

Greig City Academy

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	133386
Local Authority	N/A
Inspection number	381500
Inspection dates	10–11 November 2011
Reporting inspector	Bill Stoneham

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

Type of school	Academy
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	11–18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1153
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	218
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Taylor
Headteacher	Paul Sutton OBE (Principal)
Date of previous school inspection	18 March 2009
School address	High Street Hornsey N8 7NU
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. They observed a variety of learning activities including 45 lessons, each taught by a different teacher. Meetings were held with the governing body, members of staff and various groups of students. In addition, inspectors observed the academy's work and looked at various policy documents including evidence of its self-evaluation. They considered the responses from 189 student and 37 staff inspection questionnaires, and 99 questionnaires received from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the academy's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- How successful has the academy been in improving attainment for all students, and are such improvements sustainable?
- How well has the curriculum been developed to meet the needs of different groups of students, and have such changes led to a rise in attainment?
- How well are students taught, and how effectively is teaching fostering improvement made by different groups of students?

Information about the school

Greig City Academy is a larger than average secondary school sponsored by the London Diocesan Board for Schools and The Greig Trust. Although it is a Church of England academy, it provides for students from all faiths. It serves students from Haringey and other areas of north London. The academy has a highly diverse intake with the vast majority of students coming from minority ethnic groups. Over a quarter of the students are from Black Caribbean heritage, a quarter from Black African heritage and one eighth from Other White backgrounds. One half speaks a first language other than English, which is a very high proportion, with one in ten of these students being at an early stage of learning English. Over half of the students are eligible for free school meals, which is a high proportion. There is an above-average proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities but fewer than average with a statement of special educational needs. The majority of these difficulties are moderate learning difficulties or behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. Each year group has a higher proportion of boys than girls; there are two girls for every three boys. The academy has a specialism in technology, including information and communication technology. Its Investors in People status, first gained in 2008, has recently been reconfirmed. The academy also has the National Healthy Schools status.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

2

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

2

Main findings

The academy offers all students a good education. Aspects of its provision, especially care, guidance and support, the contribution students make to their own and the local community, and the work undertaken with parents and carers, are outstanding. Despite a dip in 2010, the academy's results are on an upward trend. GCSE results in 2011 met most targets and exceeded others. The inspirational leadership of the principal, supported by a good management team, contributes to high student and staff morale. There is a strong desire to improve further.

Attainment on entry into Year 7 is below average. Many students, including those with English as a first language, face difficulties in reading and writing. In addition, a significant number have experienced unsettled education because of family mobility. As the students move through the school, their progress is good because they are consistently well taught. For some significant groups, including many students with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those entitled to free school meals, progress is outstanding. By the end of Year 11, attainment is below average but clearly rising. Attainment in subjects such as English, science, modern foreign languages, history and music, for example, is improving well. In mathematics, however, attainment is not high enough. Staff changes have caused some disruption and monitoring procedures have lacked impact although they are now improving.

Most students enter the academy with low skills in literacy and numeracy. Much emphasis is placed on improving literacy, but in the minority of lessons where learning is satisfactory rather than good, literacy is not given sufficient priority. Another characteristic of these lessons is that marking and assessment lack consistency and the challenge for the most able students is not sufficiently demanding. The use of data and other information about students' performance and potential is now good. On the basis of this information, students are set appropriately ambitious targets and each student's performance is analysed well. Staff know how well all students are progressing. Such good monitoring is helping to accelerate progress. Attainment in the sixth form is rising although examination results are below average. Sixth form outcomes, however, are good. A Level examination results show that most students did better than expected given their starting points.

The students' adoption of healthy lifestyles is outstanding and is reflected in the academy's National Healthy School status. An impressive number of students participate in sport, either for fun or competitively. The quality of sports teams,

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including girls' basketball, is exceptionally high with students competing successfully at national and international standards. The academy's work as a specialist technology college is reflected in its extensive work to promote future economic well-being. Considerable emphasis is placed on developing key skills and there is an extensive and most successful programme of work-related learning. However, students' preparation for future economic well-being is satisfactory rather than good because their skills in literacy and numeracy, though improving, are below average.

Students told inspectors that they feel safe and are cared for well. Satisfactory safeguarding arrangements cover all requirements. Care, guidance and support are outstanding. Attendance has improved considerably and is above average. Behaviour is good. Improving the learning, development and well-being of students, many of whom face challenging circumstances, is deeply embedded at all levels. The curriculum has been enhanced and contributes well to rising attainment. Students and staff are proud to be associated with an academy that they recognise is improving and feel valued and respected. Staff morale is high, which is one reason why Investors in People Status has been reconfirmed. Senior managers are well supported by a good governing body. Good progress has been made since the previous inspection. A clear, well stated vision about how the academy will develop and improve further demonstrates a good capacity for continued, sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure even more lessons feature good and outstanding learning by:
 - ensuring that higher-attaining students are consistently challenged in all lessons
 - achieving greater consistency in the way teachers foster the students' literacy skills by ensuring key words are displayed and understood, and by providing students with ample opportunities to write in detail and in different forms
 - achieving greater consistency in the marking and assessment of students' work.

- Raise standards and the rate of progress students make in mathematics.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

From low standards on entry to Year 7, all groups of students make good progress, including those at an early stage of learning English. Some groups, including lower attaining boys and students of White British and African heritage, make especially good improvement in their work. By the end of Year 11 attainment has risen to below average and is far closer to the national figure than expected, given most students' starting points. Most students gain better GCSE results than expected, based on their prior attainment.

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In a large majority of lessons, learning is at least good. Learning was particularly good in English and science, as well as in various other subjects. These include modern foreign languages, humanities, music and information and communication technology, where the academy’s specialist status has helped to raise attainment. Outstanding learning was seen in a music and a physical education lesson where students were particularly well engaged and challenged by work that met their needs, and where they were able to evaluate and refine their own efforts.

A safe and secure environment is provided and students say staff respond effectively to any concerns. Students’ behaviour in lessons and around the campus is good, with most displaying common sense and maturity. Students are successfully encouraged to follow healthy lifestyles. This is reflected in high participation rates in sport, for example. Much emphasis is placed on developing their understanding of potential risks to their health and well-being. Most students enjoy school and are very proud of the academy; this is reflected in the contribution they make both to the academy and the local community. For example, academy students help in the training of cadet police officers. Students demonstrate a good understanding of the diversity within the United Kingdom and how other communities compare and contrast with their own. Their understanding of multiculturalism and moral and social issues, in particular, is developing very well; their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.

These are the grades for pupils’ outcomes

Pupils’ achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils’ learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils’ behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils’ attendance ¹	2
The extent of pupils’ spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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Students learn well because a large majority of lessons are purposeful, challenging and enjoyable. Learning is most effective when students are involved in a range of activities that are well matched to their interests and abilities, and when they are given the opportunity to work independently or in small groups. Such lessons are characterised by a brisk pace with staff using questioning well to ensure that students can explain concepts or demonstrate their understanding. In the most successful lessons staff are effective teachers of literacy and plan lessons well according to the needs of the learners. Students further benefit from the good subject knowledge of the staff. Teachers’ expectations are usually high. In less effective lessons, while some of these strengths were evident, literacy development was often given insufficient emphasis. For example, key words are not always taught and used sufficiently well, and students are not always given enough opportunity to write. Teacher-talk tended to dominate at the expense of independent learning, and there were inconsistencies in marking and the use of assessment. At times, the work was not sufficiently challenging for more able students. This was particularly evident in some mathematics lessons. Nevertheless, the assessment of students’ work is generally good. The academy sets students challenging targets and monitors the progress of different groups extremely well. The information is used well by staff and these procedures have contributed significantly to improved outcomes.

The curriculum is frequently evaluated and revised to meet the students’ needs. The current curriculum is good and has contributed towards a significant rise in the percentage of students gaining five or more GCSE passes at Grade C or above. Since 2008 this outcome has improved by over 20% and is now far closer to the national average. The changes to the curriculum have introduced a far wider choice of subjects. Enrichment provision is particularly strong. Students have many opportunities to enjoy outdoor pursuits and this is a key strength of the academy. Students are also offered plentiful opportunities to develop interests in the arts, or to participate in clubs and societies.

The academy’s systems to care for and support students are outstanding. The work of academy staff with families, students and a range of agencies to sustain the learning, personal development and well-being of individual students whose circumstances make them vulnerable is very strong. All students are valued. Improvements in attainment can also be attributed to the excellent work that has been undertaken to boost attendance. Attendance, including in the sixth form, is now above the national average. This good outcome reflects very well on the commitment of staff to help and nurture all students.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account:	
The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils’ needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

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How effective are leadership and management?

The principal provides strong and motivational leadership. He effectively communicates a clear vision to staff, students, parents and carers. He and his good senior staff team show considerable commitment to obtaining the best outcomes for all groups of students. The senior staff know the academy well. Self-evaluation is detailed. Careful and accurate monitoring, searching analysis and self-challenge have enabled the academy to readily identify strengths and devise precisely focused action plans to improve weaknesses. For example, appropriate remedial procedures have been put into place to improve some under-performing departments, such as mathematics. Attainment throughout the academy is improving with all students making good, and some outstanding, progress. The strong and relentless focus on improving outcomes is resulting in gaps in performance between different groups closing. The promotion of equality of opportunity and tackling discrimination is good, with careful tracking of all groups of students' progress and clarity about how the academy will provide for its students' specific needs. Good, thorough work has improved teaching and learning. Attainment is being boosted further by the good work the academy undertakes in association with its wide array of partners. Its work with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff consistently 'go the extra mile' to ensure parents and carers are fully involved with their child's education.

Governance is good. The governing body ensures students' safety and that all safeguarding requirements are met. Members are knowledgeable about the academy and how it is performing and challenge staff about performance and outcomes. Staff and governors are keen for the academy to be at the heart of the community it serves. Actions taken in sport, partnerships and charitable work successfully achieve this. Sporting success and work such as training police officers have enabled the academy to make important national contributions. Together with its extensive work supporting disadvantaged children in other countries, these ensure that the academy's promotion of community cohesion is outstanding.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	2
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3

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The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Sixth form

The overall effectiveness of the improving sixth form is good. In the past, students entering the sixth form have had levels of attainment that were below average, and attainment by the end of Year 13 had also been below average. This represented satisfactory progress. Attainment for current students is higher and their progress is good. The sixth form is growing in size and reputation and is attracting higher-attaining students, both from its own Year 11 and also from other local schools. This is resulting in higher attainment on entry to the sixth form. The good progress made is further enhanced by the quality of teaching as all teaching seen in the sixth form was at least good. This is embedding and sustaining the good progress.

Leadership and management are good and improving. There is a clear rationale for how the sixth form should develop and what needs to be improved and why. The curriculum has been improved to meet the students' needs more effectively and the arrangements for monitoring and tracking students' performance are challenging and effective. Attendance is above average and monitored well. These factors contribute to high retention rates and the sixth form's improving outcomes.

Students' personal development is particularly good. They feel safe and show loyalty. They are keen to take on responsibility and, for example, enjoy the opportunities to be student leaders and to contribute to various charitable efforts. They also play an important role in mentoring younger students and helping with their welfare on the many outdoor education opportunities provided by the academy. Students feel supported and well advised about careers and university applications. Applications to higher education are rising, with many students having high, but realistic, expectations about their next steps. The sixth form is expanding. This is attributable to the improving standards and opportunities offered.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

Fewer than 10% of parents and carers replied to the inspection questionnaire, with fewer still adding any comments. This is a below average response. For every question, the percentage of parents and carers who either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' was over 90% with some responses running at over 95%. This is an

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extremely high level of support for the work of the academy. A small minority of respondents made comments about bullying, but even here, one comment praised the academy for the work it has done to ensure that bullying incidents are rare. The inspection findings agree with parents and carers about the good quality of education provided. They also conclude that individual needs are met well. The academy is inclusive and staff strive continuously to meet the needs of all students. Behaviour is good. Students behave sensibly and are polite. An overwhelming majority of parents and carers believe that the academy keeps their children safe and that the progress they make is at least good. As one respondent stated: 'Any concerns I have had have been dealt with promptly and have not spoilt my child's experience of a school that has so many positive aspects.'

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Greig City Academy to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 99 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1153 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	47	47	49	49	2	2	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	39	39	56	57	3	3	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	56	57	38	38	3	3	1	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	38	38	58	59	2	2	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	29	29	65	66	5	5	0	0
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	29	29	61	62	6	6	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	25	25	62	63	8	8	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	34	34	54	55	4	4	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	30	30	59	60	5	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	38	38	55	56	4	4	1	1
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	20	20	68	69	5	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	36	36	58	59	2	2	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	47	47	48	48	2	2	1	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	43	47	10	0
Primary schools	6	46	42	6
Secondary schools	14	36	41	9
Sixth forms	15	42	41	3
Special schools	30	48	19	3
Pupil referral units	14	50	31	5
All schools	10	44	39	6

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2010 to 08 April 2011 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement. ■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils. ■ The quality of teaching. ■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships. ■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



14 November 2011

Dear Students

Inspection of Greig City Academy, Hornsey, N8 7NU

My colleagues and I thoroughly enjoyed our recent visit. Thank you for making us so welcome. We enjoyed talking to you and learning about your views. You told us that the academy is a special place and that you are happy with the education you receive. We agree. You are receiving a good education. Many things impressed us. Many of the lessons we observed were good, interesting and challenging. They help you make good progress in your work, and improve your levels of attainment. You make a significant contribution to these positive outcomes. Attendance is above average and your behaviour is good. We were impressed with your attitudes in lessons. We were pleased to learn about your involvement in various sporting, music and drama activities. I was disappointed that I could not see your excellent girls' basketball team in action. We were also impressed by the opportunities you have for outdoor education and how this is combined with visits to places such as the Irish Republic.

Although we are pleased by your achievements, we have asked the academy to make some improvements to help you improve your work further. These are to:

- ensure even more lessons feature good and outstanding learning by:
 - ensuring that higher-attaining students are consistently challenged in all lessons
 - achieving greater consistency in the way teachers foster your literacy skills by ensuring key words are displayed and understood by you, and by providing you with ample opportunities to write in detail and in different forms
 - achieving greater consistency in the marking and assessment of your work.

- raise standards and improve the progress you make in mathematics.

You can help by continuing to attend regularly and working hard. We all enjoyed meeting you and would like to wish you every success for the future.

Yours sincerely
Bill Stoneham
Lead inspector

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