



# Southend High School for Boys'

Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 115362  
**LEA** SOUTHEND-ON-SEA LEA  
**Inspection number** 279584  
**Inspection dates** 1 February 2006 to 2 February 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms. Rhona Seviour LI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Prittlewell Chase
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		SS0 ORG
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Boys	<b>Telephone number</b>	01702343074
<b>Number on roll</b>	938	<b>Fax number</b>	01702300028
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr. Paul Richards
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	16 October 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr. Michael Frampton

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 18	<b>Inspection dates</b> 1 February 2006 - 2 February 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 279584
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Southend High School is a grammar school for boys aged 11 - 18. Girls are admitted to the sixth form. The school takes pupils from a wide geographical area, including the borough of Southend-on-Sea, and is regularly oversubscribed. Entry to the school is selective and pupils are drawn from the upper quarter of the ability range. The number of pupils from minority ethnic communities is below the national average and the proportion with special educational needs, or who are entitled to free school meals, is low. The school has been a specialist Language College since 2001 and has recently been designated a lead school in a Leading Edge Partnership. It is also a member of the Comenius East of England language partnership and the Southend Excellence Cluster.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 1**

Southend High School for Boys is an outstanding school with a very strong ethos and a distinctive character. Its pupils are justifiably proud to belong to it, make very good progress and achieve exceptionally high standards. The school successfully balances an emphasis on academic achievement with a concern for pupils' personal development and well-being. This ensures that pupils are well equipped for their place in society. The leadership team is very ambitious for the school and is effective in bringing about improvement. The headteacher, well supported by the governing body, provides very strong leadership. Middle managers are not always rigorous in checking the consistency of the quality of marking, and the use of assessment information. The school's curriculum is complemented by an outstandingly rich and varied range of additional activities, some of which result from the school's specialist languages status and its community links. Pupils speak in glowing terms about these activities and appreciate the time devoted to them by their teachers. All staff have high expectations of pupils and a strong commitment to the school which contribute much to its success. Currently, the school is not meeting the minimum requirements for information and communication technology (ICT) at Key stage 4. Most teaching is good and some is outstanding, particularly in the sixth form. Only a small amount is not well matched to pupils' learning needs. The school works hard to recruit and retain good teachers; it has not always found this easy but presently it is well staffed. The school's care, guidance and support are outstanding. The strength of the relationship between teachers and pupils contributes to the positive attitudes pupils have to the school and to learning. Within the school there is an atmosphere of intellectual challenge and care. Pupils' keenness, interest, curiosity and hard work were evident to inspectors. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and tackled all the identified issues. Results have improved and are exceptionally high. In 2005, attainment in the sixth form placed the school amongst the highest performing in the country. The school has recently been re-designated a language college which has numerous benefits. Through their questionnaires to inspectors, parents have expressed a high level of confidence in the school. The school provides good value for money. Its self-evaluation is broadly accurate and, as a result, it is well placed to move to the next stage of its development.

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

### **Grade: 1**

Inspectors judge the school's sixth form to be highly effective and efficient, a more favourable judgement than the school's own. A combination of consistently good or outstanding teaching, a challenging curriculum and very good guidance and support means that, overall, students make outstanding progress during their time in the sixth form. The majority of students achieve their predicted grades and progress to university education. Successful efforts are made to ensure that students joining the sixth form, and particularly the girls, are welcomed and supported. Students enjoy their time in the sixth form and speak very positively about the many responsibilities and

opportunities they are given. As a result they develop as very well rounded young people. The sixth form is well led and provides very good value for money.

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

- Ensure that the school meets the minimum requirement for ICT at Key Stage 4 and utilises ICT more effectively to support teaching and learning in all subjects. - Improve the effectiveness of middle managers, particularly in relation to the consistency of the quality of marking and the use of assessment information.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils reach exceptionally high standards in all stages of their education. In 2005 most pupils achieved the highest levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 3 and 98% achieved grades A\* - C in the GCSE examinations. Sixth form results in 2005 placed the school amongst those achieving the highest standards nationally in the advanced level examinations. Entry to the school and the sixth form is by selection. As a result, the attainment of Year 7 pupils is well above average. Between Years 7 and 11 pupils make very good progress. In 2005 there were some variations between the GCSE results achieved in different subjects, in part the result of staffing difficulties experienced by the school. The school has thoroughly investigated the reasons for these differences and has convincing strategies to address them. Improvements in the use of assessment data have enabled teachers to set challenging targets and to direct additional teaching support where necessary. This has been particularly effective in raising standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 3. Entry to the sixth form is also selective and during their time there students make outstanding progress and achieve exceptionally good results in the advanced level examinations. In 2005 nearly 70% of students achieved either A or B grades. Across the school, pupils with learning difficulties or disabilities make good progress. The school sets itself and achieves very challenging targets.

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

### **Grade: 1**

The school judges pupils' personal development and well-being to be good; inspectors judge it to be outstanding. Attendance levels are very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and around the school and are considerate of and respectful towards others. Relationships between all in the school community are outstanding. Pupils enjoy the learning opportunities they are given, both in class and in other activities, and are highly motivated. They have positive views of school life and express themselves very confidently and articulately. The school and year councils are active groups, making a difference in some areas of school life. For example, they are currently playing an important role in improving the opportunities for healthy eating. Many pupils enjoy physical activities, often beginning early in the morning and continuing beyond the school day. Pupils know how to keep themselves safe and many make a good

contribution to the wider community. Sixth form students make a significant contribution to the life of the school. Pupils respond very well to the opportunities for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff and governors are interested in pupils' opinions and consult with them about school issues. Pupils are acquiring good skills which are equipping them well for their future place in society.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school rightly judges teaching and learning to be good. The focus on improving teaching and learning, which includes increased monitoring by senior staff, has had a positive impact on overall quality. Some of the teaching observed by inspectors, particularly in the sixth form, was outstanding. Teachers have a high level of subject expertise and maintain very good relationships with their pupils. Most lessons are well structured with clear objectives. Challenging questioning by teachers draws out pupils' deeper understanding. Pupils have confidence in their teachers and in each other and so can ask questions and share their thoughts without apprehension. Teachers' explanations are clear and, on occasions, helpfully reinforced by the skilful use of interactive whiteboards. Regular marking of work, the setting of clear targets, encouraging pupils to evaluate their own progress and helping each other to identify how to get better contribute to the achievement of very high standards. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations; they work hard and take a pride in their work and so progress well. However, in a small proportion of lessons the learning activities are not well matched to the needs of all learners. Many subjects have good assessment and marking strategies that need to be copied by all teachers. The wide range of information to monitor progress enables appropriate target setting for all pupils, so that the learning by pupils with special educational needs and by looked after children is also good. Teaching in the sixth form is good and often excellent. In the very best lessons students have the curiosity and confidence to question and challenge their teachers. This promotes a very high level of intellectual discourse.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the school that its curriculum is good. Younger pupils follow a broad programme that includes a wide experience of modern foreign languages. In Years 10 and 11 the curriculum is complemented by the provision of after school classes, for example, in foreign languages and statistics, which, although voluntary, are very well attended. In addition, there is an outstandingly rich and varied range of sporting, social, and cultural additional events and activities which adds to pupils' enjoyment of coming to school. The take up of these opportunities is outstanding and few students do not benefit from the enrichment available. Since the last inspection ICT is better used in many areas of school life. The curriculum time given to the subject has increased at Key Stage 3 but still half of the pupils in Key Stage 4 do not study it

sufficiently. There are plans in place to correct this for 2006-7. There has been a significant investment in equipment but provision needs further improvement to support teaching and learning effectively in all subjects. Students in the sixth form follow a very good range of advanced level courses and a high quality general studies programme adds breadth to their experiences. There are also many day and extended visits that widen experience. Due to time pressures the school has reduced the number of enrichment activities available in the sixth form. However, as part of its curriculum review processes it has rightly identified the need to restore its wider provision and to formalise community links, enrichment activities and experience of work.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Inspectors agree with the school's judgement that care, guidance and support are outstanding. Teachers know pupils very well and provide a high level of guidance and support through a strong pastoral and house structure. Marking often provides an added intellectual challenge for pupils, but is not consistent across all subjects and teachers. Nonetheless, pupils say that they receive very good feedback on their work and know what they need to do to improve. Induction for pupils is very good. In particular, girls entering the sixth form feel very welcome and supported. Pupils are confident that they can turn to adults in school if they have any problems. A new initiative is the extension of the current mentoring system by sixth form pupils of younger pupils, so that those new to the school are offered extra support. Provision for careers guidance is very good and the school has extensive links with local business and commerce. Health and safety procedures are clear and staff are aware of the arrangements for child protection. All other appropriate steps to ensure the safety of pupils have been taken. Staff work very effectively with parents and outside agencies to support those pupils with learning needs and any who may be at risk.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors confirm the school's judgement that its leadership and management are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and is continually examining new ways of improving its effectiveness. Parents, governors and the community greatly respect his committed approach to promote very good standards of behaviour and the highest levels of care and attainment for all pupils. The leadership team, strengthened by the new deputy headteacher, is working very well with the staff to move the school forward to its next stage of development. The school improvement plan is a very thorough planning document that provides a good basis for development. The systems for self-evaluation, which include surveys of the views of parents, pupils, staff, governors and other stakeholders, are enabling the school to identify its main priorities but the school knows that it has some way to go before its self-evaluation processes are fully effective across all departments. Middle management is generally good although there is a lack of consistency across subject departments in the marking of pupils' work and the use of assessment information. The school runs very smoothly

and calmly on a day to day basis. It works hard to recruit and retain good teachers and the language college status provides good opportunities to share good teaching practice with other secondary and primary schools. Staffing has been restructured and additional support staff employed to promote pupils' achievement. The new language building, sports hall and music centre have greatly improved the learning environment although other parts of the school are in need of refurbishment. The governing body brings much valuable expertise to the school and is effective in discharging its responsibilities. Governors are well informed of the school's progress and know its strengths and areas for development. They monitor progress well and make a significant contribution to the advancement of the school. The school has successfully addressed the issues in the last inspection and its capacity for improvement is very good.



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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	1	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
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>	2	2
<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>	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	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1	
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**

Thank you for welcoming the inspection team when we visited your school. We enjoyed meeting you, talking with you and observing you in lessons and around the school. We know that you are exceptionally proud of your school and, in our view, you have every right to be. It is an outstanding school. The school's results are exceptionally high. In the sixth form they are amongst the highest in the country. An important reason for this is your attitude to learning. You impressed us with your keenness and curiosity and also with your willingness to take a very active part in lessons. You are not afraid to ask challenging questions and to engage in discussions with your teachers and each other. Also, you receive mostly good, and in some cases, outstanding teaching. Your teachers are enthusiastic about their subject and are able to inspire and motivate you. Many give you helpful guidance through their very detailed comments on how to improve your work and we have asked the school to make sure that this happens in every subject. We also think the school should make more use of information and communication technology to make lessons even more interesting and challenging. What is special about Southend High School for Boys is not just its success in examinations but the importance it places on providing opportunities for your personal development. There is an outstanding range of extra curricular activities and you told us how much you value this aspect of school life. There are also opportunities for you to take responsibility, for example, within your house, through supporting younger pupils, fundraising for charities or through work on school councils. These experiences are helping you to develop as considerate and confident young people and are an excellent preparation for your future lives. We think Mr Frampton is an excellent headmaster. He, and the staff, are ambitious for the school and have your welfare at heart. That is why we think the school is exceptionally good at looking after you and guiding you towards your future. You are lucky to go to such an outstanding school and we hope that you will all make the best of your time at Southend High School for Boys.