

The Greenwich Free School

Adair House, 403 Shooters Hill Road, Woolwich, SE18 4LH

Inspection dates 11–12 February 2014

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Not previously inspected	
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
Leadership and management		Require improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Too few students make good progress across the different subjects taught in the school.
- Lower-ability students fall behind in some lessons because the teaching does not cater for their needs. In addition, disabled students and those with special educational needs are not achieving the standards they are capable of in English and mathematics.
- In some lessons, teachers do not set challenging enough work for the most able students.
- Teachers do not ensure that students complete tasks to a high enough standard. Some work is untidy and written work is often too short or incomplete.
- Marking in books and folders does not routinely instruct students how to correct and improve their work.
- Leaders monitor teaching regularly but they do not focus sufficiently on the impact of teaching on students' learning over time.
- In the school's first year, arrangements for checking students' progress did not provide leaders or governors with an accurate view of the school's performance.

The school has the following strengths

- In the four terms since the school opened, governors have set ambitious goals for the school. They have coped well with changes of headteacher and a delayed building programme.
- The school has done well to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, and an extensive range of extra-curricular opportunities, for all students.
- Provision for students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is supported by a strong programme to promote students' personal development.
- Behaviour is good. Students are unfailingly polite and positive about their experience at school. Students feel safe and the school equips them with the skills needed to stay safe outside of school.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors gathered evidence about teaching, learning and behaviour in 17 lessons. This included four joint observations with members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors reviewed the school's own analysis of students' progress in 2012–2013, together with information provided about the students' progress so far in the current academic year.
- Meetings were held with members of the governing body, middle leaders, groups of students and senior leaders.
- Inspectors took into account the 50 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and considered a number of letters and emails from parents received during the inspection.
- Inspectors scrutinised students' work and a range of documents. These included information about student progress, minutes of governing body meetings, the school's self-evaluation, the school's development plan, and information held by the school on the quality of teaching and performance management.

Inspection team

Kevin Flanagan, Lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

David Gutmann

Additional inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Greenwich Free School opened in September 2012 with 100 students in Year 7. A further 100 students joined in September 2013. The school is currently housed in a mix of temporary accommodation and leased buildings while building work for the permanent accommodation continues. New school buildings are due to open in September 2014.
- The school is a smaller than the average-sized secondary school.
- The proportions of disabled students and those who have special educational needs supported at school action are above average. The proportion of students supported at school action plus, or through a statement of special educational needs, is below the national average.
- The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is above average; however, the single biggest group is White British students.
- The proportion of students who are supported through the pupil premium (additional funding for children in the care of the local authority, children of parents in the armed forces, and for students known to be eligible for free school meals) is below average.
- The school does not make use of any alternative education provider.
- The school is being led currently by two interim co-headteachers. The substantive headteacher left the school in December 2013 following an extended period of absence. One of the interim co-headteachers was away during the inspection, on planned leave.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the overall quality of teaching so that all students make good or better progress by:
 - making sure that teaching caters more for students of different abilities
 - making sure that all marking shows students how to improve the standard of their work
 - increasing opportunities for students to write at greater length.
- Improve leadership and management by:
 - using information from the new system for monitoring students' progress to develop a more accurate view of the school's performance
 - ensuring more accurate evaluation of teaching by identifying how well teaching is improving learning
 - clarifying in more detail who is responsible for each area of the school development plan.
- An external review of governance and the pupil premium should be undertaken in order to assess how these aspects of leadership and governance could be improved.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Leaders tested students when they joined the school in September 2012. Information from the end of Key Stage 2 showed that students attained above-average standards in English and mathematics overall.
- These students were tested again at the end of Year 7 to give a broad indication of the standards that they were achieving in English, mathematics and science. Inspectors were told by the school that these students had made outstanding progress since joining the school.
- However, information presented to governors by school leaders in November 2013 indicated that disabled students and those with special educational needs were failing to make acceptable progress in English and mathematics. Students eligible for pupil premium funding were also reported to have made insufficient progress in English, as had some students who had attained well at primary school. This is why achievement requires improvement.
- A new programme to accelerate students' progress in reading and comprehension began this year. Every student reads for around 30 minutes four times a week. Students are tested regularly on their reading skills. The school is currently collecting information to assess the impact of this new strategy to improve students' reading.
- Extra classes in English and mathematics have also been established to support learning for students who require additional and specific help, reflecting the school's policy of 'depth before breadth'.
- Inspectors' scrutiny of students' work over time, as seen in books and folders, confirms that achievement is not yet good. While students' oral skills are generally well developed, students are given too few opportunities to develop their extended writing skills.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- Teaching does not always cater for the needs of students with different abilities. Sometimes a lesson moves ahead too quickly and less able students cannot keep up. For example, in a Year 7 mathematics lesson on number patterns, the teaching continued at the same fast pace despite the fact that some students were falling behind.
- Students are confident speakers but this is not always matched by their written work. For example, during a lesson on *Macbeth*, strong teacher questioning encouraged detailed and well-developed spoken answers. However, the written work done by some students afterwards consisted of little more than one-word answers or simple copying out of quotations. This did not challenge the most able students well enough.
- The quality of written and other work in students' folders is inconsistent across subjects, and even within the same class. While many students' folders reflect industry and evident pride in their work, in others the work was haphazard, untidy or incomplete.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge. When teaching is most effective it is focused on the knowledge students need to acquire and the steps needed to get there. An example of this was seen in an outstanding Year 8 French lesson. Here, a relentless emphasis on extending students' vocabulary and sentence structure led to excellent oral and written work.
- Most marking and assessment is undertaken regularly. However, feedback to students about how well they are doing is not always given in a way that all students can understand. This means a significant number do not know what they need to do to improve their work.
- Opportunities for developing students' spiritual and moral development are good. These range from roles assigned to students during 'family dining' to active participation in school assemblies. This is supported by 'philosophy for children' during tutor time and a programme to

develop students' resilience. Together with the curriculum, these opportunities develop students' confidence and underpin their personal development.

The behaviour and safety of pupils are good

- The behaviour of students is good. There is very little disruption to learning. When it does occur, it is dealt with quickly and teaching time is not lost. As a result of a clear and robust approach to managing behaviour, students are clear about what is expected of them and how they can play their part in promoting good behaviour.
- Students' behaviour around the site is very good, especially in view of the limited space available as the site is being developed. Students act with care and consideration for each other and are excellent ambassadors for the school when visitors arrive.
- Instances of bullying are exceedingly rare. Racist or homophobic language is not tolerated within the school. An ethos of tolerance and positive support for others pervades the school.
- The school's work to keep students safe is good. Appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place and support for students' specific care needs is good. However, the school's current location offers limited space for the teaching of physical education.
- Students feel safe at the school. They know who to talk to if any issues arise and have the confidence to do this. The school provides many opportunities for students to develop the strategies that they need to help them stay safe outside of school. Parents who completed Parent View agreed that the school keeps their children safe.
- The attendance rate is high and persistent absence is very low. Punctuality to school and lessons is very good.

The leadership and management require improvement

- Despite their palpable ambition for the school, senior managers and governors have not had reliable information about students' progress across subjects since the school opened. Inspectors do not agree with the leadership team's view that every aspect of the school is outstanding.
- Senior leaders are now beginning to collate information about the progress of students on a more regular basis. While the school is more confident that students are making good progress, it is too early to draw definite conclusions from this information.
- Teaching is regularly observed in a variety of different ways, including through peer observations and lesson visits by middle and senior leaders. However, senior leaders' views about teaching do not give enough consideration to the impact of teaching on students' learning.
- Some of the priorities identified by the school development plan are too broad. Timescales are long and accountabilities are often linked to groups of staff rather than individuals.
- The school's performance management system is very well understood by staff and linked closely to teacher effectiveness, based on students' progress. All staff are clear about performance management arrangements and how their training needs are identified.
- Leaders have worked hard to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, given the size of the school and its short history. They have carefully and skilfully planned for additional opportunities to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered, even in those areas where limited accommodation or lack of specialist staff has made this difficult. Students are able to attend a wide variety of cultural and educational events. This increases aspiration and cultural awareness

for all students.

- The school has produced a detailed report on its use of the pupil premium funding in the last academic year. This report states that not all students have made sufficient progress given their prior attainment at the end of Key Stage 2.
- Senior leaders and governors acknowledge that the school's early systems for tracking students' progress needed improvement. A new system for recording and analysing achievement was introduced in September 2013. This requires teachers to judge standards of students' work in Key Stage 3 by measuring them against GCSE grade criteria. Senior leaders are confident that this new system shows that all groups of students are now doing better.

■ **The governance of the school:**

- There is no doubting governors' very strong ambition for the school. In the school's short history, they have managed a period of change and development, including changes of headteacher and a delayed building programme.
- Ambitious targets have been set by the governing body. However, the information provided to them about students' progress has been unreliable.
- The monitoring of the school development plan has not been sufficiently focused on improving student outcomes.
- Governors exercise strong oversight of the performance management of all staff, including the headteacher. Recommendations about teachers' pay progression are discussed in detail before being recommended to the pay committee. Governors have discussed, at length, the school's performance and the quality of teaching within the school.
- Governors are often on site and have provided timely support throughout this academic year to help with the smooth running of the school.
- The governing body ensures that the school keeps its students safe. It has a strong system of control over the school's finances, including the direction of the pupil premium funding. The school's financial position is strong.

What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	138245
Local authority	Greenwich
Inspection number	408995

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

Type of school	All-through
School category	Academy free school
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	199
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Jonathan Simons
Headteachers	Sara Jones and Sue Duckworth
Date of previous school inspection	Not previously inspected
Telephone number	020 8319 3692
Email address	info@greenwichfreeschool.co.uk

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, 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.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

[Piccadilly Gate](#)
[Store St](#)
[Manchester](#)
[M1 2WD](#)

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2014

