



# Thorpe Greenways Junior School

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 114777  
**Local Authority** SOUTHEND-ON-SEA  
**Inspection number** 294565  
**Inspection dates** 5-6 March 2007  
**Reporting inspector** Robert Drew

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

|   |                    |                         |                   |
|---|--------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|
| <b>Type of school</b>                     | Junior             | <b>School address</b>   | Greenways         |
| <b>School category</b>                    | Community          |                         | Southend-on-sea   |
| <b>Age range of pupils</b>                | 7-11               |                         | Essex SS1 3BS     |
| <b>Gender of pupils</b>                   | Mixed              | <b>Telephone number</b> | 01702 468057      |
| <b>Number on roll (school)</b>            | 496                | <b>Fax number</b>       | 01702 602122      |
| <b>Appropriate authority</b>              | The governing body | <b>Chair</b>            | Mr Ian Turner     |
|   |                    | <b>Headteacher</b>      | Mr Paul Fairbrass |
| <b>Date of previous school inspection</b> | 16 November 2005   |                         |                   |

|                          |   |                                    |
|--------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school is larger than average, serving the Thorpe Bay area of Southend-on-Sea. The great majority of pupils are White British with small numbers coming from several minority ethnic groups. About 4% have English as an additional language. Pupils come from a wide range of social and economic backgrounds, though the proportion entitled to free school meals is below average. Pupils' attainment when they start Year 3 is broadly average, though fewer pupils than nationally have learning difficulties or disabilities.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory. It has made sufficient improvement since the last inspection and its results now broadly match national standards at the end of Key Stage 2. Achievement is satisfactory and personal development good. Therefore in accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school no longer requires significant improvement.

The care, guidance and support offered by the school have long been good, encouraging good personal development by pupils. Staff now make much better use of assessment information than at the time of the last inspection and the school's analysis of data helps identify learning needs early and provide appropriate support quickly. Staff promote personal safety, healthy lifestyles and pupils' contribution to the community very effectively. Pupils respond with excellent behaviour and a mature regard for their own well-being and that of others. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good as is attendance. The school's excellent range of musical, sporting and other extra-curricular activities enriches pupils' experience immensely. They help create confident individuals who work well together. This promotes successful relationships in the wider community. The formal curriculum has been strengthened and is satisfactory, though the school has yet to complete its upgrading of the place of science.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory and improving. Many lessons generate real enthusiasm amongst pupils. This is usually in response to teachers sustaining rapid pace, involving pupils by name and providing demanding work for all abilities. Occasionally, relationships in lessons are so positive and the match of tasks to pupils' needs so accurate that excellent learning takes place. In the rare instances of inadequate teaching, in contrast, where pace is slow and tasks are not explained clearly, pupils lose interest. There are also some inconsistencies in the quality and effectiveness of teachers' marking of pupils' work. Some teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly and show pupils how to improve but others leave work unmarked or just mark with ticks or crosses.

The work of leaders and managers is satisfactory overall. The headteacher and the newly formed senior team provide good direction and have sustained high morale during a difficult phase in the school's history. They have introduced necessary changes and teaching, the curriculum, the use of data and the role of subject leaders have all begun to improve. Standards in English have risen markedly, closely followed by those in mathematics. An increased percentage of able pupils now reach the higher levels in all subjects. Subject leadership is now satisfactory; it is particularly effective in English, while in mathematics and science it is secure but very new. While standards meet targets, in the light of the improvements made, these are no longer sufficiently challenging. In science improvement has been satisfactory but standards lag behind those of the other core subjects. The governing body is more active than at the time of the previous inspection. Its monitoring of the school, and support and challenge of senior leaders ensure it has a satisfactory impact.

Value for money is satisfactory. The school has shown it has a satisfactory capacity for improvement, evaluates its quality and effectiveness accurately and acts effectively on its analysis of strengths and weaknesses.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Raise standards in the core subjects by setting targets which are more challenging and better reflect the success of other more ambitious schools.
- Eliminate the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching and ensure all lessons employ the clear structure and pace seen in the majority.
- Strengthen science using the successful strategies used to promote English and mathematics, and by completing the reshaping of the science curriculum.
- Improve the quality of marking by implementing school policy effectively.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Test results for 2006 at the end of Key Stage 2 were above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. These standards continue to be sustained in English, representing good progress from entry in Year 3, while current standards in mathematics and science are average and pupils make satisfactory progress. In all three subjects, pupils gain more high levels than previously. There has thus been sufficient improvement on the issues raised in the last inspection. In English the improvements are good. Crucially the school now monitors pupils' academic progress closely and takes swifter action to eliminate underachievement. Pupils with particular learning needs make sound progress. New booster classes and support groups in English and mathematics give pupils valuable additional help, though similar provision in science is lacking. Teachers use data well to shape lessons and help pupils understand their targets. Challenging work for the more able is set regularly. The school is meeting its targets, but they are less challenging than they might be, in the light of recent improvements.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Personal development and well-being are good. Pupils' behaviour is outstanding. They are proud of their school and their attendance is above average. The school successfully promotes an impressive ethos of mutual respect between adults and pupils. There are plenty of chances for pupils to work together and they become good at doing this. They appreciate the help they receive from teachers and teaching assistants; they feel safe and comfortable at school. Pupils have no concerns about bullying and think the school deals with their problems well. They learn about eating healthily and the vegetables they grow are used for school lunches. There is a wide range of popular physical activities that provide healthy exercise. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They have a good appreciation of their responsibilities

to the wider community through raising funds for charities. Pupils' basic skills in preparation for the next phase of education are satisfactory.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory but varies from inadequate to outstanding. Much of the teaching is good and productive learning prevails. In a small number of lessons progress is inadequate because teachers' expectations of pupils' performance are too low and work is not matched closely enough to pupils' widely varying stages of development. Relationships between teachers and pupils are generally excellent and this contributes to high levels of motivation. Pupils enjoy learning. In nearly all classes, lessons are thoroughly planned and carefully prepared. Pupils rise to the challenges set. In Year 3, for example, pupils enjoy learning terms such as 'imperative verbs'. There are, however, inconsistencies in the quality of marking, with some teachers offering regular and explicit help to pupils and others leaving work unmarked or failing to show pupils how to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory and is improving. The school's increased emphasis on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills addresses pupils' needs well. Necessary work has now begun on revising the science curriculum to provide more focused science lessons. Skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are taught systematically but pupils have limited opportunity to use these in other subjects. The school makes outstanding provision for extra-curricular activities, including residential visits that enhance pupils' physical and creative education and develop new skills. There are exceptional opportunities to play instruments in the school's orchestras and bands. Pupils learn French and there are well-established links with a French school. The personal, social and health education programme is good and ensures that pupils develop confidence as learners and enjoy their time at school. Good provision is made to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and the school prepares them satisfactorily for life after school.

### **Care, guidance and support**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school provides a very caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel happy and safe. This contributes to their good personal development. Parents are generally positive about the school. Effective procedures are in place for safeguarding pupils and these comply with government requirements. Health and safety checks are rigorous to ensure pupils' well-being. Pupils know that adults will listen to any concerns they might have. Pupils say, 'Teachers are kind'. There are examples of good support

for pupils who are going through periods of particular emotional need, ensuring they are successfully included in school life and continue to learn. The school works effectively with outside agencies to support pupils with additional needs. Procedures for tracking pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science are now good, ensuring that teachers know their pupils' capabilities and generally how to move their learning forward.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

The headteacher provides strong leadership and is much respected by pupils, parents and the community. The contribution of year group and subject leaders is improving and is now satisfactory. They make a sound overall contribution to promoting consistency in what is taught in each class and in each year group but their monitoring of pupils' work remains limited. As a result, too much inconsistency persists, for instance, in the effectiveness of teachers' marking. One major improvement since the last inspection is the sharper emphasis on measuring pupils' achievement in literacy, numeracy and science. The data produced is used well to set precise targets for the amount of progress each pupil is expected to make each term. If pupils do not make as much progress as expected, extra support is quickly provided to help pupils to catch up. This has had a significant impact on raising standards across the school and providing effective equal opportunities for pupils. Governors are acutely aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are increasingly involved in monitoring the school's performance. Finances are managed well and the team of administrative assistants ensure that the day-to-day running of the school operates smoothly.

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## Inspection judgements

|   |                       |
|---|-----------------------|
| Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate | <b>School Overall</b> |
|---|-----------------------|

### Overall effectiveness

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b> | 3   |
| How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?  | 3   |
| The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation  | 3   |
| The capacity to make any necessary improvements  | 3   |
| Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection   | Yes |

### Achievement and standards

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>How well do learners achieve?</b>   | 3 |
| The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners   | 3 |
| How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners | 3 |
| How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress                              | 3 |

### Personal development and well-being

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>                           | 2 |
| The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development                                     | 2 |
| The behaviour of learners   | 1 |
| The attendance of learners  | 2 |
| How well learners enjoy their education   | 2 |
| The extent to which learners adopt safe practices   | 2 |
| 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

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>          | 3 |
| <b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b> | 3 |
| <b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>   | 2 |

<sup>1</sup> 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.

## Leadership and management

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| <b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>                                       | 3   |
| How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education | 3   |
| How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets   | 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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money  | 3   |
| The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities  | 3   |
| Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?  | Yes |
| Does this school require special measures?   | No  |
| Does this school require a notice to improve?  | No  |

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

8 March 2007

Dear Pupils

Thorpe Greenways Junior School, Greenways, Thorpe bay, Southend-on-Sea

Thank you for making us feel very welcome during our recent visit. Many of you took the time to speak to us and we are very grateful.

There are many good things about the school.

- Standards have risen and you now make satisfactory progress. Your progress in English is good.
- Teaching is satisfactory overall but many lessons are good and a few are outstanding.
- The school offers an excellent range of extra-curricular clubs, activities and visits;
- Your behaviour is excellent.
- The headteacher leads the school well.
- The way the school cares, guides and supports you is good.

To improve further the school needs to:

- set you targets which match the challenging ones seen across the country so that your progress moves from satisfactory to good
- make sure that the small amount of unsatisfactory teaching is removed and all your work is marked regularly and helpfully
- complete the changes being made to the way science is organised.

Best wishes your future at Thorpe Greenways.

Yours sincerely

Robert Drew (Lead inspector)