

Greenfields School and Sports College

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	122163
Local Authority	Northamptonshire
Inspection number	359178
Inspection dates	8–9 June 2011
Reporting inspector	David Muir HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 under pilot arrangements; it was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Special
School category	Community
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	79
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	32
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kate Willson
Headteacher	Jean Moralee
Date of previous school inspection	06 March 2008
School address	Prentice Court Lings Way Northampton NN3 8XS
Telephone number	01604 741960
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Introduction

This pilot inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and one additional inspector. Inspectors observed different aspects of the school's work including approximately five and a half hours of teaching. In addition they held discussions with governors, groups of students and staff and scrutinised a range of documentation including that relating to safeguarding practices, the school's self-evaluation and development planning. They also evaluated questionnaire responses from 44 parents and carers, 26 students and 55 staff.

Information about the school

Greenfields School and Sports College relocated to its current site at the end of 2009. It was the subject of an Ofsted monitoring visit in February 2010. The school caters for students with a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, including profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD); autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and severe learning difficulties. All students have a statement of special educational needs before they enter the school.

Students come from both urban and rural areas across the county. Most students are brought to school by local authority transport. A few students come from minority ethnic backgrounds and have a language other than English as their first language.

The school was redesignated as a specialist college with physical education (PE) and music status in July 2010. The school holds several awards, including the Basic Skills Quality Mark and National Healthy Schools Status.

The headteacher is retiring at the end of this term.

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	2
Achievement	2
Teaching	2
Leadership and management	2
Behaviour and safety	1
Does the school adequately promote the pupils' well-being?	Yes
Does the school adequately promote community cohesion?	Yes
Does the school provide value for money?	Yes

Key findings

- This is a good school which has made many improvements since the previous inspection. Students overwhelmingly agree that they enjoy coming to school and they feel safe and well-cared for during their time in the school. The redesigned curriculum works well to provide a range of themed learning experiences which complement the good and outstanding teaching.
- Excellent behaviour and attitudes to learning are strongly promoted throughout the school. Students' effective personal development during their time in the school ensures that they are increasingly able to manage their own behaviour.
- Students make at least good progress because teachers, and other staff, know them well and have high expectations of what they can achieve. In the best lessons, students are fully engaged in exciting activities which stimulate and fully involve them. As a result, students work enthusiastically and are expected to undertake a range of activities which successfully promote their independence and ability to work collaboratively with others.
- In all subjects, students make at least good progress. However, in the school's specialist subjects of PE and music, progress is outstanding over time. There is some sharing of good practice between staff, and some teachers are developing joint working practices. However, the school is yet to develop a formal system of sharing the best practice in order to make more of the teaching outstanding.
- The school's senior and middle leaders provide direction and motivation which have contributed well to the improved outcomes since the previous inspection. Systems have now been established which allows leaders to track students'

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progress throughout their time in the school. However, they are not analysing the data in enough detail to give them a full and comprehensive evaluation of the school's performance over time.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Accelerate progress for all students across the school by:
 - ensuring that the systems for monitoring and tracking progress are effective by ensuring that the data collected is used to identify clearly the progress made by all individuals and groups of students over time
 - raising the overall quality of teaching from good to outstanding by identifying and sharing the best practice available in the school.

Main report

Since the previous inspection and the school's move to its current site, staff have worked tirelessly to address the identified areas for improvement. This has led to faster progress by students and improvements in their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Inspectors found evidence of improvements in how well the school monitors progress, although the data collected are not fully evaluated. This is a friendly and welcoming community and there are strong relationships between students and adults. Nearly all of the students stay at Greenfields to continue their education into Key Stage 5, where they are able to access an increasing array of courses and accreditations suitable to their needs. These opportunities include placements in the local mainstream college and through links with other special schools.

Due to their special educational needs and/or disabilities the attainment of students on entry to the school and when they leave is low. In lessons observed during the inspection, learning was judged to be at least good and some was seen that was outstanding. Similar progress is made over time in all three key stages. On entry to the school, students rapidly develop positive attitudes to learning as a result of high expectations of behaviour and teaching which motivates, engages and promotes a joy of learning. In the best lessons, work is planned in great detail so that it matches the ability levels and interests of the students. The school's monitoring of the progress of students shows that there is no significant difference in the progress of groups of students. The school ensures that the development of literacy and numeracy skills is a focus in all lessons and this results in students making good progress in these areas.

Behaviour seen in all areas of the school during the inspection was exemplary. Behaviour in lessons, and the support which students provide for each other, contribute significantly to the quality of learning taking place. Students are warm, welcoming and proud of their school. They show sensitivity to the needs of their

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peers and are happy to share in others' successes, as well as being proud of their own. During lessons and around the school there is clear evidence of the warm relationships which develop between all members of the school community. This reflects the strong work that the school does with regard to students' personal development. The effective behaviour management strategies employed by staff are planned so that, over time, emphasis is placed on students to better manage their own behaviour. The school's logs of behaviour incidents show that students make marked improvements in making choices and managing their behaviour during their time in the school. The good natured approach of staff to the management of challenging behaviour supports this improvement. No students raised any concerns about bullying and, during discussions, were very clear that they all felt comfortable with seeking help from an adult, should any problems arise. All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire agreed that behaviour in the school is good and that they feel that their child is safe during their time there.

The overall quality of teaching is consistently good in all three key stages. Teachers, and other adults, have high expectations of students and work is well matched to their capabilities enabling them to make good progress. Staff know students well and track their performance effectively to identify those at risk of underachievement. Planning shows an appropriate variety of tasks and learning activities to challenge all students. In lessons, there is an expectation that all students evaluate their own work and contribute to their future learning objectives. Questioning by adults during lessons is skilful and well focused so that staff are aware of how much progress is being made by all students. Students are given sufficient time to consider and answer questions. This also helps teachers to adapt their teaching effectively during lessons, to improve the quality of learning taking place. Occasionally, adults miss opportunities to seize on conversations, initiated by students, which could move learning on even further. In addition, there are instances when adults are insufficiently focused on assessing and promoting new learning.

The school places a great emphasis on the promotion of students' communication skills and this receives impressive support from the work of the Augmentative and Alternative Communication department which ensures that all students have access to high quality communication appropriate to their needs. This is done through the use of high- and low-technology or alternative languages and communications systems such as British Sign Language, PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System) and switches. The school's work in the specialist subjects has continued to promote and develop a range of partnerships and links with other schools and organisations to the benefit of the whole school. Links have also been developed through such initiatives as the Comenius project, with visits to Sweden, Poland and Greece which have provided students with memorable life experiences.

Recent well-planned changes to the curriculum have resulted in a coherent cross-curricular approach which provides a wealth of opportunities and experiences for all students to work in areas unfamiliar to them. The themes taught through this approach support the teaching of English and mathematics, and also the development of personal skills. A variety of 'curriculum challenges' taking place over

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a week also provide students and staff with chances to work with people who they would not normally work with and in areas of the school which they would not normally work in.

Since the previous inspection, leaders have made significant progress in devising systems to collect and analyse data related to the performance of the school and students. However the school now needs to develop its procedures to analyse the school's performance more closely, so that a more accurate overview can be established. This will enable all aspects of the school's work to be more fully evaluated to support school improvement more effectively. Middle leaders and class teachers, have taken on increasing levels of responsibility through a delegated leadership model and this has resulted in areas of high quality practice being developed in managing the curriculum, joint teaching and the school's specialisms.

There is no evidence in the school of discrimination and equality of opportunity is promoted well at all levels. The school has outstanding provision in place to promote students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Their cultural development is particularly notable, resulting from the wide range of partnerships, locally, nationally and internationally. Social development is also excellently promoted through their involvement in activities such as the school council where their views are actively sought and they contribute effectively to the development of the school. Many opportunities are provided throughout the school day for students to reflect on all aspects of their lives and on their relationships with others in the school community.

The governing body plays an active part in the life of the school. An example of this is the programme of lesson observations undertaken by members of the curriculum committee to monitor the quality of the teaching of literacy and numeracy in the school. Although this is done on a regular basis, appropriate analysis of the evidence is not fully taking place to make the most of this activity. Members of the governing body are very clear about the strengths and areas for improvement within the school and hold leaders to account for the performance of the school. Safeguarding procedures meet current requirements. The work of leaders and the governing body since the previous inspection demonstrate that the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Greenfields School and Sports College 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 44 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 79 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
Q1 My child is happy at school	29	66	14	32	1	2	0	0
Q2 My child feels safe at school	34	77	10	23	0	0	0	0
Q3 The school helps my child to achieve as well as they can	28	64	15	34	0	0	0	0
Q4 The school meets my child’s particular needs	33	75	10	23	1	2	0	0
Q5 The school ensures my child is well looked after	32	73	12	27	0	0	0	0
Q6 Teaching at this school is good	30	68	13	30	0	0	0	0
Q7 There is a good standard of behaviour at this school	25	57	19	43	0	0	0	0
Q8 Lessons are not disrupted by bad behaviour	21	48	20	45	1	2	0	0
Q9 The school deals with any cases of bullying well	24	55	20	45	0	0	0	0
Q10 The school helps me to support my child’s learning	25	57	17	39	1	2	0	0
Q11 The school responds to my concerns and keeps me well informed	22	50	20	45	1	2	0	0
Q12 The school is well led and managed	28	64	16	36	0	0	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 all 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	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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 achievement of all pupils. ■ Behaviour and safety. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The effectiveness of leadership and management. <p>and taking into consideration</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ how well the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
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.



10 June 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Greenfields School and Sports College, Northampton, NN3 8XS

On behalf of the inspectors who visited your school recently, I would like to thank you very much for making our visit very interesting and enjoyable.

We found that Greenfields School is a good school. The headteacher, leadership team and staff all work very hard to make your time in school successful. Your behaviour and attitudes to learning are strengths of the school, in particular the way you learn to manage your own behaviour and learn the difference between right and wrong. We judged that behaviour and safety are outstanding. In meetings and in the questionnaire, you told us how much you enjoy coming to school. You also make good progress in the work that you do in lessons. The teaching and the support you receive in the school are also good. Adults know when to support you and know when to leave you to work independently. You should all be proud of the contribution you make to the school.

I have asked the school to improve the following area so it can get even better:

- Help you to make even better progress by:
 - making sure that the school leaders use data better so that they know how much progress you are making over time
 - providing opportunities for the teachers to share and learn from the best practice that there is already in the school.

You can all help with this, by using the school council to tell the teachers what you like best and what would make you even more interested in learning than you are already.

Once again, thank you very much for the time you spent with us during the visit and we would like to wish you well for the future.

Yours sincerely

David Muir
Her Majesty's Inspector

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