

Greenshaw High School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	103000
Local Authority	Sutton
Inspection number	286545
Inspection dates	01 May 2007
Reporting inspector	Sheila Nolan

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	11-19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School	1463
6 th form	234
Appropriate authority	The local authority
Chair	Mr M Cooper
Headteacher	Mr J Fuller
Date of previous school inspection	10-13 September 2001

School address	Grennell Road Sutton Surrey SM1 3DY
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Telephone number	020 8715 1001
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Age group	11-19
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors for one day. Inspectors investigated the following issues: achievement and standards, personal development and well-being, care, guidance and support, aspects of the curriculum in relation to the school's specialist status and the consistency of middle managers. Evidence was gathered from the school's self-evaluation (SEF), national published assessment data, the school's own records and other documentation, and observation of the school at work. Parents' questionnaires and interviews with senior and other staff, governors and students also informed inspectors' judgements. Other aspects of the school's work were not investigated in detail, but inspectors found no evidence to suggest that the school's own assessments, as given in the SEF, were other than justified. These have been included where appropriate in this report.

Description of the school

Greenshaw High School, a specialist mathematics and Computing College, serves a very diverse socio-economic area. Applications to Year 7 far exceed available places and the sixth form is growing in popularity. The school has grown significantly in recent years. Students are predominantly of White European heritage but the school population also includes small numbers from a wide range of minority ethnic groups. Families in the area have ready access to a wide range of selective and independent schools.

The proportion of students eligible for a free school meal is lower than national figures. Whilst the percentage of students with learning difficulties and disabilities is average, more than double the expected proportion has a Statement of Special Educational Need. Few students have a home language other than English. Extensive building works have recently been completed.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

Greenshaw is a dynamic and effective school that offers its students a good quality of education. It is an 'exciting school and we are enthusiastic about our work,' commented a group of staff. Students, too, consider it a 'good place to learn' and note the warm working relationships between teachers and pupils. The overwhelming majority of parents also agree that this specialist mathematics and computing college does well for the students. This view matches the school's overall judgement on its provision. The sustained progress since the last inspection is underpinned by its work as a training school, which has supported teaching by spreading the good practice within the specialist areas of mathematics and information and communications technology (ICT), and by the increasingly rigorous use of information on students' progress at senior level. Greenshaw's capacity to improve further is good.

The school rightly prides itself on its inclusiveness. Despite students' sometimes very complex needs, it manages to support the overwhelming majority of them to remain in school. Most students with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those with emotional, social and behavioural challenges, thrive in the school's generally calm and ordered environment. Nevertheless, this can result in occasional instances of challenging behaviour. This is reflected in the concerns of a very small number of the parents who returned questionnaires. The school council convincingly assured inspectors that the school deals immediately with any anti-social behaviour, including signs of bullying.

Students' personal development is outstanding. Relationships throughout the school are very positive. Students give real assent to the 'Greenshaw Charter' on behaviour, equality and racial harmony. A real strength of the school is the way it involves students in decision making and policies through ample opportunities, such as the school council. Students, for example, are rightly proud of their part in finding ways of maintaining sport at breaks even during examination periods. Students report feeling safe in school and are secure in that there is always someone to turn to, be it teacher, the school nurse or community police officer. Most students are very active participants in sport and many sample the healthy menus of the canteen. In their conversations with inspectors, students clearly demonstrated that they enjoy school. Well over half stay on into the sixth form and the overwhelming majority attend regularly. They are proud that they can make a difference to others through, for example, their support for a Sri Lankan school, by visiting local elderly residents or by helping Year 7. They feel they are well prepared for the next stages of education and training because of outstanding care, guidance and support. Most students asked were very well informed on their personal and academic targets and on their progress towards them.

There is a clear trend of improvement in results in national tests and in examinations in Years 9 and 11. Standards are above average. Students come to the school with broadly average levels of attainment and build well on this secure foundation to make good progress by the end of Year 11. Those with learning difficulties and disabilities achieve exceptionally well. In 2006, a significantly higher proportion of

students than that seen nationally gained five or more higher GCSE grades that included both English and mathematics. Students make especially fast progress in mathematics, reflecting the school's specialist status. The new digital applications course, also part of the specialist college plan, has made a good start. Still early in the course, almost three quarters of Year 9 students have already gained examination success. The school's judgement on likely high rates of success in forthcoming examinations is confirmed by the comprehensive data on students' current progress and by modular examination results.

The school is keenly aware that students do not always achieve equally well in all subject areas. Those in younger year groups, for example, previously made better progress in science and mathematics than in English. Senior managers ensure that the best practice in the most successful subjects is shared increasingly effectively across all areas the curriculum. For example, recent robust actions have led to a marked improvement in English, business studies and art. This is already evident in examination results last year. Groups of students, identified as making slower progress than others, are carefully tracked to explore underlying causes. As a result, a range of successful measures are bolstering the achievement of a number of vulnerable students. There is no significant difference in the progress of students from different minority ethnic groups.

The good leadership and management of Greenshaw is reflected in the headteacher and senior team's able and rigorous identification of the school's strengths and weaknesses and in the actions taken to bring about improvement. Standards are rising and students are making good progress throughout the school. Committed middle leaders share the school's vision of a fully inclusive school striving for excellence for all. The school has given considerable thought to its outstanding curriculum which is well enriched by a wide range of out-of-hours activities. Students are particularly appreciative of the innovative 'learning to learn' through ICT in Year 7 and of the different pathways open to them in Years 10 and 11. Governance is good. Governors support the school well and have a clear view of its development. They are increasingly able to question students' performance and are aware of where improvements are needed.

Good teaching is promoted through the expectations of the 'Greenshaw Good Lesson.' In this, the school has been very successful but knows it needs to ensure that it is applied more consistently across, and within, subjects. Students learn well and this is mirrored in their very encouraging examination results and in inspectors' judgements on classroom practice. The school has used its specialist mathematics and computing designation effectively to promote a sense of urgency in learning across the curriculum and to encourage rigorous checks on students' understanding in lessons. Nevertheless, it recognises that not all subjects have adopted such strategies consistently. Inspectors identified that the feedback some students receive on their written work was too scant in a number of lessons, partly because middle leaders have not been effective enough in monitoring classroom practice.

Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form

Grade 2

The effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form are good because it is well led, teaching is good and the majority of students learn well in their chosen courses. Students are highly appreciative of the open access to post-16 education and of the very strong guidance and support that sees them through their time in the school. One commented, 'We can freely approach teachers who go out of their way to help, even in their own time.' Well over half of Year 11 students decide to continue their education at Greenshaw.

Overall standards are average, despite sometimes lower than average starting points, and students achieve well by the time they leave school. Students pinpoint the knowledgeable and enthusiastic teaching and the regular checks on their work as the two main factors contributing to their success. Most are clear as to future education and work plans through a wide range of visits and visitors from across higher education and the work place. Nearly all students successfully reach the universities of their choice.

The curriculum closely matches the aspirations of current students but senior managers appreciate that future students' needs will be better met by further opportunities of other than advanced level courses. Students' personal development is outstanding and students are excellent ambassadors for the school. As well as their involvement with younger pupils and the wider community, they show a genuine sense of responsibility in their studies and in their mature attitudes and behaviour. Inspectors identified a loophole in the security procedures for the sixth form but the school has taken immediate action to remedy this gap. The overall quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that shared expectations of what makes for consistently good teaching is promoted relentlessly across all departments.
- Extend rapidly the skills of some middle leaders to manage their accountabilities more effectively.

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?	2	2
The quality and standards in the Foundation Stage		
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	2	3

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	1	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	1	1

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2	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	

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.

All white boxes must be completed. The grey boxes are used wherever the inspection team has sufficient evidence to come to a secure judgement.