

George Green's School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100974
Local Authority	Tower Hamlets
Inspection number	335633
Inspection dates	14–15 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Samantha Morgan-Price HMI

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

Type of school	Comprehensive
School category	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1287
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	141
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Dr Harriett Jones
Headteacher	Mrs Kenny Frederick
Date of previous school inspection	17–18 September 2008
School address	100 Manchester Road Isle of Dogs London E14 3DW
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 55 lessons, and held meetings with governors, staff, groups of pupils, the local authority school improvement partner and the school's consultant from Education London. They observed the school's work, and looked at school planning and evaluation documents, records of lesson observations, governing body minutes and tracking and monitoring data for current students.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- achievement of all groups of students especially White British, Bangladeshi and Caribbean to determine whether teaching is sufficiently challenging and is meeting the needs of all students
- teachers' use of assessment throughout the school to identify whether it is used effectively to match lessons to the needs of all students and to inform them how to improve
- the consistency of achievement across subjects to identify the effectiveness of leadership and management, including middle managers, especially in English, drama and religious education (RE)
- the effectiveness of the sixth form in light of outcomes not consistently improving in 2009.

Information about the school

The school serves a community with high levels of social and economic disadvantage; the proportion of students eligible for free school meals is significantly higher than the national average. Around half the students are of minority ethnic heritage, with the largest proportion being of Bangladeshi origin, who account for a third of the school's roll. The proportion of students who start or leave the school other than at the beginning of the school year is above average. Over a third of students have special educational needs and/or disabilities, which is significantly higher than the proportion seen nationally; the largest group have behavioural, emotional or social difficulties.

The school has been a humanities college since 2006, specialising in English, citizenship and drama, and has been a training school since 2003. The school was given a notice to improve in September 2008.

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?

3

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

3

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

George Green's is a satisfactory, but rapidly improving school. This is a caring school where students are valued and cared for well by the school community. Support for more vulnerable students is particularly good, enabling students with special educational needs and/or disabilities to achieve well. The headteacher and her senior leadership team have worked tirelessly to increase the pace of improvement in the last year. After the school was given a notice to improve in 2008, leaders acted quickly to stem student underachievement; their actions have proved to be successful. Students enter the school with standards that are broadly average. Inspectors judged that attainment is low by the end of Year 11 due to the legacy of students not reaching the standards expected of them over recent years. In 2009, students' attainment in their GCSEs showed a marked improvement, especially in the proportion of students who gained five or more GCSEs at grades A* to C and also those attaining five or more passes at grades A* to C including English and mathematics; this is now broadly average. Some groups attained well, for example, Black African and students with special educational needs who are receiving help solely from the school. The attainment of Bangladeshi students showed a marked improvement on the previous year, resulting in them attaining as well as their peers. Inspectors saw many good lessons where students made good progress, although the quality of learning and progress overall was judged to be satisfactory. The school's own data show that the current Year 11 students are on track to achieve their challenging targets. This demonstrates a further improvement on 2009, and standards are rising rapidly.

The school is taking clear actions to improve the achievement of White British students. Analysis of the school's current data for Year 10 and Year 11 indicates that the gap is being closed in relation to their progress and attainment, representing a marked improvement on previous years. The school has implemented many strategies to ensure that students behave as expected. Students' behaviour varies between excellent and needing adult supervision as there are a few students prone to exuberance. Students make a good contribution to their school and local community; for example, the work of the anti-bullying committee is excellent. Some students are members of the borough-wide pupils' forum where they are able to make community safety recommendations to elected members.

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The quality of teaching has improved from the last inspection; inspectors observed many good lessons, although overall there are too many lessons that are no better than satisfactory. In the better lessons, there was evidence of good planning where teachers used assessment data well to plan learning for all groups. Where lessons were not as strong, inspectors observed the poor use of assessment by teachers that failed to identify the progress students were making and there was little involvement by students in their own learning. In some lessons, more able students were not stretched or challenged by the work set. The quality of marked work and written feedback given to students to enable them to understand what they need to do to improve is not yet consistently effective across subjects.

The good curriculum is having a positive impact on students' achievement. The school has thoughtfully revised its provision at both key stages, although changes in Key Stage 4 are more recent. There are good established partnerships in many areas that have strengthened the curriculum provision, including providing the borough's youth service and being an active member of the local 14–19 partnership to devise and deliver appropriate diplomas. The impact of the specialist status has had a positive impact on students' citizenship skills. Care, guidance and support are integral to all areas of the school's work. There is good multi-agency team support for more vulnerable students.

Effective tracking systems and line management structures have enabled senior leaders to scrutinise the performance of subjects more closely. The school knows its communities well and has worked hard to provide a harmonious school community despite many challenges. Leaders recognise that a more thorough evaluation of the impact of their many actions will enable them to identify more precisely areas which are underdeveloped. The school's self-evaluation is now accurate, and it clearly identifies further improvements required. Course managers have a good understanding of the performance of their students and have improved the quality assurance systems for their departments including those in religious education (RE), drama and English. This has resulted in the improvements in the quality of teaching and learning and the better use of assessment data. These actions have enabled the school to demonstrate a satisfactory capacity to improve.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise attainment of all groups of students by:
 - more precise use of data and assessment by teachers so that lessons fully stretch all students and involve them in their learning
 - improving the consistency of marking to enable students to know how to improve
 - helping students develop the skills of self-assessment through regular opportunities to evaluate their work in lessons
 - sharing best practice in teaching and learning, especially:
 - lesson planning
 - the use of plenary sessions to evaluate and reinforce learning

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- the use of methods to increase students' participation and engagement.

About 40% of schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

3

Students' attainment improved considerably in 2009. The proportion of students who achieved five or more A*- C in their GCSEs including English and mathematics demonstrates the best results ever achieved in the school. The proportion of students who attained five or more A*- C grades including English and mathematics increased by 16% on the previous year. The school is rapidly closing the gap which has been further demonstrated by the proportion of students attaining GCSEs in the school's other specialist subjects of drama and citizenship; both have demonstrated good improvement. Student attainment is set to improve further on the results of 2009 and this is supported by the school's own robust data. Due to low standards achieved in previous years, overall attainment is low. Inspectors' judgement of learning and progress closely matched that of the school's own assessment. Where learning and progress was judged to be good or better, students' behaviour was often good or better. Inspectors observed good learning and progress in some subjects, including mathematics, art and design, drama, citizenship and physical education. All other subjects observed by inspectors contained lessons of varying quality. Students learned better when they were given opportunities to be actively involved in their learning. In some lessons, students worked well in groups, and were able to undertake peer-assessment of each other's work well. However, there were limited examples of this. Inspectors observed good examples of students actively learning in humanities where they gained a good understanding of the concept of 'globalisation'. Students were assigned countries ranging from world leaders to third world countries and they were assigned the task of increasing the financial revenue for their countries. In these lessons, students worked well in teams, achieved their learning objectives and thoroughly enjoyed the lessons.

The rate of students' attendance has improved, although it remains broadly satisfactory. The majority of students expressed a view that they were safe around the school. Inspectors did not observe any instances of unmanageable behaviour. However, a significant minority of parents expressed a view that the school does not keep their child safe. A significant minority of students also expressed this view. Students adopt healthy lifestyles through a range of sporting activities and through the curriculum. Students' achievement in mathematics and English at GCSE continues to improve. They have opportunity to develop their orators' skill through participation in many debates and forums including local and national debating societies and through the school's specialist subjects such as community-based performance.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
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	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

How effective is the provision?

Teaching continues to improve throughout the school, and the use of teaching assistants to support learning in lessons has also improved. Inspectors observed many instances of where teaching assistants supported lesson activities well and enabled students, especially those with special educational needs and/or disabilities to make good progress and enjoy their learning. In the better lessons, there was good use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning and teachers used assessment data well to plan learning outcomes. In weaker lessons, there were insufficient opportunities for students to be involved in their own learning and to work with peers to evaluate their work. In many lessons, teachers dominated discussions, which left students little opportunity to manage their own learning. Inspectors observed some very good marking, which enabled students to understand precisely what they needed to do to improve their work. There was good use of target setting and students responded well to the challenges set by teachers and had the opportunity to record their responses. However, this good practice was not consistent throughout lessons and there were many instances where marking was undertaken in a cursory manner that provided no feedback or support for students to progress in their learning.

The carefully thought out curriculum at both Key Stage 3 and 4 has made a significant contribution to the improvement in student achievement in the last year. The school has made good provision for less able students and has been successful in providing a curriculum to re-engage disaffected students There is a broad

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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curriculum at Key Stage 4. The revised Key Stage 4 curriculum includes academic, vocational and work-based learning pathways. Provision for more able students is not as well developed and the full impact of the curriculum is yet to be realised in student achievement.

The effective tracking systems have enabled the school to support students well. 'All different, all equal' is the shared ethos that permeates all of the school's work. This has enabled the school to begin to close the gap and eradicate the legacy of underachievement. The use of multi-agency partnerships which include counsellors, a family therapist, final year social work students and complex needs support from teaching assistants have contributed well to the good achievement of many students with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as improving the performance of groups of students who were previously underachieving. There have been very few instances of bullying in the last year and the school has good rapid response systems to support students at risk of being bullied. The good partnerships with local schools have enabled the school to develop strong transition arrangements for students entering the school in Year 7.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	3
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	2

How effective are leadership and management?

School leaders and managers know what they need to do to further improve student achievement. The headteacher and her senior leadership team have created a culture of rapid improvement which is now shared by the school community. They have succeeded in considerably raising attainment in the last year and in improving student attendance. Leaders and managers are aware of underachieving groups of students and the school is working hard to eradicate this. The promotion of equal opportunities is satisfactory as leaders and managers know that they have not fully removed the barriers to enable White British students to achieve as well as their peers. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities throughout the school and subject leaders are held accountable for the performance of their departments. Actions to improve teaching have been swift and have resulted in teachers in some subject areas delivering predominately good lessons. There are clear actions in place to support teachers who continually fail to provide effective lessons and these systems are working. The school is now in a position to increase the proportion of good and outstanding lessons. The school has thorough and well-managed safeguarding procedures. The school's work is extensive in the community and it has been commissioned to lead on the provision of youth services within the borough.

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The school works well with the community police and this has enabled leaders to have a good understanding of disputes that are likely to have an impact on students' behaviour in school. Governors are aware of the schools' key priorities and the progress it is making to improve achievement; however, there is limited challenge by the governing body to hold the school to account in its progress of tackling key areas of weakness.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Sixth form

The school provides an inclusive sixth form with a range of courses from entry level to level 3 to meet the varying needs of students. Students enter the sixth form with standards that are low and make satisfactory progress given their starting points. Students' attainment varies across subjects; for example, attainment is above average in A level accounting but low in A level history. Attainment is broadly average overall. The proportion of students achieving the higher grades on advanced programmes is low. Inspectors observed many good lessons. Students on A level programmes make better progress than students on AS programmes. Due to the unevenness in respect of the learning and progress within groups, subjects and qualifications, overall learning and progress is satisfactory rather than good. White British and Chinese students do not make as good progress as their peers. The progress students make in drama is good. In some lessons observed in the sixth form, teachers do not provide consistent challenge to more able students and the use of assessment by some teachers to identify students' progress is not well developed. The school is constantly reviewing the curriculum to enable students to take a range of courses, which include the International Baccalaureate as well as traditional advanced level and diploma programmes. Some relatively new curriculum

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initiatives are yet to show an impact on students' overall achievement. The monitoring of students' progress has improved which has enabled teachers to have a sound understanding of how well students are doing and what support is required for them to achieve well. Leaders recognise that there have been insufficiently rigorous actions in the past to improve its performance. Secure systems are now in place to monitor students' achievement and attendance. The focus leaders have placed on improving students' attainment of higher grades is yet to come to fruition.

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	3
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	3
The quality of provision in the sixth form	3
Leadership and management of the sixth form	3

Views of parents and carers

The rate of parental response was low, as just over 15% of parents returned questionnaires. The majority of parents were happy with their child's experience at school and agreed that their child enjoyed school. Over a third of parents disagreed that the behaviour was good at school. Over 20% of parents disagreed that the school helped their child to have a healthy lifestyle. Inspectors judged these areas to be satisfactory.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted’s questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at George Green School 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 247 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 1287 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	57	23	160	65	24	10	4	2
The school keeps my child safe	64	26	153	62	25	10	2	1
The school informs me about my child’s progress	60	24	155	63	28	11	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	53	22	147	60	35	14	5	2
The teaching is good at this school	49	20	156	63	30	12	5	2
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	47	19	143	58	43	17	6	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	37	15	143	58	47	19	6	2
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)	60	24	135	55	29	12	5	2
The school meets my child’s particular needs	47	19	145	59	37	15	5	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	52	21	127	51	47	19	14	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	40	16	130	53	51	21	10	4
The school is led and managed effectively	51	21	136	55	41	17	5	2
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	68	28	136	55	33	13	4	2

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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

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>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.

16 October 2009

Dear Students



Inspection of George Green's School, London E14 3DW

I am writing to let you know what we thought about the school. We would like to thank you for helping us when we came to find out how well you are getting on. We particularly enjoyed visiting your lessons and talking to some of you. We have judged that the school no longer requires significant improvement; overall the school now provides a satisfactory standard of education. We judged that your headteacher, senior managers, governors and other staff within the school are working hard to improve the quality of education that you receive.

We know that the majority of you feel that the school is a safe environment; however, we did note some concerns from a few of you and your parents about not feeling safe in the school. The school works hard to provide a safe and caring environment.

You achieve satisfactorily throughout the school, and the good care, guidance and support and the good curriculum that the school provides enables you to make effective progress in developing personal skills, such as in your ability to make a positive contribution to your school and the local community. Inspectors noted that there were many good examples of where you act as mentors for younger year groups, and of your work with local primary schools and other community groups in drama and your very good work on the anti-bullying committee. The good partnership links the school has made within the community have helped to improve your attendance and behaviour and has enabled some of you, especially those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, to achieve well. The school has a harmonious atmosphere and leaders and managers have done really well to achieve this.

We have asked your school leaders and managers to:

- raise attainment of all groups of students within the school by:
 - ensuring that teachers use more precisely data and assessment information about you so that lessons allow you to do your best
 - improving the standards of your marked work to enable you to know how to improve
 - helping you develop the skills of assessing how well you are doing through regular opportunities to look at your own work in lessons
 - teachers sharing best practice, especially:
 - to plan lessons
 - the use of plenary sessions to evaluate and reinforce learning.
 - the use of methods to increase your participation and engagement in lessons.

Samantha Morgan-Price
Her Majesty's Inspector

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