over 200 boys took part in recent rugby tours to Italy, Australia and Canada.

Training School status has been integral in driving up standards in teaching and learning; however, the school's status in technology has had less impact on provision and outcomes. Recent and proposed changes are now strengthening staff and student perception of what the specialism means.

The senior leaders, along with the middle managers, have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are clearly held to account by the governors. There have been noteworthy improvements since the last inspection in provision, the sixth form, standards and students' personal development. All staff and governors are united in their pursuit of the school's vision, and teamwork is a strength. Capacity to improve is therefore excellent. As the chairman of governors commented, 'We are forging ahead in a very convincing manner!'

Effectiveness of the sixth form

Grade: 1

The sixth form is a very important part of the school, and all members of its community are justifiably proud of its high standards and strong provision. It now attracts students, including girls, from other local schools. Standards are above the national average, and results in 2008 show that students achieve exceptionally well especially in AS-level and vocational courses.

Personal development is also exceptional, and students in Years 12 and 13 provide excellent role models and make a very real and valued contribution to the school, the house system and the wider community. They have a strong sense of ownership, and value the continuity and opportunity provided by ex-students who continue to support the school and its sporting traditions.

Students express a high level of enthusiasm for their teachers and for their experience in their two or three years in the sixth form. They appreciate the range of courses open to them and the way in which provision can often be tailored to their individual needs. The school is developing a range of vocational options and is able to offer a wider range of subjects through cooperation with other centres. Teaching is good and a very strong feature is in the emphasis on study skills, independent learning and the use of information and communication technology that helps prepare students for higher education and the workplace.

What the school should do to improve further

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning by more consistently matching work closely to students' needs, and by ensuring that even more teachers question students skilfully.
- Increase the impact of the technology specialism on provision in order to raise achievement across the whole curriculum.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students start Glyn with standards generally well above those found nationally. They make good progress through Key Stage 3 to consistently reach standards at the end of Year 9 that are very high. In particular, in 2008 nearly 60% of students attained the highest levels achievable in mathematics.

Students continue to make steady progress throughout Key Stage 4, and since the last inspection standards have improved, and are now exceptionally high. In 2008, 85% of students attained five or more A* to C GCSE passes, and nearly all students finished Year 11 with five or more GCSE grade A* to G grades. These results, though, mask some variation between subjects. For example, students make very good progress in mathematics, and in 2008 90% of students attained a grade C or above, with nearly 40% achieving the very highest grades. However, a notable number of students did not achieve their challenging target in English. Ensuring that all students make maximum progress in all subjects has been made a high priority by the school. In particular, careful monitoring of underachieving students is leading to targeted support, and underachieving departments have been given focused intervention. Inspection evidence shows that this is paying dividends and that students are making better progress. Focused support and much improved provision for the small proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities means that these students achieve as well as others in the school.

Intake to the sixth form is comprehensive, with many students from other schools joining Glyn in Year 12. Students make outstanding progress and attain high standards. In 2008 the GCE A-level pass rate was over 98%, with 38% of all

examinations taken passed at grade A or B.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Students' personal development and well-being is outstanding. Their attitudes and behaviour are excellent, because of the mutual respect seen between students and teachers. One student in Year 11 said, 'Some teachers are like a friend - they listen to you.' Rare cases of bullying are dealt with swiftly and sensitively. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. For example, tolerance and understanding of different beliefs is a marked feature. Students speak with enthusiasm of the variety of experiences and the interest they find in lessons, especially in undertaking independent research, making their enjoyment outstanding.

Students speak knowledgeably of the importance of healthy living, and they are fully aware of risks, such as those posed by the internet. Their commitment to physical exercise is exceptionally strong. Attendance has improved and is now good. Students make a good contribution to the development of the school community through the school council. However, opportunities to take on positions of responsibility outside the sixth form are somewhat limited. Locally, students perform in choirs and musical groups for the elderly, and they raise funds for charities. High academic standards, work experience and group investigation tasks, prepare students exceptionally well for their future economic success.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The school has prioritised improving the quality of teaching and learning, and this has been supported by high-quality training opportunities for staff. The school's accurate and extensive monitoring of the quality of teaching indicates that it is improving, and that more teaching is now good or outstanding than at the time of the last inspection. Highly knowledgeable teachers are successful in creating a classroom environment where students enjoy learning and are eager to achieve. Teachers routinely share the objectives of the lessons with the students, frequently linking these to prior work or the real world. Good pace, a wide range of activities and teaching styles, high expectations of work and behaviour and not least humour help students to stay on task and make good progress. In an outstanding geography lesson, the teacher built on students' prior learning and developed their understanding through an excellent electronic presentation, which was underpinned by regular probing questioning and interactive involvement of the students. In some lessons, however, progress is limited because activities and resources are not sufficiently adapted to students' different levels of ability to effectively support learning, and questioning is superficial.

Students are able to talk confidently about levels they are working at and targets to pursue. Frequently, teachers give additional support in and out of lessons. As one student commented, 'Teachers push you that extra mile!' The frequency and quality of marking, however, are variable across departments, and students are not always given constructive advice on how to move their learning forward.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum is good and improving. The needs of the students are well met and, where students have barriers to learning, the school develops ways of ensuring that they have a curriculum that supports their achievement. There are

some vocational courses available, and improved choice of options at all levels is being developed. However, the current limit of choices at Key Stage 4 means, for example, that the take-up of languages has been low. The specialist status as a Training School is apparent in the relentless focus on improving teaching and learning; however, the technology aspect is less evident through the curriculum.

The school has begun to review the approach to work in Key Stage 3, and shared units of work have been successfully developed between some departments. There are excellent opportunities to develop enterprise and work-related skills. Students have a very wide range of opportunities outside of the curriculum to develop their interest in subjects, sports and hobbies. For example, the chance to participate in the Tall Ships Race had a considerable impact on students. There is an exceptionally rich programme of visitors and visits to enhance the curriculum further, and students are encouraged to make the most of these opportunities.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

The school has robust arrangements in place for caring for its students, through a well-organised and responsive house system. Many parents commented on how quickly the school responds to any concerns they might have. The school has excellent systems for safeguarding its students. Attendance is checked thoroughly, recorded and analysed, and parents are involved when necessary. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive excellent support from the special educational needs staff, and the Student Support Centre. This provision helps identified students to regain study and behaviour skills that enable them to return to their lessons. The recently appointed Head of Inclusion has made a notable impact on making this area much more cohesive than at the time of the previous inspection.

The system for tracking students' achievement and analysing how this could be improved has been developed and refined, and is exemplary. House staff and key stage leaders are involved in assisting students at all levels to improve their performances and reach their potential.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Over the last few years, there have been considerable changes in staffing of senior and middle management, and this has led to marked improvement in the overall leadership and management of the school. The school is exceptionally well led by the enthusiastic and incisive headteacher and his highly able senior leadership team. They have engendered a shared vision among all staff focused on raising achievement with high expectations of all students, set within a caring, supportive and inclusive community. Teamwork is a key strength among all managers, and staff particularly appreciate the opportunities to be consulted and involved in any changes that are put in place.

Self-evaluation is precise and comprehensive, leading to well-focused actions that have improved important aspects of the school's provision, including that for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and students' personal development and well-being. There are rigorous systems in place to analyse students' achievement, and stringent arrangements to monitor the quality of teaching. This leads in turn to focused support and intervention that are contributing to increased standards. Nevertheless, some newly introduced changes have not had sufficient time to make a full impact on students' achievement.

Governors understand their role and responsibilities, and ably support and challenge the school. The school is highly regarded by an overwhelming majority of parents and the local community. As one parent remarked, 'The school is a very different place to the school a few years ago. It is more dynamic and challenging - the new head has improved the school dramatically and has my support 100%.'

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

| | | |
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| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | School Overall | 16-19 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|

Overall effectiveness

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners? | 1 | 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 | 1 | 1 |

Achievement and standards

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| How well do learners achieve? | 2 | 1 |
| The standards ¹ reached by learners | 1 | 2 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 2 | 1 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress | 2 | |

Personal development and well-being

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners? | 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 | |
| How well 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 | 2 | |
| How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being | 1 | |

The quality of provision

| | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|
| How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs? | 2 | 2 |
| How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interest of learners? | 2 | 2 |
| How well are learners cared for, guided and supported? | 1 | 1 |

¹ 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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.

² IE - denotes that insufficient evidence was available to inspectors for a judgement to be made.

Leadership and management

| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|-----|
| How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners? | 1 | 1 |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 1 | |
| How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards | 2 | |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation | 1 | 1 |
| How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated | 1 | |
| How well does the school contribute to community cohesion? | 2 | |
| 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 | 1 | |
| 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



Letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection.

27 January 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Glyn Technology School, Epsom, KT17 1NB

On behalf of the inspectors and myself, who visited your school recently, I would like to thank you very much for the warm welcome you gave us. We valued the discussions that we had with you, both in small groups and informally around the school. We hope that you take the time to look at the full report, but we thought you would like a summary of our findings.

Your school has improved considerably since the last inspection. We agree with one of you who commented, 'Our motto 'Learn - Achieve - Enjoy - Succeed' sums the school up', and we judge Glyn to be outstanding. There are many reasons for this, but in particular I would like to highlight the following:

- your school provides you with a very good quality education, enabling you to progress well and achieve very high examination results
- you develop into confident young people prepared for the next stage of your life
- your behaviour is very good, and relationships between you and your teachers are excellent
- there is a wide range of experiences on offer to you, both inside and outside the classroom, and a large proportion of you take advantage of these
- the teaching is good, and the staff work really hard to support and guide all of you - especially those who have particular difficulties at any time
- the sixth form is vibrant, growing and highly successful
- the leadership of the school, and in particular that of your headteacher and his senior leadership team, is outstanding.

Glyn Technology School strives for excellence. To build on the successes so far, we have asked the school to continue the work it is doing to improve learning and teaching, particularly by ensuring that your work is always well matched to your ability. Also we would like the school to increase the emphasis and impact of your technology specialism.

You have a school to be proud of, and I am sure you will continue to support staff in making any changes. We wish you and the school every success in the future.

Yours faithfully

Maria Dawes
Her Majesty's Inspector