

Greig City Academy

High Street, Hornsey, London N8 7NU

Inspection dates 8–9 December 2015

Overall effectiveness **Good**

Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
16 to 19 study programmes	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- The Principal and the governing body have high aspirations for all pupils. They have an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for further development.
- Governors were quick to challenge academy leaders about the 2015 GCSE results which, in some subject areas, were disappointing. Leaders have taken decisive action.
- New staff in key roles have swiftly secured improvements in teaching. Teaching in most subjects is now ensuring pupils make good progress from often very low starting points.
- Staff at the academy understand the academic and emotional needs of individual pupils. They offer high-quality support and guidance which pupils value highly. As one pupil said, 'we are like a family'. This ensures that pupils make good progress in their studies.
- The academy is a harmonious, diverse and caring community where pupils are known well and feel very safe. Staff receive relevant child protection training and appropriate procedures are consistently followed. Safeguarding is therefore, effective.
- Pupils' behaviour at the academy is good. They support each other's learning in class, work hard and respect each other. Pupils mix well together at break and lunchtimes.
- The large and inclusive sixth form is good. It offers a range of appropriate courses, taught within a supportive and well-equipped environment. Pupils have high aspirations for future employment and studies, and they receive good advice about their options.
- The academy has an extensive extra-curricular programme of sport, outdoor pursuits, art, music and drama that inspires pupils to strive for personal excellence outside of the classroom.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Some pupils, including the most able, do not make the same substantial progress from their starting points as other pupils at the academy.
- The persistent absence of a minority of pupils is hindering the progress they make.
- There is subject variation in the progress made by learners studying some A-level courses.

Full report

What does the academy need to do to improve further?

- Senior leaders should ensure that pupils make substantial progress from their starting points by:
 - checking that initiatives to accelerate the progress of particular groups, including the most-able pupils, are having an impact
 - further improving attendance for pupils, particularly those who are persistently absent
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching on A-level courses is consistently good or better across all subject areas.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management is good

- The Principal and the governing body have an accurate understanding of the academy's strengths and areas for further development. This knowledge has been used to take swift action and tackle areas of previous underperformance successfully.
- A number of issues led to GCSE outcomes in 2015 being disappointing. Academy leaders, with the support of the governing body, were quick to address these issues, around teacher assessments and the consistency of high-quality teaching in some subject areas. New staff were recruited and external support sought to validate teachers' assessments of pupils' work. As a result, the quality of middle leadership has been strengthened and teaching in some areas of the curriculum is quickly improving.
- Progress information provided by senior leaders indicates that these changes have had a positive impact on the progress of pupils across the academy. Work seen in pupils' books supports this view.
- Academy leaders acknowledge that the number of pupils who arrive and sometimes leave during the school year means that these pupils need a bespoke learning package. Some arrive with little or no formal education, gaps in their knowledge and understanding, or little spoken English. Consequently, academy leaders oversee a range of effective support and assessment systems, so that individual pupils' needs can be met. This ensures that the majority of pupils make good progress.
- Middle leaders are a strong, experienced and cohesive group. They work well with senior leaders to ensure that the quality of teaching, learning and assessment is of a high standard. They are offered appropriate professional training and clearly understand their responsibilities.
- Staff targets are linked to pupils' performance and teachers are held to account for underperformance. Newly qualified teachers say that they are well supported by middle and senior leaders. A newly introduced coaching and mentor programme for those new to teaching and other identified staff is highly valued. Weekly learning walks, lesson observations and checks on pupils' books identify any staff who require further training or support. This is implemented quickly. Leaders regularly share this performance information with governors.
- The curriculum, across all key stages, is wide and successfully prepares pupils for life in modern Britain. Pupils are given a 'free choice' of subjects to study at GCSE, although the majority are encouraged to study a range that will enable them to achieve an English Baccalaureate qualification. The development of pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural understanding is woven throughout the curriculum and explicitly taught in social and emotional aspects of learning (SEAL) and citizenship lessons in Years 7 to 11. British values such as an understanding of the rule of law and democracy are explored through the varied enrichment programme. Pupils are elected into leadership positions and there is an active school council.
- The wider curriculum opportunities provided by the academy are extensive and pupil participation is very high. Projects aimed at specific groups, for instance the Girls Active at GCA club, are very popular. The academy offers specialist coaching in sports such as basketball, and, as a result, the academy wins numerous national basketball tournaments and awards. Challenges such as completion of the Duke of Edinburgh's bronze, silver and gold awards are undertaken by a large number of pupils as part of the academy's commitment to outdoor pursuits. The academy owns boats, including a yacht moored in Poole Harbour, and many pupils are given the opportunity to learn to sail. Pupils are proud to be part of the academy's 'sailing club' and were keen to tell their stories to inspectors. For instance, three Year 11 pupils told of their desire to study close to the sea so that they could continue to sail.
- The governing body and senior leaders carefully check the spending of pupil premium (additional funding given to schools for looked after children and those known to be eligible for free school meals) and Year 7 catch-up funding and its impact. The majority goes to supporting literacy projects across the academy – a priority area for academy leaders. The impact of this can be seen in the excellent progress made by pupils in both the acquisition of formal standard English and their performance in written examinations.
- A very small number of pupils attend off-site provision. The academy carefully checks their attendance, safety, behaviour and progress through weekly reports and any issues are quickly dealt with. Currently, this group is making progress in line with other pupils.
- Sometimes, leaders focus too much on individual pupils' needs, rather than assessing the impact academy initiatives have on groups of pupils, for instance the most able. This means that the progress of these groups is not checked as well as it could be.

■ The governance of the academy

- Governors are experienced, established and well trained. They have clear, shared priorities for the academy's further development. They understand the performance of previous groups of pupils and are quick to challenge and hold senior leaders, particularly the Principal, to account for poor performance.
- The Chair and Vice-chair of the Governing Body regularly visit the academy and spend time in classrooms and with the pupils. 'Open Days' are mapped into the calendar for other governors to visit the academy and undertake learning walks through the classrooms. They therefore are knowledgeable about the day-to-day running of the academy, the quality of teachers' performance and the culture for learning. They were disappointed by the 2015 GCSE results and were quick to challenge academy leaders. While they are confident that the issues have been addressed for current pupils, they are closely monitoring the situation.
- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Governors have received appropriate training and check that the academy follows consistent procedures, including the completion of the single central record. Several governors have undertaken safer recruitment training and participate in interviewing new staff. Some governors have been trained in the Prevent duty and awareness of female genital mutilation. They understand their statutory responsibilities.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment is good

- Staff have a detailed understanding of the academic and emotional needs of the pupils. Assessments completed when pupils arrive at the academy give detailed information which is shared with staff. Teachers carefully use this information to track pupils' progress and give both verbal and written feedback to help them improve.
- Specialist support for those who speak English as an additional language or those newly arrived means that these pupils are quickly and effectively assessed and this information is shared with all staff. A safe climate for learning ensures that these pupils are keen to practise their reading skills aloud and actively participate in classroom activities. Resources are sometimes in the home language to deepen their understanding of the subject. For the majority of these pupils, progress is very good.
- Pupils respond positively to the feedback they receive from their teachers and other pupils. Pupils believe that teachers want them to do well and consequently work hard.
- Teachers use available information to plan lessons that encourage pupils to think, explore and practise key skills. They have excellent subject knowledge and receive appropriate training around the new curriculum requirements. Teachers probe pupils' understanding through effective questioning.
- Pupils and parents endorse the good teaching, learning and assessment, particularly as there are now fewer changes in teachers, especially in mathematics and science.
- In a minority of lessons, set activities were not challenging enough for some pupils and didn't build on their prior knowledge and understanding. Consequently, some pupils' progress slowed. This was particularly the case for some more-able pupils.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The academy's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- The academy is a diverse and harmonious community. Pupils are known well and their academic and emotional needs are well supported by staff. As a Christian community, pupils are encouraged to celebrate their differences and support each other, which they do well. Mutual support, tolerance and respect are valued highly. Pupils are used to newcomers arriving at the academy and warmly welcome them. Consequently, the transition into the academy is usually seamless.
- Safeguarding is effective. Staff are well trained and understand procedures should they be concerned about a pupil. Equally, pupils are well informed about potential dangers such as cyberbullying, radicalisation, child sexual exploitation and gang violence. They were clear about who they could turn to should they have any worries and were confident that staff would quickly deal with any situation. Further training on female genital mutilation awareness is planned for the new year.
- Pupils report that bullying is rare and dealt with swiftly and effectively. Records kept by the academy, and

comments on Ofsted's online questionnaire Parent View, support this view.

- The canteen provides a range of food and, although busy, is organised and reasonably litter-free. Pupils were clear about healthy options and a large majority participate in sports, gym and yoga sessions to keep themselves healthy and active.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils both in class and around the academy site is good.
- Pupils work hard in lessons and support each other's learning. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the revised code of conduct is consistently applied. Generally, pupils take pride in their work and arrive on time to lessons. The '3 Rs' – Respect, Responsibility and Readiness to Learn – are reinforced throughout the school day and adhered to by the majority of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to earn points towards progress awards and profile awards, which they enjoy doing.
- The reviewed code of conduct is consistently applied by all staff. Sanctions are enforced quickly and appropriately. As a result, fixed-term exclusions have reduced significantly this term.
- At break and lunchtimes, pupils mix well together. They participate in a range of activities provided by the academy, for instance music or sports clubs. Some play basketball or table tennis in small groups. Some do homework or talk with friends. The atmosphere at these times is friendly and pupils integrate well across year groups.
- Throughout the inspection, pupils were polite and courteous. They were keen to share their views with inspectors and did so in an articulate and thoughtful way. They are proud of their academy and its achievements.
- Attendance is above the national average.
- The academy is successful at reducing the persistent absence of individual pupils. However, a large number of pupils arrive at the academy during the school year. For some of these pupils, regular and sustained attendance is not always good. This has a direct impact on the progress that they make. The academy works closely with these pupils to increase their attendance and, in many cases, is very successful.

Outcomes for pupils

are good

- Pupils arrive at the academy with often very low academic attainment. Many arrive in-year across Years 7 to 11. Teachers use a range of detailed assessment information to ensure that pupils make good progress from their starting points.
- By the time pupils leave at the end of Year 11, the proportion making progress across a number of subjects is just above the national average. Information provided by academy leaders on pupils' current progress indicates that this will continue to rise. Pupils' work in a range of subjects indicates that this will be the case.
- In English, the number of pupils making the expected progress and exceeding it in 2015 was in line with the national average and just below in mathematics. Leaders have analysed what they consider to be disappointing results for some pupils in mathematics. Decisive and swift action has been taken to address some issues that were identified, particularly around the quality of teaching. Current information shows that these actions have been effective and that a much higher proportion of pupils across all year groups are now making good progress.
- Many disadvantaged pupils make better progress in English and mathematics than other pupils at the academy and significantly better than disadvantaged pupils nationally. Pupil premium funding is used to provide a range of initiatives such as mentoring, one-to-one tuition and specialist teaching assistants.
- The progress of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs continues to be better than this group nationally. The academy works very hard to accelerate the progress of those pupils who arrive with very low academic starting points and effectively uses Year 7 catch-up funding to provide additional support. This group make significantly more progress than pupils of a similar ability nationally.
- A high proportion of pupils arrive at the academy with little or no experience of using the English language. Historically, their progress has been good. Specialist teachers work closely with those who arrive with no English to ensure that they make good progress.
- In 2015, outcomes for girls, while better than boys at the academy, were still just below those of girls nationally. Academy leaders have rightly identified this as a priority. Effective action across different

subjects means that current girls are making good progress.

- Progress for the most able has been historically variable, ranging from significantly above average to just below in English and mathematics. The academy has recognised that more needs to be done to challenge the most able in class and in a range of extra-curricular activities such as Latin. Current information provided by the academy indicates that their progress looks set to rise to above average again this year.
- Pupils are given very good advice and guidance. As a consequence, the sixth form is oversubscribed and the number of pupils continuing with their education or training is above the national average. Pupils have high aspirations. Pupils across year groups talked to inspectors about the universities they were planning to attend.
- Improving pupils' literacy across the academy is a high priority. Consequently, the library is well resourced, open all day and well used. Pupils are encouraged to read across subject areas and during form time.
- The number of pupils achieving five A* to C GCSE qualifications, including English and mathematics, continues to be below the national average.
- Some pupils do not make the same substantial progress from starting points as other pupils at the academy. Sometimes, this is due to work not being pitched at the right level or aspirations being too low.

16 to 19 study programmes

are good

- The inclusive and large sixth form provision is good. Learners can choose from a range of academic and vocational courses and combine them if appropriate. The sixth form study centre is open from 6am to 7.30pm daily and learners are encouraged to make use of the facilities and available staff support.
- The enrichment programme is extensive and provides learners with a range of sporting, artistic and outdoor pursuit opportunities. It also aims to raise aspirations through visiting speakers, visits to universities and masterclasses. Learners are encouraged to act as role models to younger pupils, hearing them read and organising events.
- Information, advice and guidance are comprehensive and, as a result, a high number of learners apply for university places across the country, with many achieving their first-choice places. Support is given to the minority who want to gain work or apprenticeships, following their studies.
- Behaviour in the sixth form is very good. Learners have high aspirations for future careers choices. Consequently, they are diligent, hardworking and mature. They are smartly dressed in business attire and conduct themselves in a courteous, articulate and polite way.
- Academy leaders are committed to developing learners' personal development and well-being. Enrichment opportunities under the strands of Global Citizenship and Tolerance and Respect offer timetabled sessions that provide training, advice and opportunities to discuss a range of topical issues. These include how to keep themselves safe from radicalisation and grooming. They are encouraged to be reflective learners, keeping self-evaluation files.
- Learner's attainment on arrival in the sixth form is below average. This is reflected in the below-average results on A-level courses. However, the progress made on these courses has improved over time and looks set to continue. Teachers have very high expectations, use probing questions and a range of challenging resources to support learners to make progress.
- Progress on vocational courses is significantly above the national average.
- Changes in the leadership of the sixth form have enabled the academy to reflect on the combinations of courses learners can opt for and the flexibility to change midway through the year if necessary. This is having a positive impact on the progress learners make.
- A number of learners resit English and mathematics GCSE to ensure that they leave the sixth form with an appropriate qualification.
- There is still variation in the progress made by learners on particular A-level courses. Teachers have received further training, and advice for learners about subject choices has increased.

School details

Unique reference number	133386
Local authority	Haringey
Inspection number	10001012

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Academy
Age range of pupils	11–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in 16 to 19 study programmes	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,128
Of which, number on roll in 16 to 19 study programmes	260
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Sheila Taylor
Principal	Paul Sutton
Telephone number	020 8609 0100
Website	www.greigcityacademy.co.uk
Email address	psutton@greigcityacademy.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	10–11 November 2011

Information about this school

- Greig City Academy is a larger-than-average secondary academy with an oversubscribed sixth form provision. It is sponsored by the London Diocesan Board for Schools and The Greig Trust.
- Just over a third of pupils at the academy are girls, which is far less than the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who join or leave part way through their secondary education is higher than in the majority of secondary schools.
- The vast majority of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. Almost a quarter are from African heritage, a quarter Caribbean and a quarter any other White background.
- Over half of all pupils speak English as an additional language.
- Almost two thirds of pupils are known to be eligible for the pupil premium which is well above the national average.
- The proportion of pupils who are disabled or who have special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is just below the national average.
- A tiny proportion of pupils attend The Boxing Academy.
- The academy is an early opt-in Progress 8 school. Pupils' progress at the end of Year 11 is tracked against their six best subject results, which include English and mathematics. The academy exceeds the Progress 8 floor target.
- The academy meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching, learning and assessment across a range of year groups and subjects, including in the sixth form provision. Some of these were jointly observed with academy leaders. Inspectors visited form time and an assembly.
- Discussions were held with the Chair and Vice-chair of the Governing Body, the Principal, senior and middle leaders, a range of staff, including newly qualified teachers, and groups of pupils.
- Inspectors took account of the 70 responses to Parent View, and looked at the surveys of staff.
- The inspection team scrutinised a wide range of documentation, including: records relating to pupil behaviour and attendance, minutes of meetings, information on the progress made by pupils, the academy's self-evaluation, the strategic plan for raising attainment, records relating to the quality of teaching and the performance of teachers.
- Inspectors reviewed safeguarding records, policies and procedures.

Inspection team

Helen Matthews, lead inspector	Her Majesty's Inspector
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Dennis Canty	Ofsted Inspector
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