

# Greenfields School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	122163
<b>Local Authority</b>	Northamptonshire
<b>Inspection number</b>	314226
<b>Inspection date</b>	6 March 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Judi Bedawi

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–19
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	44
6th form	30
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Nicola Hoffman
<b>Headteacher</b>	Jean Moralee
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 December 2003
<b>School address</b>	Harborough Road Northampton NN2 8LR
<b>Telephone number</b>	01604 843657
<b>Fax number</b>	01604 844470

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<b>Age group</b>	11-19
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

The school provides for pupils with severe learning difficulties (SLD), profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD), and a small minority with multi-sensory impairment (MSI) or autistic spectrum disorders (ASD). All have statements of special educational needs. Pupils come from Northampton and surrounding areas. Awards include the Basic Skills Quality Mark and National Healthy Schools. Specialist physical education (PE) and music status was granted in September 2007. The school is to be relocated in 2009.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

Greenfields is a satisfactory and improving school with some good features. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy and crew of hard working governors, has successfully navigated through a long and tricky voyage, gaining specialist school status and fast approaching the safe harbour of a new school.

Parents strongly value the way that their children are supported. Typical of comments about staff are: 'They show real dedication to the children'; 'Staff provide over and above what is normally expected'; and 'Teaching assistants relate well to the children.' Pupils' personal development is good, they are very helpful and their behaviour is wonderful. Pupils like each other, have made good friends and have a huge sense of fun, always smiling. They enjoy sport, music and information and communication technology (ICT). Good pastoral care and partnerships with outside agencies have a positive impact on pupils' physical and emotional health and well-being. Despite the complexity of their needs, pupils attend well, enjoying lessons. They really like exercise and healthy eating, helping to improve school lunches. They accept responsibility with pride. They are aware of staying safe. Post-16 students feel well prepared for life beyond school through the good vocational provision and college opportunities.

Although standards are exceptionally low, pupils' achievement and progress from very low starting points are satisfactory. However, leaders and managers at all levels do not have a secure overall grasp on using information from data analysis. Learning levels are not reflected in clear record keeping, so leaders and managers do not know precisely how well pupils are doing. This results in pupils not having a clear understanding of their own learning. It also affects the quality of teaching and learning, planning and the process of setting targets, which are satisfactory. Teaching strategies do not consistently provide challenge or opportunities to develop and extend basic skills across subjects. The curriculum provides good opportunities for pupils through specialism in physical education (PE) and music, enhancing pupils' motivation and self-esteem. However, monitoring, evaluation and review at all levels is not fully effective in addressing inconsistencies in challenges set and pace in teaching and learning, or the ongoing drive to raise pupils' achievement. Nonetheless, capacity to improve is satisfactory.

### Effectiveness of the sixth form

#### Grade: 3

Standards remain low, although students make satisfactory progress. Their personal development, maturity and the positive role models they set for younger pupils are good, as is the pastoral care they receive. The good vocational curriculum and partnerships with schools, colleges and workplaces compensate well for current accommodation limitations, so that students gain experience of independent life. Teaching, academic guidance and support are satisfactory. Students are not fully aware of how well they are doing because the use of assessment, monitoring and evaluation is not entirely effective. Leadership and management are satisfactory with pockets of underachievement identified and recent strategies adopted to aid improvement.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Develop procedures and practice for assessing pupils' and students' progress so that teachers plan work that meets their needs more closely.
- Ensure that pupils know what they need to do to improve their learning skills.

- Develop the effectiveness and consistency of monitoring and evaluation by managers at all levels to raise achievement.

A small proportion of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory but which have areas of underperformance will receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

## **Achievement and standards**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Attainment on entry is very low due to pupils' complex learning difficulties and disabilities. Standards remain low throughout the school and into post-16. From their very low starting points, the majority of pupils and students make satisfactory progress. However, the lowest attainers, including those with PMLD and MSI, make good progress, due to the focus on raising their achievement. A minority do less well, mostly due to regressive conditions. Many data analysis methods have been used, trying to securely identify progress for different groups of pupils and individuals, with considerable data amassed. The current system, now in its second year, is not fully embedded, except in PE and music. As a result, information is unavailable or not used effectively and consistently enough to pinpoint pupils' progress and individual learning needs in all subjects. Tracking of achievement is embryonic apart from music and PE where it is shown that most pupils' make satisfactory progress. The school admits it has not yet 'bottomed out' pupils' progress and achievement. Booster classes for younger pupils are in place to reduce identified pockets of underachievement in mathematics. At post-16, the introduction of an award scheme development and accreditation network (ASDAN) mathematics module to improve students' progress and life skills links is very recent. Writing and reading are rightly identified as school priorities. Pupils have targets, but they are not always reinforced consistently enough, or do not offer sufficient challenge, especially for higher attainers.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Pupils enjoy school and want to learn. Their attendance is good, despite some absence for medical appointments and bouts of ill health. Pupils and post-16 students work well, remaining interested even when learning lacks challenge. This is most evident for higher attaining pupils who are ready and able to work more independently. Many pupils do not feel confident about their reading, writing and mathematical abilities. Some think they could work a bit harder. Most can express their views in the way most suitable for them. A student recalled a bumpy bike ride during a residential visit with considerable humour. Pupils relish praise, equally delighted in their own and their friends' successes. Behaviour is excellent in lessons and when moving sensibly along the very narrow corridors. Pupils say there is no bullying, so they feel safe and free from racism. They explain how to ask adults for help. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Pupils treat others with politeness, respect and tolerance. Displays celebrate multicultural awareness and achievement. Culture in the community is reflected by signing choir performances. The lively school council is impressive. They know what they want and how to put their ideas into practice. Physical education impacts impressively on pupils' knowledge of healthy living. They know that eating fruit keeps them healthy. Pupils participate

enthusiastically in the daily 'activate' sessions and enjoy their swimming. Older students feel well prepared for adulthood but their parents feel sad that they have to leave.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Some good teaching features are evident throughout the school. They include staff and pupil relationships, knowledge of learning difficulties and disabilities, behaviour management and teamwork. Staff also use praise well to motivate pupils. The way that teaching assistants often work one-to-one, to support and encourage pupils' learning, is good. However, teaching is inconsistent due to lack of challenge in work set. Additionally, the relaxed pace of some lessons means that pupils do not always progress as well as they could. Teachers are not confident enough with, or do not have adequate access to, the right information to identify pupils' progress and learning levels. This affects lesson planning, which varies in meeting pupils' diverse needs. As a result, the process of setting targets and learning objectives are inconsistent, sometimes used well, sometimes barely touched upon. Pupils really enjoy the increased exercise and music in lessons, a direct result of the school's specialist status. However, this can intrude on the time, expectations and need to learn basic skills. Pupils, particularly higher attainers, are ready for more challenge and independent learning to boost their progress.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The revised curriculum, following specialist status, is fully embedded in PE and music. It is starting to benefit pupils' self-esteem but it is too soon to assess its effect on achievement. Partnerships with schools and other providers are good. Accommodation issues remain until the school relocates. However, there is good improvement in provision and use of ICT, impacting well on learning. Good resources meet pupils' complex needs. Cross-curricular links, so that pupils can practise their English and mathematics skills in other subjects, are not yet fully established, but regular 'theme days' take place and benefit pupils' learning. The three-year science curriculum is spread over five years to ensure pupils' understanding. The sensory curriculum offers good tactile experiences for pupils with the most profound impairments. Visits, visitors and residential trips enrich pupils' life experiences well. Post-16 students have a good work-related learning and life skills programme. Vocational college courses, which include hairdressing, horticulture and animal care, attract girls and boys. Transition programmes are well established.

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

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The good pastoral support and positive relationships extended to all pupils and students is a real strength at the centre of the school's work. Staff know and support pupils and families well, aided by the good access to outside agencies and the advice of the school-based nurse. Transportation punctuality is still difficult, despite the schools' best efforts to seek resolution.

Safeguarding is satisfactory. Monitoring, evaluation and recording of pupils' academic progress and personal well-being does not provide a clear, consistent picture of progress. Records are too often undated or incomplete. As a result, staff do not know exactly how well their pupils are doing. This means pupils are unsure of their targets and how to improve. Use of pupil self-assessment is developing and often verbal rather than written. Some individual education plan targets are unchanged, even though pupils have met them. This slows the pace of pupils' progress. Parents say that they find that the school's explanations about how their children make progress through the P scale levels is confusing in understanding their children's progress. However, the recent introduction of Visual Annual Reviews is helpful in identifying the very small steps made by pupils with the most limiting capabilities and the progress of higher attaining pupils.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

The outward looking leadership of the headteacher and her steady hand on the helm has sustained the school well, during a significant period of change. As a result, pupils' satisfactory achievement and good personal development has been maintained. Stakeholders are now largely supportive and looking forward to the next stage of the school's development. Senior managers, including the proactive and hard working governing body, share the exciting vision for the future. They are all committed to raising achievement and standards, and improving provision and pupils' outcomes, through specialist school status. However, the quality of monitoring, evaluation and review of the school's performance by managers at all levels is inconsistent. This results in the school's knowledge of its strengths and development areas and its self-evaluation being satisfactory. Support staff are deployed well to support pupils, with continued professional development effectively embedded. Financial management and resourcing is good with budgets carefully planned to meet relocation expenses. The school has satisfactory capacity to improve with the benefits of recent specialist school status starting to filter through.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall	16-19
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### 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	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3	3

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<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.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3	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 leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
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	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No	
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No	

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**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

We enjoyed our recent short visit to your school. We liked talking to you and sharing some of your lessons. Thank you for telling us so much about what you do at school.

We think that your school is satisfactory and improving with some good features. It offers you a satisfactory education. We know that Mrs Moralee really cares about all of you. We can see you enjoy school. Your progress is satisfactory but we think the staff could help you to make even better progress. We know that you like your teachers, that you enjoy activities like music, PE and ICT and that you love going on trips. We think that your behaviour is excellent – well done! We can see that post-16 students help you to be mature and sensible. Some of you find mathematics hard whilst others find work in lessons easy. You are not too sure of your learning targets or how to do even better. We think your school council does a really good job and that you organise it well.

Here are the things we have suggested to your school that they should improve.

- We have asked Mrs Moralee, your teachers and the governors to improve the way that they work out how well you are doing so that your teachers can plan work that helps you to learn even more.
- We want you to make sure that you find out and understand how to improve your own work.
- We have asked all staff to ensure that they check on your learning and find ways of helping you to make better progress.

We hope that you continue to do your best and work hard while you are at Greenfields School.



7 March 2008

Dear Pupils and Students

**Inspection of Greenfields School, Northampton, NN2 8LR**

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Best wishes

Yours sincerely

Judi Bedawi  
Lead inspector