

# Greenvale School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	100765
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lewisham
<b>Inspection number</b>	323339
<b>Inspection dates</b>	15–16 January 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Melvyn Blackband

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 (total)	87
Sixth form	29
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr G Kwasniewski
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs A Youd (Executive), Mrs L Haines and Mrs A Sharp (Heads of School)
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	16 January 2006
<b>School address</b>	Waters Road Catford SE6 1UF
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8465 0740
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8465 0764

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

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector.

## Description of the school

The school provides for students who have severe or profound and multiple learning difficulties (PMLD). Some students have additional physical disabilities, complex medical needs and sensory impairment. An increasing number of students have autistic spectrum disorder.

The school's population reflects the wide ethnic and cultural diversity of the Borough of Lewisham. A third of students are from homes where English is not the first language. Most students transfer from the Watergate Primary school, which forms a federation with Greenvale School. The school provides an outreach service to schools throughout the local authority. Its out-of-school provision was last inspected in April 2007. The executive headteacher leads both schools, who have their own headteachers, and the schools retain their own governing bodies and budgets.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 1

Greenvale School provides an outstanding education for its students. All the students do well in their studies, and many make outstanding progress. The oldest students in post-16 provision achieve equally well. Students with autism and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties benefit from outstanding teaching, as do those at the early stages of learning English. This leads to their exceptional progress, particularly in their communication and social development. As a result, the students enjoy their lessons and respond by trying their best. The assessment and recording of students' progress is very effective. This enables teachers and subject leaders to identify strengths in teaching and to intervene quickly when any slight slowdown is detected in the students' performance.

The curriculum is outstanding because teachers tailor activities so effectively to students' differing needs and abilities. The whole staff, outside professionals and governors all play a part in creating a wide and comprehensive range of learning activities which are closely linked to the National Curriculum and which are always interesting and well resourced. As a result, the students tackle challenging tasks with enthusiasm. The move to a new, well-designed and spacious building since the previous inspection has enabled the staff to provide a much richer curriculum than was possible before the move. Activities range from experiences at a sensory level for students with profound disabilities to specific courses leading to nationally accredited qualifications. The programmes for English and mathematics are a major strength within the curriculum and, combined with excellent teaching, result in the students' outstanding progress in learning basic skills. The relatively new post-16 curriculum provides the students with many opportunities to develop their vocational understanding, their independence and their life skills. Teachers are aware, however, that there is further scope to develop programmes leading to nationally accredited qualifications.

The students thrive within the caring ethos of the school. It underpins their excellent attitudes to learning and helps them to achieve their full potential. All students make excellent progress in their personal development. The school manages the students' behaviour very well, and the behaviour of most of them is outstanding. They feel well supported and become confident learners. Teachers place a strong emphasis on personal, social and health education (PSHE), which encourages the students to respect and value themselves and others. They learn to remain healthy and to keep themselves safe. The students value the school and this is evident from their good attendance and the excellent relationships they have with staff. Parents report that their children are very happy at school. They feel confident that they enjoy their lessons and that the school has high expectations of their achievements.

The executive headteacher and the two heads of the school have provided outstanding leadership and management. Since the previous inspection, they have successfully managed the move to new premises and they have driven the continuing improvements in provision. The successful federation with Watergate has further encouraged the sharing of good practice. Together, the leaders have been effective in leading staff consistently to improve the curriculum, and this has been extremely successful in helping students to raise their achievement. The school evaluates its work very thoroughly. It seeks and acts on the views of all connected with the school, not least the students themselves. The governing body is supportive, and monitors aspects of the school's work robustly. Because of the school's rigorous self-evaluation and the determination of the governors and staff to provide the best possible service to its students,

there is an outstanding capacity to improve further. The school provides excellent value for money.

## **Effectiveness of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 1**

The leaders and managers of the post-16 provision have been outstanding in ensuring the rapid development of an appropriate and successful curriculum. Students make excellent progress in their personal development. The staff effectively promote an adult ethos and mature behaviour. Outstanding teaching results in many students making exceptional progress, particularly in their communication skills. This gives the students confidence to express opinions, and as far as possible to assert their independence. The students have well-planned experiences of preparation for adult life, including work experience, and a developing choice of vocational and creative learning experiences, such as in gardening, office skills and music.

The school has developed good links with local colleges and schools, and almost all students leave at nineteen years of age for further education courses. Students follow challenging courses, which lead to nationally recognised qualifications. The limited range of these courses, however, means that sometimes they are not matched to every student's interests and abilities as appropriately as they could be.

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

- Develop a wider range of programmes leading to accreditation for post-16 students, which are more closely matched to the abilities and interests of each student.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

As a result of their severe or profound learning difficulties, the students make progress in small increments, and their attainment remains far below that expected in mainstream schools. All the students make at least good progress, however, and many achieve exceptional gains. Older students in post-16 provision make very good use of the skills they have learned as they gradually develop their self-confidence and apply their knowledge to the adult world. The high quality of support for students with the most severe impairments ensures that they make outstanding progress, albeit in very small steps. The students make excellent progress in their acquisition of basic skills, and this has a significant impact on their achievement throughout the curriculum. Students with English as an additional language make very good progress because of the school's excellent teaching and support for their communication. Most students make exceptional progress in meeting the challenging English, mathematics and personal development targets in their individual education plans. All the students in Year 14 are consistently successful in gaining nationally accredited qualifications.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The students' excellent progress in personal development reflects the school's strong management of behaviour and the emphasis on moral and social values. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is outstanding. The students always express their pleasure and support for their friends, and they experience an exceptionally rich variety of cultural experiences. They gradually develop an awareness of the importance of healthy lifestyles

through the many opportunities to take part in physical activity during the day, at lunchtimes and after school. They make very good gains in their social skills, for instance through the communal activities which older students share with students from a local secondary school. Students in post-16 education make excellent progress in acquiring valuable life skills through their visits to a variety of different colleges, adult learning centres and schools. As a result of these community and educational links, the students are well prepared for when they leave school. Students feel safe and confident, and know what is expected from them within the school's calm and supportive atmosphere. Those students who were spoken to were emphatic that they felt free from bullying or unpleasantness and that they really looked forward to coming to school. The parents who returned questionnaires were unanimous in their praise for the school and its impact on their children's lives. As one parent commented, 'My daughter really enjoys her school and she is very proud of Greenvale.'

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 1**

Teaching standards are exceptionally good throughout the school, and this has a very substantial impact on the students' achievement. Teachers capture each small step in progress which students make, and this leads to very well-focused targets for each student's further improvement. They know their students very well, and this enables them to plan interesting, well-paced activities, which motivate the students to do their best. Teachers place a very effective emphasis on the development of communication skills, and this significantly enhances the students' involvement in learning activities. For example, in one outstanding lesson in Year 7, students with widely differing abilities were able to respond with enthusiasm to the teacher's oral promptings during the story of 'Oliver Twist'. In this exciting and fun lesson, the students all made exceptional progress. The management of behaviour is excellent. Students understand and respond to clear routines. When a student's behaviour becomes unacceptable, it is dealt with calmly and with understanding and support for the individual involved.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Students enjoy a carefully constructed curriculum which is very well adapted to their needs, and which is rigorously monitored for its effectiveness. Learning activities are made interesting and often exciting, as, for instance, when students were able to 'visit' Narnia, spectacularly recreated within a classroom. Programmes in PSHE underpin much of the school's work, and these have a significant impact on the students' achievement in personal skills, and their knowledge about the advantages of a healthy lifestyle and about their own safety. The school's excellent provision for the development of students' communication and other basic skills is extremely effective in promoting the students' confidence and their access to learning opportunities. Since the previous inspection, the provision for autistic students and those with PMLD has been significantly enhanced, and is now one of the school's strengths. There is a wide range of activities to take students out of the classroom, teaching them to behave appropriately in the community. This adds substantially to their social skills, their self-confidence and their interest in learning.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 1

The safeguarding of students is the school's highest priority. There are very secure child protection procedures in place, including the necessary checks on staff. It maintains excellent links with outside agencies to help ensure that all needs are fully addressed. There are excellent transition arrangements as younger pupils leave the partner primary school to enter Greenvale, which are very effective in supporting and reassuring students as they start their new school. The students are proud of their successes and they like the way that staff tell them how well they are doing, in both their work and personal development, and reward them with praise and encouragement. Parents appreciate the quality of care. One parent commented that 'It's like an extension of the family'. Parents receive high-quality information about their children at annual review meetings, and the students are involved where possible in agreeing their own targets. Students receive very good advice and support as they are about to leave school. There are good links with local colleges, which results in almost all students taking advantage of further education courses when they leave school.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 1

The school's leaders have continued to drive up standards in teaching and in the students' achievements since the previous inspection. The major strength of the school lies in the rigorous and effective way in which managers monitor, evaluate and improve on every aspect of the school's performance. There are very effective procedures, for instance, to measure students' progress, although the senior team are aware that there is scope to refine further its procedures to enable them to demonstrate the school's effectiveness more easily. Communication within the school is excellent. Staff feel fully consulted, involved and valued. There are excellent procedures to support new staff, and the quality of professional training is outstanding. This makes a significant contribution to sustaining the students' often exceptional achievement. Governors provide excellent support to the school, they work closely with individual staff, and they rigorously monitor the school's strengths and areas for development.

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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?	1	1
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?	1	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1	1

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	1	1
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	1	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1	1

<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.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1	1
The attendance of learners	2	2
The behaviour of learners	1	1
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	1

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	1	1
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	1
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

## Leadership and management

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

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

28 January 2009

Dear Students

Inspection of Greenvale School, Catford, SE6 1UF

Not long ago I came to the school to see how you were getting on and whether I could suggest anything to make the school better. You made me very welcome and I enjoyed meeting some of you in the classroom and at lunchtimes. Thank you and well done.

I was with you for two days. That was long enough for me to realise that Greenvale is an outstandingly good school. I could see that you all enjoy school very much. I liked many things. Here are a few:

- you work hard, and make excellent progress in your work and in your personal development
- the many different people at the school look after you very well
- there is an excellent range of activities, including those that help you to become independent, to make choices and to learn how to behave well
- you receive excellent teaching, and your teachers and other staff are very good at recording all the progress you make; this helps them to prepare interesting work for each of you
- the senior staff run your school extremely well and everyone else, including your parents, supports them very well.

The school could improve even further if teachers were to develop a wider range of activities for post-16 students.

You can help too, just by working as hard as you have been doing!

Please thank your parents for the helpful comments they made on the questionnaires.

Best wishes and good luck!

Yours faithfully

Mel Blackband

Lead Inspector