

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **CHESTERFIELD HIGH SCHOOL**

Crosby

LEA area: Sefton

Unique reference number: 104952

Headteacher: Dr. A. K. Irving

Reporting inspector: Mr. D. P. Cox  
10297

Dates of inspection: 8/5/2000 – 11/5/2000

Inspection number: 184375

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Comprehensive
School category:	Community
Age range of students:	11 to 18
Gender of students:	Mixed
School address:	Chesterfield Road Crosby Liverpool
Postcode:	L23 9YB
Telephone number:	0151 924 6454
Fax number:	0151 931 5089
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. T. V. Beswarick
Date of previous inspection:	3 <sup>rd</sup> – 10 <sup>th</sup> March 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Chesterfield High school is in Crosby, which is a residential area to the north of Liverpool. It is a mixed comprehensive school for students in the 11-18 age range with 1323 students on roll; there are 214 students in the sixth form. The number of students is similar to that noted in the previous inspection report. The school is popular and is significantly over-subscribed. The school is bigger than most other secondary schools. The school is now on a single site, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. The school has very few students from ethnic minorities with 1.0 per cent of students speaking English as an additional language. The attainment of students joining the school in Year 7 is below average. Students have a particular weakness with reading with a significant minority having a reading age at least two years below their chronological age. The school has the full ability range but has fewer higher attaining students. There are 242 students on the register of special educational needs; this is 18 per cent of the school population and is broadly in line with the national average. There are 28 students who have statements of special educational need. The percentage of students known to be eligible for free school meals is above the national average at 25.3 per cent; this is similar to that noted in the previous inspection report. The school is to become a specialist sports college from September 2000.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective, and improving, school. The very good quality teaching, combined with the students' very good attitudes, ensure that students' levels of attainment are improved significantly whilst they are at the school. The very good leadership provided by the headteacher and other senior members of staff is successful in bringing about a commitment to improving standards in all areas of the school's performance. The school is providing very good value for the average funding that it receives.

#### **What the school does well**

- The very good standard of teaching has a positive impact on students' learning and brings about very good achievement.
- Students achieve very well in relation to their levels of attainment on entry to the school.
- Students have very good attitudes and enjoy attending the school.
- The school is very well led and managed. Raising students' standards of attainment within a positive learning environment is central to the work of the school.
- Teachers know and care for their students very well.
- There is a very strong ethos that has a positive influence upon all of the activities in the school.
- Students achieve well particularly in English literature, art, modern languages, physical education, religious education, dance and design and technology at Key Stage 4.

#### **What could be improved**

- The school needs to refine its literacy policy to ensure a more cohesive whole school approach to improving students' literacy skills.
- The school needs to extend its systems of self-review to ensure that the monitoring and support of teaching becomes sufficiently rigorous.
- The monitoring of the work of faculties by middle managers is inconsistent.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected in 1995. Improvements in teaching have ensured that standards have risen throughout the school and are now above the national average at GCSE. Results in GCSE examinations have improved at a rate that is above the national average and are now very high when compared with similar schools. An extensive building programme has been completed successfully with the school now being housed on a single site. The key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed most successfully, with the exception of monitoring where further work is required. The improvements in the quality of teaching and the standards achieved reflect well on the leadership and management skills of the headteacher and other staff in posts of responsibility.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 16 and 19 year olds based on average point scores in GCSE examinations.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
GCSE examinations	C	C	B	A*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
GCE A levels	C	D	C	N/a	

Results in the national tests for 14 year olds in 1999 were well above the national average in English; above average in mathematics and in line with the national average in science when compared with all schools. When compared with schools with students from similar backgrounds, results were very high in English and mathematics and were well above average in science. When compared with similar schools these results place English and mathematics in the top five per cent of schools nationally.

In the 1999 GCSE examinations, students' results were above the national average and very high compared with similar schools. When compared with similar schools these results are in the top five per cent of schools nationally. The school sets challenging targets for the proportion of students obtaining five or more passes at grades A\*-C and A\*-G and was successful in attaining these. GCSE results have improved significantly since the previous inspection and the school is justly proud of its success in the 1999 examinations. Based upon the last three years, results showed a rate in improvement above the national trend. Students achieved their best results in art, English literature, modern languages, physical education, religious education and design and technology, while the least successful results were in business studies.

Students' standards of attainment are well above the national average in English. However, problems with literacy, particularly reading and writing, persist and hinder some students from achieving the very highest GCSE grades. Standards of numeracy are generally above average.

In the 1999 GCE A-level or GNVQ equivalent, students' results were in line with the national average. This represents a slight decline since the previous inspection.

Students achieve very well at the school when compared with their standards of attainment on entry.

## STUDENTS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Students are enthusiastic about school and learning. A high proportion of parents says that their child is happy here.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is very good in and around the school. There are few permanent exclusions. The number of fixed term exclusions is also low.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Students show a good deal of respect for the opinions of others. There is a good degree of harmony in the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The school has worked hard to improve attendance. Punctuality to school and to lessons is very good.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching students: of	aged 11-14 years	aged 14-16 years	aged over 16 years
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Very good	Very good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

The quality of teaching in the school is very good. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons, at least good in 74 per cent of lessons and very good or better in 47 per cent. Teaching is effective in meeting the needs of all students.

The quality of teaching is very good in English and good in mathematics and science. The very best teaching is in English, modern languages and dance where there are examples of outstanding teaching. There is, however, a high proportion of lessons across the school where teaching reaches a very good or excellent standard. The teaching of both literacy and numeracy skills occurs within subjects but as yet there is not a formally co-ordinated approach.

Teachers have good levels of expertise that underpin their authority in the classroom. A strength of the teaching is the enthusiasm that many teachers bring to the lesson. Thorough lesson planning clearly targets what is to be learnt in the lesson, which is normally shared effectively with students at the beginning of each lesson. Students understand well what is expected, how to do the task, and how to move forward to a higher level in the subject. Students consistently demonstrate very good attitudes to their work and respond positively to the very good teaching. They concentrate well on the tasks, although occasionally a class will lose concentration between tasks. They respond best to the most challenging or imaginative activities. Teachers frequently include a lesson summary in order to consolidate the work covered during the lesson. The quality of marking is less rigorous.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum provision is good at all key stages.
Provision for students with special educational needs	Good. Teachers match work well to the needs of individual students, who are provided with extra support of good quality where necessary.
Provision for students with English as an additional language	N/A
Provision for students' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision overall. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good and has a strong impact upon students and the life of the school.
How well the school cares for its students	Standards of care are high. This is a caring school where staff know the students well.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is fully committed to raising standards in the school. He is well supported by other members of the senior management team and the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has a good working knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and supports the school to good effect.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There are satisfactory systems and strategies in place to monitor and evaluate the performance in subjects. The formal and systematic evaluation of teaching through first hand observation needs to be further developed.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of the resources that are available and provides very good value for money at all key stages.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students make good progress</li><li>• Students work hard at the school</li><li>• The quality of teaching is good</li><li>• There is very good leadership provided by the headteacher</li><li>• The attitudes and values promoted by the school.</li><li>• The caring nature of the school</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The amount of work that students are expected to do at home</li></ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive views. Students do make very good progress within a caring environment. Parents were split over whether there was too much or too little homework. The inspection team's judgement is that the amount of homework is generally satisfactory, but that there are significant variations in the amount set on different weeks.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

**The very good standard of teaching has a positive impact on students' learning and brings about very good achievement.**

1. The quality of teaching is very good and there is a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching. Teachers have good levels of expertise that underpin their authority in the classroom. In a Year 11 food technology lesson, the teacher used her knowledge of the examination syllabus to improve students' understanding of examination techniques and to extend students' technical vocabulary. A strength of the teaching is the enthusiasm that many teachers bring to the lesson. Thorough lesson planning clearly targets what is to be learnt in the lesson, which is normally shared effectively with students at the beginning of each lesson. Students understand well what is expected, how to do the task, and how to move forward to a higher level in the subject. Students consistently demonstrate very good attitudes to their work and respond positively to the very good teaching. They concentrate well on the tasks, although occasionally a class will lose concentration between tasks. They respond best to the most challenging or imaginative activities. This was evident in a Year 10 dance class, when students were highly motivated by the choreography. Teachers frequently include a lesson summary in order to consolidate the work covered during the lesson. This means that students normally work well to the end of each lesson and often leave the classroom discussing their work.
2. Teachers know their students very well and relationships are very good and this creates a positive learning environment. Expectations are high, with very good effect on learning and progress enabling students at all levels of attainment including those with special educational needs, to achieve well through the key stages. Firm class control, good lesson planning and short interesting activities harness students' energies and keeps students, who can be easily distracted, well on task. In the best lessons seen, as in a Year 7 Spanish lesson, the teacher changed tasks every 15 minutes and used humour to motivate and encourage students. Teachers have a friendly but purposeful approach which students appreciate. They manage students very effectively. In a Year 7 science lesson on human reproduction, the teacher was firm but was always aware that some students had difficulty coming to terms with the topic. Teachers are particularly skilful at questioning students, finding out what they know and then creating opportunities that enable students to achieve well. This was well illustrated in a Year 10 mathematics class when the teacher built successfully on students' prior knowledge of algebra. Teachers make good use of a range of resources. In a Year 10 history class, the teacher made very good use of resources to improve students' understanding of the background to the persecution of different ethnic groups.
3. Students are attentive and many show real interest in their subjects. Most students concentrate well and sustain their interest throughout the 60-minute lessons. On the rare occasions when students drift off task, teachers are quick to refocus the group. Students have a good understanding of how well they are doing. Teachers are quick to praise and the individual support provided for students informs students on how they can improve.

**Students achieve very well in relation to their levels of attainment on entry to the school.**

4. The majority of students currently attending the school entered the school in Year 7 with levels of attainment that were below average, although there are both very high and very low attaining students who join the school in Year 7. By the age of 14, students' overall results in the national tests are above the national averages. The results in English and mathematics when compared with schools with students from similar backgrounds place the school in the top five per cent of schools nationally. This represents very good progress in Years 7 to 9. The very good rate of progress is continued throughout Years 10 and 11 and students leave the school with examination results that are above the national average and place the school in the top five per cent of schools when compared with schools with students from similar backgrounds.

**Students have very good attitudes and enjoy attending the school.**

5. Students respond positively to their education and there is mutual respect between teachers and students. Students take pride in their school and speak highly of their teachers. Students come to school expecting to learn and to make good progress. They are interested in their work, especially when lessons are purposeful and the quality of teaching is good. Most are happy at school and believe that it is a good school that will give them a good education. They are very loyal to the school and take great pride in its reputation. Behaviour in and around the school is very good. Students move around the school in an orderly manner. There is little evidence of graffiti although some students are careless with litter. Students relate very well to their teachers and to other adults in the school. They know and understand the school's rules. There is very little evidence of bullying and there is a calm atmosphere within the school.

**The school is very well led and managed. Raising students' standards of attainment within a positive learning environment is central to the work of the school.**

6. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is fully committed to raising standards in the school. He has established a very clear direction for the work of the school. The headteacher is well supported by other members of the school management team. The senior management structure operates well and enables strengths to be recognised and areas for development and improvement to be identified. There is a strong emphasis on improving standards of attainment and this is reflected in the rapid improvement in GCSE results.
7. The governing body has a good working knowledge of the school's strengths and weaknesses and supports the school well.
8. Subject performance reviews are carried out regularly and, together with the analysis of examination results, are used to draw up action plans to improve standards of attainment. The results of this approach are clear in the improvement in teaching and the significant improvement in GCSE results since the previous inspection.
9. Development planning, at a whole school level is good, with carefully identified priorities appropriate to the needs of the school. Priorities are clearly linked to raising standards and improving the educational experiences of the students. The work of the school is monitored closely by the senior management team. The school sets challenging targets for the standards which students achieve.
10. Financial planning in the school is very good. The school manages its budget very effectively. The school is rigorous in its approach to attaining the best value for money. It is constantly reviewing its performance against other schools both locally and nationally. The school provides very good value for money. Routine administration of the school's budget is very good. The school makes good use of new technology that enables the school to monitor expenditure against budget. The quality of the school administration and routine administration is very good and ensures that the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

**The teachers know and care for their students very well.**

11. Standards of care are high, and the school makes very good provision for safeguarding the health and welfare of its students. Arrangements for child protection meet all legal requirements. The school is highly conscious of the importance of good attendance to attainment and progress. It has therefore established very good procedures for ensuring that students attend school regularly and punctually and are not absent without good cause.
12. Teachers with responsibility for the pastoral care of students carry out their roles very effectively, supported by some very good initiatives put into place by the school's managers. Levels of attendance show continual improvement as a result of the rigorous chasing of students not arriving at school. There are good links between academic and pastoral monitoring. A mentoring system has been introduced which enables the progress of students to be monitored and when necessary, appropriate action is taken to ensure students meet their targets.

**There is a very strong ethos that has a positive influence upon all of the activities in the school.**

13. There is a strong commitment to high standards in the school, which is linked, to an expectation of hard work. The quality of relationships among all that work in the school is also viewed as central to continued success. There is no acceptance of poor behaviour. The school is assiduous in supporting students and in taking all reasonable steps to avoid excluding students. A feature of the life of the school is found in its celebration of success. This is seen in the very effective use of praise in and outside the classrooms.

**Students achieve well particularly in English literature, art, modern languages, physical education, religious education, dance and design and technology at Key Stage 4.**

14. In English literature, both boys and girls achieve very well at GCSE. Students have a good knowledge of contemporary writers and carry out in-depth studies to improve their understanding of characters and how they are presented on stage. Students show a high level of evaluation of characterisation. In a Year 13 GCE A-level class, students had a very good grasp of the distinction made between literature and plays.
15. In art, GCSE results are consistently above the national average. Students have good drawing and painting skills; individuals demonstrate a good understanding and control of the artistic elements of line, tone, colour, texture and shape.
16. Students achieve well in modern languages. Most students speak and write using full sentences and form questions with good accuracy. They have good listening skills and are generally used to hearing and understanding French, German and Spanish for classroom instructions and simple explanations. Lower attaining students identify information in a recorded text and can write short sentences about people and places.
17. Students achieve well in physical education and this results in GCSE results which are above the national average. Many students perform skilfully, and show good understanding of the principles of play in the major games. Decision making skills develop well in most games lessons, as students plan for performance and refine their skills in the context of tactical play. Very good standards are attained in dance, where most students of all abilities show a good sense of rhythm and good use of dynamics as they create their own dance routines, and evaluate each other's work sensitively.
18. Students achieve well in design and technology. Students have a good grasp of the designing and making process. Scrutiny of students' projects indicates a high level of practical competence and some outstanding sixth form coursework. Students develop their research and planning skills and make effective use of information technology facilities.
19. In religious education, the numbers of students who achieve the very highest grades at GCSE is far above the national average. A wide range of topics is covered and in a Year 10 class the discussion on Islam was of a particularly high standard.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The school needs to refine its literacy policy to ensure a more cohesive whole school approach to improving students' literacy skills.**

20. Approximately one-third of all students enter the school in Year 7 with a reading age that is at least two years below their chronological age. Whilst students do very well in national tests and examinations, many still have difficulty with reading and writing. During the inspection there were very good examples observed of how students' reading and writing skills can be improved. However, as yet, there is no overall whole-school strategy that is applied consistently by faculties to help raise the standards of reading and writing across the school. Teachers use different approaches to marking and to the correction of spelling errors. There are missed opportunities for engaging students in reading.

**The school needs to extend its systems of self-review to ensure that the monitoring and support of teaching becomes sufficiently rigorous.**

21. Most of the formal observation and monitoring of teaching is undertaken currently by the senior management team. Whilst the overall quality of teaching is very good, there are pockets of teaching that are not as good as the very best practice observed during the inspection. Currently, the system for monitoring the quality of teaching by middle managers is not sufficiently rigorous and this leads to a small proportion of lessons being less challenging and productive.

**The monitoring of the work of faculties by middle managers is inconsistent.**

22. Middle managers are not always proactive in monitoring the work of their faculties and this leads to the inconsistent application of whole-school policies such as the assertive discipline system or to some students not having their work marked on a regular basis. On three occasions throughout the week of the inspection the assertive discipline system was not applied and minor disruption went unheeded. The scrutiny of students' work indicates that occasionally marking is not sufficiently rigorous and does not inform students how their work might be improved.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

23. To raise further the standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governors and senior management team should:

- (1) Improve students' reading and writing skills by introducing a co-ordinated whole-school literacy strategy that is applied consistently by all staff. (Para 20).
- (2) Introduce a comprehensive programme of classroom observation with clear targets agreed for the improvement of teaching, including the already existing very good teaching. (Para 21).
- (3) Improve the quality of monitoring by middle managers by ensuring that there is a systematic approach to the monitoring of faculties by all middle managers and that policies are applied consistently across the school. (Para 22).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

55

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and students

19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	40	27	26	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

### Information about the school's students

#### Students on the school's roll

Y7 – Y13

Number of students on the school's roll

1323

Number of full-time students eligible for free school meals

281

#### Special educational needs

Y7 – Y13

Number of students with statements of special educational needs

28

Number of students on the school's special educational needs register

242

#### English as an additional language

No of  
students

Number of students with English as an additional language

14

#### Student mobility in the last school year

No of  
students

Students who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission

34

Students who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving

63

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.6
National comparative data	7.9

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	1.1

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 3**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered students in final year of Key Stage 3 for the latest reporting year	1999	110	112	222

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	78	78	56
	Girls	97	72	63
	Total	175	150	119
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	79(67)	68(63)	54 (63)
	National	63 (65)	62 (60)	55 (56)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	42(41)	40 (40)	19(31)
	National	28 (35)	38 (36)	23 (27)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of students at NC level 5 and above	Boys	72	80	57
	Girls	95	79	65
	Total	167	159	122
Percentage of students at NC level 5 or above	School	75(70)	72 (65)	55(65)
	National	64 (62)	64 (64)	60 (62)
Percentage of students at NC level 6 or above	School	23 (42)	40(43)	21(32)
	National	31 (31)	37 (37)	28 (31)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*



**Attainment at the end of Key Stage 4**

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of 15 year olds on roll in January of the latest reporting year	1999	121	112	233

GCSE results		5 or more grades A* to C	5 or more grades A*-G	1 or more grades A*-G
Numbers of students achieving the standard specified	Boys	53	119	120
	Girls	67	111	112
	Total	120	230	232
Percentage of students achieving the standard specified	School	52(37)	99(94)	100(98)
	National	46.3 (43.3)	90.7 (88.5)	95.7 (94.0)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

GCSE results		GCSE point score
Average point score per student	School	42 (35)
	National	37.8 (36.8)

*Figures in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

**Ethnic background of students**

	No of students
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	3
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	5
White	1308
Any other minority ethnic group	1

**Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	20	3
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

*This table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of students excluded.*

**Teachers and classes****Qualified teachers and classes: Y7 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	79.9
Number of students per qualified teacher	16.6

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Education support staff: Y7 – Y13**

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	502

**Deployment of teachers: Y7 – Y13**

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	74.6
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**Average teaching group size: Y7 – Y11**

Key Stage 3	24.9
Key Stage 4	21.9

**Financial information**

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	3181420
Total expenditure	3264738
Expenditure per student	2398
Balance brought forward from previous year	114665
Balance carried forward to next year	31347

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out

1323

Number of questionnaires returned

512

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	34	56	9	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	51	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	53	7	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	52	13	3	2
The teaching is good.	39	56	3	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	49	11	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	4	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	32	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	49	12	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	51	43	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	52	5	1	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	45	8	1	5