

Greenfield Community College a Specialist Arts and Science School

Greenfield Way, Newton Aycliffe, County Durham, DL5 7LF

Inspection dates

3–4 October 2012

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Satisfactory	3
	This inspection:	Good	2
Achievement of pupils		Good	2
Quality of teaching		Good	2
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Good	2

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school.

- Students make good progress and examination results have improved in recent years.
- Teaching is typically good and sometimes outstanding. Inadequate teaching has been eradicated and leaders provide a wide range of training and development opportunities that are closely matched to teachers' needs.
- Students are very positive about the school and their attendance is good. They behave well in class and around the school. Students feel safe and bullying is rare.
- The curriculum, together with an extensive range of extra-curricular activities, makes a strong contribution to students' achievement, including for students supported through the pupil premium.
- The school is well led. School leaders, including the governing body, are rigorous in monitoring all areas of the school's work including students' progress and the quality of teaching.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- There is some variability in the quality of teaching. Teachers do not always take enough account of the needs of different students when they plan and deliver lessons and so not all students are challenged, particularly the most able. The achievement of students is, therefore, not as high as it could be.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 30 lessons, of which four were observed jointly with managers from the school, together with a number of brief visits to other lessons. In total, around 15 hours of teaching were observed.
- Inspectors held meetings with four groups of students, senior leaders from the school, middle leaders, members of the governing body and with a representative of the local authority.
- During the inspection, inspectors took account of the 47 responses to the online (Parent View) questionnaire and other questionnaires completed by staff.
- The inspection team observed the school’s work and examined a range of documentation, including in relation to the safeguarding of students. They also scrutinised information relating to students’ achievement, behaviour and attendance, together with minutes of meetings of the governing body, school planning documents and records of the school’s monitoring of teaching.

Inspection team

David Brown, Lead inspector	Seconded Inspector
Jim Hall	Additional Inspector
Steven Goldsmith	Additional Inspector
Christine Kennedy	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- The school is smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium is above average.
- The proportion of students supported at school action is similar to the national average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus, or with a statement of special educational needs is slightly above the national average.
- The school has specialist status in visual arts, performing arts and science. It has gained a number of awards, including the Artsmark Gold Award, Healthy School status, the Unicef Rights Respecting Schools Award and the International School Award from the British Council. It is a member of the Aycliffe and Shildon Schools Education Trust.
- The school meets the current government floor standards, which set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase the proportion of good and outstanding teaching by sharing best practice within the school to ensure all teachers plan and deliver lessons that challenge students and are closely matched to their needs and prior attainment
- Build on recent improvements in achievement, particularly in mathematics and for more-able students.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

is good

- Attainment at the end of Year 11 is rising and students achieve well in science, religious education and in history. Lesson observations and a scrutiny of students' work confirm that significant actions taken to improve literacy and numeracy throughout the school, and to strengthen weaker teaching, have led to a rapid rise in achievement, particularly in English. However, the pace of improvement in mathematics is slower and actions taken have yet to fully impact on the results of more-able students.
- Students enter the school with levels of attainment that are a little below average. In 2012, there was a further rise in the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics so that it is now close to the national average.
- Some students enter the school with weak skills in reading. Through a range of interventions, such as daily support for reading through the 'time4success' programme, these students in particular are making substantial progress in a very short time. The school is highly innovative in using money provided by the pupil premium to support literacy and numeracy throughout the school. The academic performance of students who attend the school's professional football academy, for example, is closely monitored and these students are fully aware of what is expected of them in their classroom studies.
- Students identified with special educational needs and those supported by the pupil premium typically make at least as much progress as other students. They are well supported within and outside of lessons.
- Students benefit from participation in a wide range of extra-curricular activities. Sport and the visual and performing arts are particularly strong. The school is outward-looking and has formed many partnerships with local and international schools. These provide students with many opportunities to reflect and empathise with people from a wide range of faiths, cultures and communities across the world.

The quality of teaching

is good

- Teaching is good throughout most areas of the school and there are examples of outstanding practice. Students respond well to the high expectations of teachers. In the best lessons, students have a clear understanding of their work and what they need to do to improve, and a purposeful and supportive atmosphere leads to high levels of concentration, participation and enthusiasm.
- In a Year 10 religious education lesson, high quality resources were used to promote students' discussions on peace and conflict. The students were fully engaged in an animated debate on the complex issues raised by a video on war and were able to reflect deeply on the moral impact of their arguments. The lesson was planned in a highly imaginative way and the teacher was clear about what students needed to learn.
- In a Year 8 physical education lesson, students made outstanding progress in developing their attacking skills in football due to the very high expectations of the teacher, clear planning, and highly effective and regular checking of understanding and progress. All students were actively engaged in each part of the lesson and were enthusiastic about how the skills they were learning could be applied to a range of sports.
- The school recognises that some teaching still requires improvement. These lessons have objectives that are too general and lack challenge, in particular for more-able students. Teachers do not always take account of the needs of different students when they plan and deliver lessons and this can mean that everyone does the same work. Because students' behaviour is good, students still learn but not as much as they should. In English, students' achievement is rising rapidly because stronger teaching in the subject has been secured.

- Students know and understand their targets and report that the frequency and quality of marking had improved over the past year.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- Behaviour around the school site is good and students are considerate and well mannered. Behaviour is managed well and students say that it has improved consistently in recent years. Students respond positively to the school's high expectations and are proud of the school and its orderly and pleasant site.
- Behaviour in lessons is usually good and sometimes outstanding, although students are at times a little passive in lessons. Students and their parents are very positive about learning in the classroom and in the number and range of extra-curricular opportunities available to students.
- Students have a good understanding of how to stay safe. Incidents of bullying are rare and are dealt with rapidly and robustly by staff. Students have a clear understanding of what constitutes bullying and the different kinds that may occur, including homophobic and cyber-bullying.
- Students are punctual to lessons. Their attendance is above average and rigorous monitoring and prompt action to support students in attending school regularly has led to a significant reduction in the number of students who are persistently absent. The incidence of exclusions has also reduced and is now well below the national average.

The leadership and management are good

- This is a very well led school. The headteacher and leadership team have taken effective action to raise standards and the school is in a good position to continue its improvement. Self-evaluation is honest and accurate and all senior and middle leaders have a good understanding of the strengths of the school and its development needs.
- The school evaluates the quality of teaching well and is fully able to identify where improvements are required. Senior and middle leaders observe lessons frequently to assess quality and identify potential areas for improvement. The performance management of staff is both rigorous and supportive and is closely linked to professional development.
- Leaders act vigorously and take robust action to correct identified weaknesses. For example, prompt action to address weaknesses in provision and outcomes in English have led to improvements in achievement across all year groups. Similar problems in mathematics are also being tackled, albeit at a slower rate of improvement.
- Recent changes to the school's curriculum are having a significant positive impact on students' learning and achievement, and older students are positive about the range of courses that are available to them. The number of students aged 16 who do not progress into further education, training or employment when they leave school is very low.
- The 'time4success' initiative is proving highly successful in enhancing students' reading and literacy skills and in raising their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are extensive opportunities to engage in music, drama and sport and students are encouraged to participate in links with other schools across the world.
- The local authority has supported the development of teaching in a range of subjects. Strong links with a local partner specialist secondary school are being used to overcome weaknesses identified in the teaching of information and communication technology (ICT).
- **The governance of the school:**
 - the governing body provides valuable and effective support to the school
 - governors have a good understanding of the school's key strengths and weaknesses, and of particular aspects requiring further improvement
 - the governing body plays a significant role in the strategic management of the school,

- including in the effective use of resources and in ensuring best value for money
 - the governing body manages the performance of the headteacher very well, and holds all senior leaders to account for their work
 - governors are fully involved in ensuring staff and students' safety at school and, at the time of the inspection, all statutory requirements in relation to safeguarding were met.
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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	114305
Local authority	Durham
Inspection number	401422

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	704
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lesley Wilson
Headteacher	David Priestley
Date of previous school inspection	29 September 2009
Telephone number	01325 300386
Fax number	01325 379058
Email address	greenfield@greenfieldschool.net

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