

New Greenhall

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	131295
Local Authority	Wigan
Inspection number	315773
Inspection dates	6–7 February 2008
Reporting inspector	Caroline Broomhead HMI

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	2–14
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	78
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Sherida Collins
Headteacher	Mr Ihor Triska
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
School address	Green Hall Close Atherton Manchester M46 9HP
Telephone number	01942 883928
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Age group	2-14
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Introduction

The school was inspected by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors.

Description of the school

New Greenhall School opened in September 2006 following the re-organisation of special schools in Wigan. Prior to this it was a primary special school on the same site and 52 of the 78 pupils currently on roll were at the school at the time. It now caters for pupils aged 2 to 14 years with complex learning difficulties. A small number also have additional needs such as autism or physical disabilities. The majority of the pupils have a statement of special educational need and the remainder are undergoing statutory assessment. Nearly all the pupils are White British and none speak English as an additional language. The pupils come from a wide variety of backgrounds and nearly half are entitled to free school meals.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

New Greenhall is an outstanding school. The headteacher has been exceptionally successful in building on the very good practice which existed when it was a primary school and establishing the same high standards with a new team of staff. He and his deputy headteacher have created a warm, welcoming and happy environment in which the pupils and staff feel valued and able to contribute their ideas. Visitors to the school are immediately struck by the politeness and courtesy shown by the pupils, the high standards of care and attention given to the pupils by the staff and the superb displays of pupils' work around the school. Its Healthy Schools Award and Eco Schools Green Flag award are both testimony to the school's commitment to the pupils' well-being. The curriculum has been suitably adapted to take account of the broader range of pupils' needs as well as the extended age range which the school now covers. The notion of learning being fun as well as challenging is at the heart of the school's success. High standards of teaching and a robust approach to planning and assessment make this a reality for most, but not all, pupils in the classroom. As a result they enjoy coming to school and make good and, in some cases, exceptional progress in their learning. Parents are very supportive of the school. This is a school which is constantly striving to improve further. Senior managers routinely review all aspects of the school's work and have an accurate view of its strengths and areas for development. They provide clear direction for the school and have good improvement plans, although these do not always show clearly enough what impact they are expected to have on pupils' outcomes. The on-going professional development of staff is also central to the school's success and contributes significantly to its outstanding capacity to improve further.

Effectiveness of the Foundation Stage

Grade: 1

The quality of education and care in the Foundation Stage is outstanding. The curriculum is suitably adapted for the different ages and abilities. Robust procedures are in place to assess children's needs and the outstanding teaching develops their individual talents. The teaching staff have successfully created a bright, cheerful environment which promotes learning and personal development. Excellent use is made of information and communication technology (ICT) to promote learning and independence. The very high standards of care result in children enjoying their time in school and making at least good progress. Behaviour and attitudes to learning are excellent. Leadership of the Foundation Stage is strong.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all teachers' planning and assessment for individual pupils is in line with the existing best practice in the school.
- Ensure that school improvement planning makes clear the expected impact on pupils' standards, achievements and personal development.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

The pupils have complex learning difficulties and arrive at the school with standards of attainment which are well below those found nationally. Most of the older pupils have moderate learning difficulties, whereas those lower down in the school have more severe learning difficulties. Pupils' attainment within the primary department ranges from P Level 4 to National

Curriculum Level 2. Pupil's attainment in Key Stage 3 is within a similar range but with a small number of pupils achieving National Curriculum Level 3. The pupils make good steady progress in their learning. For some pupils, particularly those who have been at the school for some time, their progress is outstanding. For example, over half of those with moderate learning difficulties made the same rate of progress by age 11 years as is expected of pupils of the same age nationally, and this represents very good progress considering their starting points and learning difficulties. The achievement of some pupils with severe learning difficulties is also exceptionally good. Most of those who joined recently are making good steady progress. Pupils progress very well against their individual targets for literacy, numeracy and personal and social education. There is a strong focus on promoting pupils' language, communication and literacy skills and this is reflected in their growing confidence to communicate with each other, with staff and with visitors. This prepares them well for moving on.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

Personal development and well-being including social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are outstanding. The pupils enjoy coming to school and want to learn and this is reflected in the high attendance rates and the good progress they make. Their behaviour is excellent. They are polite and courteous and greet visitors with a smile. They also learn how to look after themselves and care about others. They feel safe at school and confident that any incidents of bullying are dealt with by staff. Parents agree and recognise the excellent work of the school. The school is a rich learning environment, which the pupils respect and contribute to. The displays are exemplary and a positive celebration of the pupils' work and ethos of the school. The pupils on the school council take their roles seriously and offer their ideas for how the school can be improved. A good variety of residential trips and educational visits impact positively on pupils' self-esteem and self-confidence. Through taking part in a range of sporting activities in and out of school the pupils are aware of the importance of keeping fit and healthy. The pupils prepare for future economic well-being by a well-planned Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Key Steps programme and through themed weeks such as 'Industry Week'. They also raise money for charities and learn the importance of recycling and caring for the local community. In short, they are a credit to the school and are rightly proud of their achievements.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Nearly all the teaching is good or better, with a significant proportion of outstanding practice. The school has created a language rich environment in which pupils develop their confidence to communicate with each other, with staff and with visitors. A key feature of the good teaching in this school is the excellent questioning which encourages pupils to think for themselves, to work out solutions to problems and to share what they have learned with others. Literacy skills are developed well across the curriculum. Teachers successfully encourage pupils to develop their writing skills and confidence. For example, in a literacy lesson where the pupils were creating their own science fiction stories, the teacher's skilful questioning encouraged them to use a 'story box' of objects to stimulate their imagination and to 'visualise the story' before they attempted to write it down. The pace of the best lessons is quick and reflects the high expectations teachers have of pupils' learning. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to learn.

They listen attentively, concentrate and patiently wait their turn to answer questions, although some are overcome by enthusiasm and cannot wait, eager to show what they know. The use of ICT to support teaching and learning is variable, with excellent practice evident in some lessons seen.

The school has developed a straight forward way of setting and implementing targets for individual pupils in literacy, numeracy and personal and social education and this works well. In the best lessons teachers' planning makes clear the activities and learning objectives for different groups of pupils and individuals, but this is not the case in all lessons. Teaching assistants provide good and often excellent support for teaching and learning. In the small number of weaker lessons seen the pace was pedestrian and the work was not sufficiently challenging with the result that pupils' progress was hampered. Detailed assessments have been carried out to achieve a baseline in all subjects for all pupils and this information is used well by most teachers to plan their lessons.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

The curriculum has been developed well to meet pupils' needs. As pupils have moved from primary to secondary, the emphasis in the curriculum has changed appropriately to reflect a secondary school model. Secondary students are taught in class groups by subject specialists and this is proving successful in motivating students to learn. Active learning is at the heart of the success of the school. The curriculum is brought to life through fun and realistic tasks. In science the pupils learn to conduct experiments and can see for themselves how things work. The ASDAN Key Steps programme has recently been introduced in Key Stage 3 and presents pupils with a range of challenges to aim for. There have been considerable developments in ICT, both in resources and developing staff expertise, and, where this is used well, it contributes a great deal to the quality of teaching and learning across subjects. An exciting development has been the introduction of French, which the pupils clearly enjoy, particularly when they get the chance to sample the delights of croissants and chocolate in a 'French Cafe'. Some are quite confident and proud of their ability to greet visitors in French. Personal, social, health and citizenship education is an integral part of the whole school day. Pupils are encouraged to mature and become independent. There are many opportunities for them to engage with the local community, for example, through visits, and to take part in lessons in local mainstream schools. Enterprise education is being developed.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 1

Care, guidance and support for pupils are outstanding. Robust procedures and staff training are in place to safeguard the pupils. Attendance and punctuality are monitored carefully and any concerns are dealt with effectively. Last term the school's attendance target was surpassed. Punctuality is a concern with a small group of pupils which the school is encouraging to travel to, and from, school independently. The work of the learning mentor and the in-school behaviour support team has led to significantly improved behaviour and attitudes, fewer exclusions and increased levels of attendance. Pupils are clearly aware of what they need to do to improve their work and how they can do this. They are supported in this by a dedicated and highly skilled staff. Pupils are given roles, such as play-leader and school council representative to promote responsibility.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Leadership and management are outstanding. The headteacher and his deputy headteacher provide strong leadership and clear direction for the school. They set and model high standards in all aspects of the school's work. Since re-organisation they have quickly established a strong staff team with a shared commitment and clear focus on enabling pupils to achieve their best. The school has successfully adopted a shared leadership approach and the capacity of middle managers is developing well. A culture and cycle of self-review is firmly embedded: all staff, pupils and governors have a role to play in bringing about improvement. The curriculum is kept under review, with coordinators playing a key part in monitoring the quality of provision and drawing up action plans. Teaching and learning is routinely monitored and clearly linked to performance management and professional development. The school is rightly proud of its Investor in People Award. Senior managers carry out detailed analyses of pupil attainment data and set reasonably challenging whole school targets. The school has recently established internal procedures for monitoring the reliability of teacher assessment. Systems for assessing learning and tracking progress are fairly robust, although the best practice which exists is not implemented consistently.

The school seeks to influence and be influenced by working in partnership with other schools and agencies and has had considerable success in both these aspects. Through its outreach work it shares its expertise and provides support to pupils and staff from mainstream schools. The school welcomes the expertise and advice of other professionals who make an important contribution to the pupils' well-being.

Governors provide good support and challenge for the school. The school is well resourced and provides good value for money.

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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
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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?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the Foundation Stage	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
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?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
How well learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	1
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?	2
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?	1

¹ 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

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
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

Inspection of New Greenhall, Atherton, M46 9HP

Thank you so much for welcoming Mr Muir and I into your school earlier this week and for taking the time to talk with us during the inspection. These are the findings from our visit.

- New Greenhall is an outstanding school. It is extremely well led by the headteacher who sets high standards for all the school's work. He and his staff work very hard to ensure that you are happy at school and achieve your very best.
- You are making good progress at school and you and your parents are right to be proud of your achievements. The lovely displays around the school show how much you enjoy school and how well you are doing.
- We were very impressed with how well you behave and how polite you are to each other.
- The teaching is very good and we saw that you particularly enjoyed all the fun activities in class. It is good that the teachers keep a close eye on your progress and let you know what you need to do next to improve. Some of you were able to tell us about your targets.

We have asked the school to make sure that teachers' show clearly what they expect each pupil to learn and then record what they have learned in lessons.

- We have also asked the school to be a bit clearer about how each of the steps it is taking to improve is going to lead to better standards and achievement for you.