



# The Mosslands School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 105103  
**LEA** Wirral  
**Inspection number** 277297  
**Inspection dates** 6 March 2006 to 7 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Susan Wareing HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Mosslands Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		Wallasey
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		Merseyside CH45 8PJ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 638 8131
<b>Number on roll</b>	1473	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 639 1317
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr C Bruce
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	8 January 2001	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr G Fair

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 6 March 2006 - 7 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277297
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## **Introduction**

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors.

## **Description of the school**

The school is a larger than average 11-18 boys' comprehensive with a small number of girls in the large sixth form. Pupils come from a very wide range of social and economic backgrounds. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is higher than average. The school also has more pupils than average with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Few pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils enter the school with broadly average attainment. The school achieved Specialist Technology College status in September 2004.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 3**

The Mosslands School considers its overall effectiveness to be good. Inspectors judged it to be satisfactory. The school offers a sound education and gives satisfactory value for money. The school's technology college status and its work with partners such as local primary schools contribute to its improvement. Standards are satisfactory and pupils make satisfactory overall progress. Their progress in their personal development is also satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory but there is too much variability between subjects. The curriculum is good and tailored to meet the changing needs of pupils. Care, guidance and support are good. The management of support for those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, especially the work of the learning mentors, is an outstanding feature, which allows these pupils to make good progress. Leadership and management are satisfactory. All staff with leadership responsibilities share a commitment to the school's strongly inclusive ethos but some do not fully understand key school policies and processes. The school has shown the capacity to improve by the way it has tackled some of the issues raised in the last inspection. However improvement could be more rapid because the monitoring and evaluation of new developments is not yet sharp, nor are the targets for pupils' achievement. Current behaviour management systems are not robust enough to deal effectively with the behaviour of the small number of very challenging pupils. The school has formulated sound plans to deal with this issue.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The school considers the effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form to be good. Inspectors judged it to be satisfactory with some good aspects. Standards at the end of Years 12 and 13 are broadly average and represent satisfactory achievement in line with students' starting points. Students' progress reflects the overall satisfactory teaching they receive. Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory overall but its quality varies and students are aware of this. Students' personal development is good, as is the care, guidance and support they receive. Students feel happy and secure but think that insufficient effort is made to seek their views. They appreciate the opportunities they have to take on responsibilities. Collaboration with partner institutions such as other local sixth forms is effective in broadening the good range of academic and vocational courses, which meet the students' needs. This is reflected in the large proportion of students entering higher education. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The new Head of Sixth Form has identified areas for improvement and put measures in place to tackle them.

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

- Improve the quality of teaching by implementing stimulating teaching approaches and more effective behaviour management strategies.
- Ensure that monitoring and evaluation of new improvements pay enough attention to their impact on pupils' achievement.

- Make more effective use of available information to monitor pupil's progress, set challenging targets and raise achievement.
- Ensure that leaders at all levels clearly understand and apply the school's policies and processes.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Pupils arrive at the school with average standards. They make satisfactory progress between Years 7 to 9 so that their test results by the end of Year 9 in English, mathematics and science, are broadly average. Progress in English improved in 2005 but its targets were not reached. Targets were exceeded in mathematics and science was close to achieving them.

In recent years pupils in Years 10 and 11 have made consistently satisfactory progress compared to schools in similar circumstances. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) results at grades A\* to C are broadly average and the number of pupils gaining A\* to G grades is above average. This reflects the school's policy of providing opportunities for as many pupils as possible to gain qualifications. However the school target of A\* to C grades was not reached in 2005. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress because of the effective support they receive, especially in developing their literacy skills. In GCSE examinations in 2005, pupils did significantly better in information and communication technology (ICT), mathematics, English language, most science courses, business studies and French, than they did on average in other subjects. They did less well in English literature, geography, history and physical education.

Standards at the end of Years 12 and 13 are broadly average. Higher attaining students make good progress but that made by middle attaining students is slower. Achievement is, therefore, satisfactory overall.

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

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 2**

Pupils generally enjoy school. They get on well with each other and the adults who work with them. Attendance is broadly average. Behaviour is satisfactory. It is better in lessons than in movement around the school. Good behaviour and enthusiastic attitudes to learning are evident when teaching motivates pupils. Sometimes low level disruption and challenging behaviour impacts on learning and slows progress in lessons. The rate of fixed term exclusion is high. Pupils' cultural development is good. Their moral and social development is satisfactory but there are missed opportunities to develop spiritual awareness, particularly through assemblies and form tutor time. Pupils feel that the school council is not always an effective means to voice their opinions or to influence school life.

Pupils know the importance of healthy lifestyles and many take part in sports activities. They adopt safe practices in lessons and make a useful contribution to the community by raising significant sums of money for charitable causes. Through good work experience placements and careers guidance pupils are well prepared for work and further study.

Students enjoy their time in the sixth form and have a positive attitude to their studies. Most students develop into confident and mature young adults.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, including in the sixth form, and some practice is outstanding. Teachers generally have good subject knowledge and explanations and instructions are usually clear. The school is developing its range of teaching and learning styles but this work is at an early stage and the quality of teaching varies considerably between subjects and teachers. Teaching frequently lacks dynamism and relies on a narrow range of teaching strategies which do not always engage pupils' enthusiasm and interest. Most teachers intervene effectively to control low level chatter and disruption but in weaker lessons teachers lack the necessary pupil management skills to deal effectively with unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils have limited opportunities to reflect on their rate of progress, or to be involved in developing ideas independently.

There are appropriate systems to assess pupils' achievement and track their progress but they are not used consistently. Best practice includes involving pupils in self-assessment and sometimes working in pairs but this does not apply in all subjects. Similarly, many, but not all pupils are aware of targets, how well they are doing, and what they need to do to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school offers a good curriculum that meets the needs of all groups of pupils in Years 7-11. Courses are tailored to meet individual needs, and this is particularly so for those with pupils and students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This is supported by teaching pupils with common learning needs together in small groups for focused support in all subjects. There is an increasing strength and breadth for Years 10 and 11, especially in the range of flexible pathways that include vocational options. The sixth form curriculum is good and provides a wide range of vocational and academic courses and the options at 14-19 are broadened by effective links with partner schools, sixth forms and colleges. Retention rates reflect positively on the overall provision from 14 to 19 which provides pupils and students with a good grasp of work related learning. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities throughout the school and participation rates are generally high. A structured programme of additional activities enriches sixth formers' experience.

## Care, guidance and support

### Grade: 2

The house structure supports pupils very well, providing continuous secure relationships as pupils move through the school. Pupils feel safe and generally free from bullying. They trust the adults and know where to turn for help. Arrangements for the safeguarding of pupils are excellent and the most vulnerable are quickly identified. The Learning Support Unit's outstanding support and guidance contributes significantly to pupils' confidence and self esteem. Child protection arrangements are in place. Health, safety and welfare procedures are good

Overwhelmingly parents are happy with the school, but a minority express concerns about pupils' behaviour. Current behaviour management systems are not robust enough and are under review. Good quality information and regular discussions enable pupils to make informed curriculum and career choices. Systems for checking pupils' performance are good, but they are not used consistently in all subjects. In Years 7-9 especially pupils do not therefore know how well they are doing or exactly what they need to do to improve.

Students in the sixth form appreciate the effective induction arrangements and the support they receive in preparation for leaving the school. Initiatives have been introduced to involve students more effectively in assessing their progress towards their targets.

## Leadership and management

### Grade: 3

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The school has an accurate understanding of its pupils' standards and achievement and of the quality of its curriculum but its evaluation of other aspects of its work is over-generous. The school has a strong commitment to inclusion which is shared by leaders at all levels. However some staff with leadership responsibilities do not fully understand some of the school's policies and processes. This affects the effectiveness of some systems, such as the current behaviour management policy. The school's capacity to improve is shown in the progress made on some of the issues raised in the last inspection. The school has improved performance in subjects identified as weaker, such as English and geography and all pupils now follow a short course in RE. However, the school's systems for measuring the progress of changes aimed at improving pupils' achievement are not sharp enough. This prevents a consistent impact on standards and achievement across the school and slows the pace of improvement. The school's development planning is sound and accurately identifies the immediate priorities for the school. Support from the local authority has improved pupils' achievement in English and helped the school to begin work on assessment for learning. The school has also begun to introduce some of the National Strategies' approaches to teaching and learning. However this is at too early a stage of implementation to show impact on pupils' achievement. Parents are generally satisfied with the ways in which the school seeks their views. Those who have children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are especially well-involved in decisions

about their children's education. The governors are very knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and play an active role in decision making. The school's specialist status contributes to the school through funding for extra resources and through its work with partner primary schools.



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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>	3	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	3
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	3
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>	3	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3	
The behaviour of learners	3	
The attendance of learners	3	
How well learners enjoy their education	3	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<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>	3	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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**

Following our visit to inspect your school I would like to tell you what we found out about the school during the inspection:

The Mosslands School is a satisfactory and very caring school and it has made some improvements since the last inspection. Teaching is satisfactory. A small number of the lessons we saw were outstanding. The school provides you with a good range of subjects and we were impressed with the variety of vocational subjects on offer in Years 10 and 11 and in the sixth form.

The head teacher and staff are very committed to all of you and try to help you to do well. They make sure that very few of you leave school without qualifications and that the great majority of you are graded in GCSE examinations. You get very good advice on careers and further study and you appreciate the wide range of extra clubs and activities. We also know how much many of you appreciate the care and guidance you get from the Learning Support Unit. We thought that the work of your Learning Mentors was outstanding. We know that a small number of pupils cause disruption in some of your lessons and quite a large number of them have to be excluded. However, during our visit we were impressed by the politeness that most of you showed to us. The staff do a great deal to ensure that your time in school is safe and you generally enjoy coming to school.

Last year the standards and progress of those of you who were in Years 7, 8 and 9 was satisfactory overall and the school put in extra support to improve your results in the English tests. Progress was also satisfactory in Years 10 and 11 and you did better at GCSE in ICT, mathematics, English language, most science courses, business studies and French than in other subjects in English literature, geography, history and physical education.

The fact that Mosslands has become a technology college is already helping the school, for example, with extra equipment and there are plans for more. We hope that this will make a big difference not just to your work in technology subjects but to the whole school.

The school has improved in some ways since the last inspection and we think it can improve further. The school needs to:

- improve the behaviour of the small number of challenging pupils by:
- having a strong system for managing them and
- helping teachers to make all lessons as interesting as the best
- ensure that when the staff plan a new development they pay enough attention to exactly how it will improve your learning
- make sure you know how you are doing in all your subjects and exactly what to do to improve.

I would like to thank those of you who talked to the inspectors to let us know what you think of the school. We found this very helpful. I would like to wish you all every success for your future at The Mosslands School.