



# Maghull High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104958  
**LEA** Sefton  
**Inspection number** 277266  
**Inspection dates** 30 November 2005 to 1 December 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Mr Mike McLachlan CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Ormonde Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Maghull
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		Liverpool, Merseyside L31 7AW
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 526 2711
<b>Number on roll</b>	1280	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 526 7619
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Councillor Howe
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 March 2003	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Mark Anderson

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 30 November 2005 - 1 December 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277266
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by 5 additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

Maghull High School is an above average sized comprehensive school serving students from the full range of social and academic backgrounds although there is a higher proportion of students from the lower socio-economic groups. Students come from a large number of primary schools with one quarter of students from outside the local authority boundary. The percentage of students entitled to free school meals in the main school is broadly average but is twice the national average in the sixth form. The proportion of students who come from homes where adults have higher education qualifications is below average. Very small numbers of students are of minority ethnic heritage and almost all students' first language is English. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is below the national average. The school has a popular sixth form which is larger than the national average. The school is a Performing Arts College in partnership with Formby High School.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the schools evaluation that this is a good school with many outstanding features. The broad vocational and academic curriculum provision and the way students are cared for, guided and supported are outstanding. The school gives good value for money. Standards are above average and progress for students throughout their time at school is good. Students achieve good standards in personal development and well-being. Teaching and learning are good. Planned programmes for improving students' learning, through better assessment and the use of information and communication technology (ICT), are not yet applied consistently across the school. School leadership at all levels is good. The school's self evaluation is accurate and staff and governors are well aware of strengths and areas in need of improvement. However, middle managers do not sufficiently monitor and evaluate teaching and learning by direct observation of lessons. The school has developed outstanding links with many partners and particularly with local primary and secondary schools and colleges. This ensures students' health and safety and widens curriculum opportunities so that students are well supported to move on to their next stage of education, training or employment. Students of all abilities and disabilities are welcomed into this highly inclusive community and they enjoy school very much. Parents and pupils are very supportive of the school. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. Under the new leadership and through the very collegiate approach taken by all staff there is a clear capacity and a determination to bring about further improvements to all aspects of the provision.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good and cost effective sixth form. The quality of education, achievement and teaching are good. Standards are average but students make good progress from often below average starting points. Since 2001, achievement has improved considerably from a very low base and is now good. This improvement owes much to the outstanding leadership of the head of sixth form. The robust target setting and tracking of progress that he has developed leads to better results. The students enjoy their residential visits and their very good opportunities for community service within the school. They are very proud of recent improvements to the sixth form accommodation. The quality of care, guidance and support is outstanding, although some aspects of health education are not consistently covered. An excellent range of examination courses meets the needs of all abilities, but the formal enrichment programme is not broad enough to meet the interests of all students.

## **What the school should do to improve further**

### **Focus on:**

- ensuring greater consistency in the quality of teaching and learning through a more extensive approach to monitoring in the classroom by all levels of management

- improving the way students work is assessed in lessons so that they clearly know what they are doing well and what they need to do to improve to reach the next level in their studies
- making better use of the very good ICT facilities to improve students' independent learning in all subjects.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' standards are broadly average when they start at school although some literacy skills are less well developed. By the end of Year 9, standards are above average. Overall, given pupils' starting point, this represents good progress. Results in the previous year were particularly disappointing in English and science. However, robust analysis of these results and a clear action plan has led to the improvements shown in 2005 although there are still fewer than average numbers of students achieving the higher levels in English. By the end of Year 11, students reach standards which are above the national average. Progress is good as standards are higher than would be expected given the students' starting points. In 2005 the school achieved its best results so far, with nearly three quarters of students achieving five or more higher grades. The challenging targets set were exceeded and there has been a rising trend in standards since the last inspection. Learners with difficulties and/or disabilities reach standards which are good and sometimes better because of the outstanding support and care they receive. Standards achieved by students in the sixth form are broadly average. The school takes a very inclusive approach to admitting students so that attainment on entry is below the national average. The well matched curriculum and good teaching leads to good progress by students of all abilities.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

The school judges that students' personal development and well-being are outstanding. Inspectors consider them to be good with many features that are outstanding. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They take seriously opportunities to reflect on their own and others' actions, and have a strong appreciation of the right way to treat others. From Year 7 to Year 13, students are very positive about their school: they would definitely recommend it to their friends! Attendance is above average. In lessons and around school they behave exceptionally well so that the school operates as an orderly, yet relaxed and friendly, learning community. Outstanding relationships underpin the happy atmosphere in which students and staff clearly respect each other. Students automatically open doors for adults and spontaneously applaud others' contributions in lessons. They generally concentrate well but, even in the sixth form, do not always show strong independent learning skills. Students particularly enjoy practical activities and they collaborate well in group work. Participation in extra-curricular activities is high. They are disgusted by racism and are generous in their support for charities. The school council plays a very positive role, recently, for example, effecting improvements to school meals. Sixth formers support

younger students extremely well. Students are very aware of acting safely and healthily. One Year 7 pupil's only complaint about the school was, 'There's always a queue for the salad bar!' Rapidly increasing enterprise activities combined with very good collaborative skills ensure that students are very well prepared for a positive future life.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school judges that the overall quality of teaching throughout the school is good. Inspectors confirm this judgement. Teachers have good subject knowledge and conduct lessons confidently. They explain ideas clearly and plan an appropriate range of interesting activities. Teaching is well structured and work is mostly well matched to students' learning needs. In the best lessons seen, for example, in drama, high-quality questioning stretched students to think for themselves, reflect on their learning and understand how they could improve it. Where teaching is mainly satisfactory there is scope for better use of routine assessment to raise students' aspirations further. Relationships are very good and this rapport ensures most students make good progress. In part, they compensate for some drab accommodation and restricted ICT resources which reduce opportunities for independent learning. Staff, at all levels, are contributing to the development of teaching and learning. Promising initiatives to bring about further improvements are now underway although systems to monitor and evaluate their impact and spread best practice are not yet fully embedded. Assessment procedures are currently under review. While there is some effective practice, for example, in physical education and Spanish, some marking does not help students to know what they need to do to move on to the next level. By contrast, assessment in the sixth form provides very good feedback to students.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

The school modestly considers the curriculum to be good but inspectors judge it to be outstanding. In Years 7 to 9, a broad, balanced curriculum meets statutory requirements and the needs of all students. In Years 10 and 11, a very flexible curriculum gives students of all abilities the opportunity to study a wide range of GCSE and vocational courses. For example, hairdressing and beauty is taught in excellent and professional accommodation on the school site in partnership with a local college. This outstanding flexibility in provision is satisfying the diverse needs and interests of all students. However, a very small number of students in Years 10 and 11 do not study ICT and the school does not ensure their entitlement is fully secure through their experiences in other subjects. In the sixth form, a high degree of collaboration with other schools and colleges is leading to a wide range of opportunities that serve the career aspirations of students well. A strong feature of the school is the work it does to prepare students for their future economic well-being, through an impressive

work related learning programme. For example, all year groups will have an enterprise day this year. As a Performing Arts College, the school successfully encourages wide participation in school-based courses as well as extra-curricular enrichment. In addition a wide range of other extra-curricular activities enriches the lives of students and contributes significantly to their enjoyment and achievement.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The school considers this aspect to be outstanding and inspectors agree. Provision results in good standards of personal development and achievement by the vast majority of students. The school is strongly committed to providing equally for the well-being of all its students. Requirements for health and safety are fully met. The 'wrap around care', as described by the school, is in evidence in the collaborative way in which all teachers and outside agencies work together very effectively. Outstanding partnerships with primary schools, local secondary schools and colleges ensure students feel very secure at points of transition and widen their understanding and experiences during their time in school. An outstanding feature of the school's provision is the Phoenix Centre, where, on a formal or informal basis, many students enjoy easy access to guidance and advice that is sensitive and responsive to their diverse needs. One girl who had returned after being off school for some time said 'I wouldn't have coped if I didn't have the Phoenix'. There are clear procedures for Child Protection and staff have received the necessary training. In the sixth form, outstanding academic guidance is given to students but some aspects of health education are not fully covered.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 1**

Inspectors agree with the school that leadership and management are good. The recently appointed headteacher sets high expectations for staff and students. He has started a carefully paced programme to improve the school. His open style of leadership and systematic use of data leads to highly collaborative and purposeful teamwork at all levels of the school. The school's day-to-day work and the success of students of all abilities confirm its very strong commitment to equality of opportunity. The senior team's analysis of performance data is robust and exemplary, leading to better results in examinations at all levels in 2005, following the disappointing results in 2004. Strengths and weaknesses of the school are well understood due to rigorous and accurate self evaluation. Views of parents, pupils and other stakeholders are sought and acted on. While overall strengths of teaching and learning are identified well through performance management, middle managers do not fully evaluate these by direct observation of lessons to assure quality and share the most effective practice. The recent initiative to make better use of assessment to improve learning is not yet being implemented consistently. These issues are already identified in the school's development plan. The leadership of the sixth form is outstanding and its committed

focus on raising standards has been an essential factor in achieving the consistently improving results of recent years. Governors know and support the school well, constructively challenging senior and middle managers. They have worked well with the senior team to deal with weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and to ensure the school's finances are managed carefully and efficiently. The leadership of the school clearly has the capacity and determination to bring about further improvements.

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## Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	<b>School Overall</b>	<b>16-19</b>
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### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	2
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	2

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	1
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	2
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

On behalf of the inspection team, I wish to thank you for the way in which you greeted and looked after us during our inspection of your school. We all felt you represented your school very well indeed. We would like to give particular thanks to the students we interviewed and those of you we saw in lessons.

We think that you go to a good school which has many outstanding features.

We were very impressed by the way the school is a caring community where all of you regardless of your range of skills or abilities, and particularly those of you with learning or physical difficulties, are seen as important. We had many comments from your parents to say how much they appreciate that support. We found your Phoenix centre to be an excellent example of this. It is clear that this outstanding care and guidance helps you all to feel safe and secure and confident to move on to the next stage in school, work or college.

We were very impressed by the range of subjects you can study and the many vocational courses, including the excellent new facilities and partnerships with other schools and colleges.

We think the standards you reach in your examinations are good and that you make good progress compared with what you knew when you started school.

We believe you are growing into confident, young adults who know right and wrong and behave very well indeed. You show considerable care for the community and yourselves, for example, through your Student Council, your charity work and your involvement in sports and performing arts. We think you are trying hard to develop healthy lifestyles and we, like you, enjoyed using your catering facilities and the salad bar!

We think that the teaching you receive and the way you approach your learning are good - and some teaching and learning we saw was really outstanding. You clearly enjoy your work, particularly when it involves practical activities.

We feel you need to become more independent as learners, use computers more in lessons and that your teachers should make it clearer in lessons what you need to do and learn to reach the next stage or level.

We believe your school is well led by the headteacher, senior staff, subject and pastoral leaders and governors. They know what your school does well and what is needed to make it even better. We think it would be helpful if your teachers, especially those in charge of subjects, could observe more of what goes on in other lessons so that the many examples of good practice could be shared more widely.

We are of the view that you have a good sixth form with excellent facilities and that the excellent leadership of this and the work done there have led to significant and continuing improvements.

It was clear from the many interviews we had with students that you enjoy your school and would recommend it to others. Thank you again for the way in which you represented your school and yourselves so well during our time with you.