

Greenmead School

St Margaret's Crescent, London, SW15 6HL

Inspection dates 23–24 January 2013

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school.

- The leaders and governors have ensured that this splendid school continues to provide the excellent education identified at the last inspection.
- The consistently high quality of the teaching means that pupils make excellent progress whatever their starting points.
- In lessons, staff give the highest priority to each pupil's learning programme and targets. As a consequence pupils rapidly improve their basic skills in communication, literacy and numeracy.
- Although almost all lessons involve fast changes of activities that capture pupils' imagination, very occasionally a pupil may be left alone for a short period with little to do and this slows up their learning.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and throughout the day is exemplary because the staff enthusiastically provide a warm, kind and interesting environment for learning.
- The staff make the well-being of pupils their number one priority through rigorous safeguarding procedures and systems, and parents are very confident that their children are kept safe at all times.
- All staff and therapists work together extremely well as a team to provide all-round care and support that fully meets the personal and learning needs of each pupil.
- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage benefit from the well-organised high quality education they receive when they join the school.
- Teachers welcome the very supportive guidance they are given by the senior leaders, that helps them develop their skills and gives them the incentive to evaluate and improve their own practice.
- The headteacher inspires the staff and sets very high standards, so that all staff are committed to what the school is aiming to achieve.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed seven lessons jointly with the headteacher taught by seven members of staff.
- The inspector held meetings with pupils, a group of parents and carers, the Chair of the Governing Body, members of staff, and a representative of the local authority who is also the school's improvement partner.
- The inspector took account of the 17 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View), the 27 staff questionnaire responses and the school's recent surveys of parents' views.
- The inspector observed the work of the school, and examined a number of documents including the school's information about pupils' progress, teaching observations, self-evaluation, information and records on behaviour, attendance and safeguarding, the school development plan and records of governors' meetings.

Inspection team

Mick Megee, Lead inspector

Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Greenmead School provides education for pupils who have physical disabilities and associated learning difficulties. It also provides for pupils who have profound and multiple learning difficulties. All of the pupils have a statement of special educational needs.
- The majority of pupils come from Wandsworth, and the remainder come from neighbouring boroughs.
- The majority of pupils are from White British backgrounds.
- The proportion of pupils who are supported by the pupil premium (additional government funding) is a little above average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative provision, although a small number of pupils attend mainstream lessons in local primary schools accompanied by members of Greenmead's staff.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure that every pupil always has something to occupy them and their learning moves forward, especially when a member of staff has to move away or attend to something else.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils is outstanding

- Children in the Early Years Foundation Stage and all other pupils, make outstanding progress in their learning although their attainment is low compared with pupils nationally because of their severe and profound learning difficulties.
- Greenmead's comprehensive, detailed information shows that pupils, whether as individuals or in groups, make at least good progress in their learning, and the majority make outstanding progress in building skills, knowledge and understanding, whatever their starting points.
- Staff are very skilful in finding a variety of ways to help pupils communicate and to understand what is being asked of them. This leads to pupils making rapid progress in developing their communication skills.
- Last year, the school's data showed that pupils with profound and multiple learning difficulties were making good, but not quite outstanding, progress against their targets. Further investigation revealed that assessments were not always picking up the very small steps that some pupils were making. The school has revamped its way of recording these small steps very precisely and they clearly show that there is no discernible difference in the progress made by pupils, irrespective of ethnicity, gender or age.
- Pupils for whom the school receives additional funding are making excellent progress as a result of the school spending its extra money on resources for these pupils such as computer software to support their literacy skills development and indoor play equipment.
- The school's provision of very strong medical, sensory and physical support for those pupils who require this enables them to make speedy progress in their physical development too.
- The pupils' very positive achievements, not only in their basic skills in communication, literacy and numeracy, but in their personal and social development, are enthusiastically celebrated by the whole school. In the often moving, and sometimes hilarious, weekly assemblies, high-achieving pupils receive certificates and trophies for their endeavours. They proudly show everyone the first few steps they have managed to take away from their walking frame, or how they can now hold a beater and play a note on a chime bar.
- Parents and carers say, in discussions and through questionnaire responses that they are extremely pleased, and often amazed, with the progress their children make at the school.

The quality of teaching is outstanding

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about learning mainly because of the very positive relationships they enjoy with other pupils and with staff. In lessons there is often good-humoured banter and many caring interchanges. Staff show their empathy and kindness for pupils, for example as they wait patiently for pupils to communicate their feelings and choices even if it takes a very long time.
- Parents and carers who met the inspector and those who contributed to Ofsted's online questionnaire say that their children are extremely well taught. Pupils say they love their teachers, because they are 'loud and fun'. These stakeholders and the school's own surveys provide an accurate view of the overall quality of teaching, which is outstanding and has a highly positive impact upon pupils' learning and progress.
- Teaching, including that in the Early Years Foundation Stage, is very strong in almost every respect. Teachers are enthusiastic and committed to improving their own practice through honest self-reflection. They work together as a very tight whole-school unit, offering each other supportive guidance and sharing resources and good ideas.
- In lessons teachers give the highest priority to each pupil's individual learning programme and targets. In this way, all staff take every opportunity to assist pupils to increase their basic skills in communication, literacy and numeracy throughout the day, and this results in very rapid

progress.

- Staff are extremely thorough in the way they conscientiously capture an individual's progress by recording every small step that the pupils take in their learning. This enables teachers to plan work with ever-increasing challenge, and for every lesson to represent a step forward for the youngsters to meet their personal targets.
- Lessons are often full of fast changes of activity that hold pupils' attention and make learning fun. This involves extremely good planning, meticulous organisation and smooth and efficient teamwork. Very occasionally, staff leave a pupil to work independently without having first taken care that the pupil is prepared and productively occupied. This slows up learning for the pupil.
- Staff keep parents and carers very well informed about their children's day, especially through the home school books and voice recorders that travel home with the children. Parents and carers find these daily two-way channels of communication invaluable and reassuring, especially where their children have difficulty in expressing themselves. This positive communication helps teachers to know their charges even better, provides a focus for conversations with pupils in class and puts staff on the alert if problems, concerns or issues arise at home.
- Teachers work extremely well with therapists and specialist staff to provide excellent intensive all-round support for pupils who have more complex medical, physical and sensory difficulties. This may require classroom staff to operate specialist equipment such as standing frames, eye-tracking readers and gastrostomy feeding systems. The close-knit teamwork of all the staff means that these interventions are carried out seamlessly without withdrawing pupils from their learning activities, so that no precious learning time is lost.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are outstanding

- The pupils' well-being is at the heart of the school's work, and every possible step is taken to ensure that pupils are looked after at all times. At the same time staff ensure that pupils can experience appropriate risk-taking and plenty of encouragement to become as independent as possible. A good example of this was when a pupil was showing how he could take his first walking steps, and staff deliberately held back from assisting him, while everybody held their breath willing him to succeed – which he did.
- The pupils who met with the inspector said they love coming to school and feel safe at all times. The pupils could say exactly what they have to do if the fire alarm goes off, and could point out the grown-ups they would go to if they were hurt or in trouble.
- Parents and carers say that they have no concerns about safety. One typical comment was, 'We went on a school trip, and I've never seen such attention to all the little things. They do everything to the letter way beyond even what parents would do. It's incredibly good.'
- The very experienced head of care ensures that all staff are well trained and implements all safeguarding procedures and systems to the full.
- Pupils' behaviour in the lessons observed was exemplary. Pupils often show kindness to one another, and listen carefully to each other's comments. Pupils', parents' and carer's views, as well as the school's records, show that there is very little disruption to lessons and that behaviour is typically excellent.
- Although behavioural incidents are rare, there are a handful of pupils who find it especially difficult to settle into learning and school life. For these pupils, the school, alongside parents and carers, arranges very effective and detailed individual plans and strategies. Staff, who are well trained in defusing situations where pupils find it difficult to maintain self-control, carry these plans out consistently and ensure that learning goes forward for everyone.
- The school rewards good behaviour by finding out what each pupil will work harder for and using this as an incentive. For example, one pupil who occasionally finds school life very difficult is offered a short go on his bicycle after he completes his work. This has transformed his attitude to learning.
- Almost all pupils attend very well and there is good follow-up if pupils are absent without an explanation from home. Overall, pupils' attendance is slightly lower than the average for

mainstream primary schools, but in almost all cases absences are for reasons well beyond the school's control, usually medical problems involving hospital stays or due to chronic illness.

The leadership and management are outstanding

- All members of the senior leadership team are exceptionally effective in their role and have ensured that the school has maintained the very high quality of teaching and learning identified by the last inspection. The headteacher is widely respected and highly regarded by the pupils, parents, carers, staff and within the local authority for her inspiring, astute and positive leadership.
- The Early Years Foundation Stage is extremely well led and managed by the new manager, who has quickly improved the procedures for recording children's progress and ensuring that activities are as child-led as possible. Parents and carers say that her home visits before the children start school are immensely reassuring and result in an accurate picture of each child being gathered.
- The staff greatly value the headteacher's and deputy headteacher's very supportive approach to managing teaching performance. This ensures that the teamwork between all staff on the site is tightly knit and very effective. There is tremendously high morale among all the staff who understand what the school is trying to achieve and are committed to the high expectations and demanding standards set by the senior leaders. Staff say in their questionnaire responses that 'it is an honour to work here'.
- The senior leaders know the school inside out and are extremely thorough in finding ways of assessing its success and seeing if they have overlooked any signs of underperformance. In this way they show their determination to uncover any inequality or discrimination. That they are very good at this is demonstrated by the outstanding personal and academic progress made by all the different groups of pupils.
- The school's action planning is very effective. Together with the governing body, the senior leaders annually check on the distance that the school has travelled during that year, identify what they can do to build on strengths and overcome weaknesses, and set new goals. Through the school's development plan, staff have a clear sense of direction and know exactly what they have to do in order to achieve the school's priorities.
- The school works extremely effectively with its partners, including their excellent work with parents and carers. There are good links with other schools in Wandsworth that enable teachers to get together and check that their assessments of pupils' progress are neither too generous nor too harsh.
- The school has very strong links with the primary school next door, and with other schools in the borough. It uses these links very well to provide its pupils with opportunities to learn in mainstream classes and experience the rough-and-tumble of larger schools. This prepares them well for life beyond school, and gives them and their parents and carers an opportunity to see if mainstream education might be an option in the future.
- The school works very well with a number of different agencies including health and social services. There are a good number of therapists from these agencies who are based within the school, including occupational, speech and language and physiotherapists. This is tremendously useful as they are always on hand to provide daily expert guidance to teachers, parents and carers.
- The curriculum has been expertly adapted to suit the needs and interests of the pupils. Every lesson is peppered with many opportunities for staff to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, especially in improving pupils' ability to communicate, interact and socialise, be creative and to gain an awareness and understanding of the wider world.
- The local authority is generally very supportive, and has well-founded confidence in the leadership team to ensure the school's outstanding effectiveness and capacity for sustaining improvement.

■ The governance of the school:

- The governing body provides excellent challenge and support to the school’s leadership team. It is very effectively led by its Chair who is extremely well informed about the school. The governors have received up-to-date training on how to weigh up the quality of teaching, the progress made by pupils, and how the leadership team checks up on and improves staff performance. The governing body has ensured that the headteacher has been set demanding targets for improvement, and that levels of staff pay are linked to their performance. Members of the governing body are given very detailed information by the school’s leaders and governors ask searching questions to test that the information provided stacks up. The governors keep a close eye on how well the school leaders are utilising the school’s finances, including the pupil premium money and that its use benefits explicitly those for whom it is intended.

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	101099
Local authority	Wandsworth
Inspection number	403765

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	46
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Lindsay Field
Headteacher	Gail Weir
Date of previous school inspection	7–8 July 2010
Telephone number	020 8789 1466
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