



Greendown Community School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number 126467
 LEA Swindon

Inspection number 274795
 Inspection dates 3 – 4 May 2005
 Reporting inspector Dr Kenneth C Thomas

Inspection deemed to have been carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996 according to section 12(3) of the same act.

Type of School	Comprehensive	School address	Grange Park Way
School category	Community		Grange Park
Age range of pupils	11 – 16		Swindon
			SN5 6HM
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01793 874224
Number on roll	1267	Fax number	01793 876274
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mr A Basson
Date of previous inspection	9 February 2004	Headteacher	Mr S D O'Sullivan

Age group	Published	Reference no.
11 - 16	May 2005	274795

© Crown copyright 2005

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

Introduction

The inspection was a pilot of the new arrangements for inspection announced by Ofsted in its consultation paper of February 2004. It was carried out with the support and co-operation of the Greendown Community School and of the local education authority.

The inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors.

Description of the school

Greendown Community School is a mixed comprehensive school for pupils aged 11-16. There are 1267 pupils on roll. Attainment on entry is below average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is below average, although those with statements is about average. These pupils mostly have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties. Around ninety per cent of the pupils are from white British backgrounds. The proportion of pupils with English as an additional language (EAL) is slightly above that in most schools, although few are at the early stages of acquiring English. A small number of looked after children, refugees and Travellers attend the school. The proportion of pupils claiming free school meals is average. The school has faced difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. The school contributes to the initial training of teachers.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Inspectors agree with the school's view that the overall effectiveness has improved and is now satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Standards at the end of each key stage are average. Progress is good in Years 7 to 9 and satisfactory in Years 10 and 11. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The personal development of pupils is good. They are well cared for and enjoy their time in school. Pupils' attitudes are good and their behaviour is satisfactory. The curriculum is good and the range and quality of activities outside school is very good. The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory with some strong elements. The headteacher has been effective in making the necessary changes in the past year to improve provision and raise pupils' achievement. Parents feel that the school provides well for their children and the pupils themselves support these views. Good links exist with a wide range of external agencies.

Steady progress has been made since the last inspection and the school's capacity to improve further is good. Weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been effectively tackled and the strong focus on improving teaching and learning has led to significant improvement. Senior staff have a good understanding of what needs to be done to move the school forward and recognise that the management of pupils' behaviour, in particular that of boys, remains an ongoing issue as does the need to secure consistency in feedback given to pupils by tutors. Further work needs to be done to raise standards in Years 10 and 11 and to develop literacy skills across the school.

Grade: 3

What the school should do to improve further

- Raise attainment in Years 10 and 11 and in English in Years 7 to 9.
- Raise standards of literacy in all subjects.
- Improve the consistency of tutor feedback to pupils on their performance and improve the management of pupils' behaviour.
- Ensure the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship is met.

Achievement and standards

From below average standards on entry, pupils make good progress to attain average standards in mathematics and science by the end of Year 9. Progress in English is slower and impeded by pupils' weak literacy skills. As a result, English standards remain below average and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.

At GCSE, overall standards are average and progress is steady. In physical education and geography, standards are above average and pupils' progress is good in these subjects. They are below average in modern foreign languages and design and technology. The school did not meet the targets set last year because they were too challenging. The targets set for 2005 are more realistic and the indications are that they should be achieved. Pupils with SEN, looked after children and those with EAL make good progress over time. The progress of gifted and talented pupils is particularly good. Girls attain higher standards than boys and this is similar to the national picture.

Grade: 3

Personal development and well-being

The personal development of pupils is good. Attendance is average and almost all pupils are punctual. The vast majority of pupils enjoy school and this is demonstrated in their improved behaviour, which is now satisfactory, and attitudes, which are good. There has been a significant drop in exclusions since the last inspection. These improvements are contributing to the better progress seen particularly in Years 7 to 9. Very effective links with primary schools ensure pupils are provided with very strong support at the time of transfer. Pupils' relationships with their peers, teachers and other adults are good and reflect the school's commitment to the development of racial harmony and responsibility for others. Pupils feel secure and free from discrimination. They have confidence that support is available if needed.

Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils show an increasing sense of right and wrong and demonstrate respect for their own and others' cultural traditions. This is shown, for example, in the way pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix well together and their willingness to help those who are in the early stages of learning English. Although provision for spiritual development has improved and is now satisfactory, not enough attention is given to this aspect of pupils' personal development in many subjects. Pupils make a good contribution to

the school community through the school council, where their views are expressed and taken seriously: for example, their practical suggestions have been taken into account in providing healthier school meals and a wider range of extra-curricular activities. Both contribute positively to the development of healthy lifestyles. Good links with the local community enhance provision and contribute well to the development of the personal qualities that will eventually transfer to working roles.

Grade: 2

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This is an improvement from the unsatisfactory position at the time of the last inspection. Considerable emphasis has been placed on improving teaching and this, allied to more consistent monitoring by senior staff, has led to teaching improvements and better pupil progress. In the good or better lessons teachers use their subject expertise well to plan challenging learning activities. In these lessons pupils respond positively to teachers' high expectations, give of their best and progress well. Most teachers exert firm but friendly control of their classes. This results in a productive working atmosphere in most lessons. In the less effective lessons there are some common weaknesses: there is a lack of challenge, teachers do not exert enough control or learning activities are not well matched to pupils' needs or abilities. These lessons occur more frequently in Years 10 and 11.

Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school makes systematic use of a wide range of information from a variety of sources to monitor progress and set targets for improvement. The effective use of assessment has a very positive impact on the teaching of pupils with SEN, EAL and looked after children. Good assessment ensures that work is well matched to these pupils' needs and this, together with very good support from a team of very well trained teaching assistants, ensures the most vulnerable make good progress.

Grade: 3

Curriculum and other activities

The curriculum is good overall and is planned well to meet pupils' needs. The school fulfils its aim to provide an innovative curriculum catering for individual needs and provides very good equal opportunities for all. As a result, all groups of pupils, including those who are most vulnerable, are well provided for. The curriculum is flexible; and through partnerships with local colleges and businesses an appropriate range of vocational courses is provided that supplements the range of GCSE courses. Some extended work placements are provided for pupils more suited to vocational studies. The curriculum is responsive to the needs of local businesses as demonstrated in the emphasis given to the development of pupils' ICT skills. However, pupils' literacy skills are generally weak and not enough attention is given to the development of these skills in many subjects. The personal social and health education programme pays good attention to the development of safe and healthy living and this is reflected in the recent winning of the Healthy School Award. The school makes very good provision for gifted and talented pupils. Extra-curricular provision is very good, and increasing numbers of pupils take advantage of the increasing number of activities that the school offers. This is having a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

Grade: 2

Care, guidance and support

The care, guidance and support provided for pupils are good and make a positive contribution to pupils' progress. The induction procedures for pupils entering in Year 7, and those who arrive during the school year, are very effective. The school has a good system for enabling tutors to meet with individual pupils to review progress and set targets for improvement. These reviews are supported by comprehensive assessment information that is regularly updated and instantly available to tutors. However, there is inconsistency in the way in which this information is used, and some pupils say that they do not fully understand their academic targets and what they must do to reach them. Pupils say staff respond quickly and effectively to any bullying incidents. Effective child protection procedures are in place. Liaison with a range of external agencies is used efficiently to secure pupils' welfare and ensure they receive good advice on future course and career options.

Grade: 2

Leadership and management

Inspectors agree with the view of the school that leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher, supported effectively by other senior managers and governors, has been successful in tackling the weaknesses identified in the last inspection report. The basis for this improvement is much more rigorous monitoring and evaluation and greater accountability for performance. This has provided senior managers with a good understanding of the school's main strengths and weaknesses and enables action to be taken to secure improvements. The impact of these improvements is seen in the rise in standards in Key Stage 3, and there are signs of improving standards in Key Stage 4. The school is now more likely to meet its realistic targets.

Governorship is satisfactory. The governing body influences the work of the school and ensures almost all statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. The exception is the provision of a daily act of collective worship, which was a weakness at the last inspection. The co-ordination of support for vulnerable pupils is particularly strong. This, together with good links with relevant outside agencies, ensures their needs are effectively met. Resources are managed well and used effectively. For example, the provision of laptops to all staff allows the rapid electronic transfer of information and strengthens the support and guidance tutors can offer. The school's involvement with the Graduate Teacher Programme has proved to be a very useful means of tackling teacher recruitment problems in the area. This makes a positive contribution to the quality of teaching and the protection of pupils.

Grade: 3

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about HMI-led Ofsted inspections', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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?	3	*
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage	*	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Y	Y/N
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Y	Y/N

ACHIEVEMENT AND STANDARDS

How well do learners achieve?	3	
The <i>standards</i> reached by learners	3	
How well learners' make <i>progress</i> , taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	
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?	2	
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
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	3	

THE QUALITY OF PROVISION

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	3	
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	
How well does the provision promote the well-being of learners?	2	

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Y	Y/N

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	Yes/No/NA
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are taught about sexual health risks	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe.	Yes/No/NA
Procedures for Child Protection meet the requirements of <i>Working Together to Safeguard Children</i>	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
How well learners enjoy and achieve	Yes/No/NA
Support is given to learners with poor behaviour and attendance	Yes
Learners' personal and academic development are monitored	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	Yes/No/NA
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, are consulted when key decisions affecting them have to be made and their views are listened to	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	Yes/No/NA
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop their enterprise and financial skills, and work in teams	Yes
Education and training for all learners in 14-19 is co-ordinated to give experience of work based learning	Yes

Alexandra House T 0207 421 6800
33 Kingsway F 0207 421 6707
London WC2B 6SE www.ofsted.gov.uk



Greendown School
Grange Park Way
Grange Park
Swindon
SN5 6HN

5 May 2005

Dear Pupils

Following our recent visit to inspect your school we would like to thank you for your contributions to the inspection, especially those who met with us and whose work we saw. We would like to tell you our findings. You will know that when the school was last inspected it was judged to have serious weaknesses in some areas of its work. This is no longer the case. Because of the positive way in which you have responded to the hard work of the headteacher, governors and staff, the school is now satisfactory with some good features.

Some of the main strengths that we observed about your school are:

- You make good progress with your work in Years 7 to 9.
- The vast majority of you want to succeed and you get on well together both in lessons and around the school.
- Almost all of the teaching you get is suitable and much is good. Because most of you listen carefully to your teachers in lessons you are able to take advantage of their expert knowledge.
- The range of courses that you can choose from is good, especially in Years 10 and 11, and this helps to prepare you for the things you want to do when you leave Greendown.
- Inspectors consider that the care and personal support you get from the staff is good. We found that all staff have a strong desire to help you to do as well as you possibly can. This is seen, in particular, in the good support that is provided for those of you who may be experiencing difficulties.
- Many teachers give a lot of their time to provide you with a very good number of extra activities out of school hours. Many of you told us how much you enjoy taking part in these activities and how the activities are helping you to make better progress.

Inspectors judge that there are four main ways in which the school can do better.

- Years 10 and 11 pupils could learn more than they do, and pupils in Years 7 to 9 could do better in English.
- The inconsiderate behaviour of some pupils interferes with progress in some lessons because it makes it difficult for teachers to do their jobs properly.
- The school needs to give many pupils more help with basic literacy skills.

Annex B

- In some lessons the work you are expected to do is too easy and your attention drifts. Some of you do not pay enough attention to your teachers.
- There is a need for the school to make sure that you all get equally good feedback from your tutors on how well you are doing and how you can improve.

Our very best wishes to you. Inspectors hope that you all do well and realise your ambitions.

Kenneth Thomas
Lead Inspector