



# The Sholing Technology College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 116451  
**LEA** Southampton LEA  
**Inspection number** 279834  
**Inspection dates** 15 March 2006 to 16 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Peter Sanderson

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Middle Road
<b>School category</b>	Foundation		Sholing
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Southampton SO19 8PH
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls	<b>Telephone number</b>	02380448861
<b>Number on roll</b>	999	<b>Fax number</b>	02380422998
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr J Kimpton
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	31 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Miss K J Dagwell

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	15 March 2006 - 16 March 2006	279834

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

The Sholing Technology College is an average sized 11 - 16 girls' school. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is just below the national average. Most students are of white British heritage, with only a small number of girls from minority ethnic groups. The percentage of students identified as having learning difficulties and disabilities, including statements, is broadly in line with the national average. The school has technology college status.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is an effective school that provides students with a good education. This judgement matches the college's own view of itself. The headteacher leads the college well and student achievement is rapidly improving. The college provides good value for money.

Student attainment on entry to the college is in line with the national average. By the end of year 9 standards are above average. In the past this good progress has not been maintained in years 10 and 11. However, year 11 standards improved significantly in 2005. The college's very good tracking systems indicate that standards are due to rise again to above average in 2006. The progress of students in years 10 and 11 is now good.

The college serves its community well. It has developed effective links with a wide range of external agencies which enhance the educational opportunities and welfare of its students. The personal development of students is good. They are encouraged to lead healthy lifestyles and enjoy their time in the college. Behaviour is good. Attendance is broadly average and improving although a small minority of students do not attend regularly enough. Teaching is good, however, in a few lessons there is a lack of pace and an over reliance on worksheets which do not fully engage students. The curriculum is good and has recently been developed to extend the vocational provision in years 10 and 11. It meets the needs of students well and there are a wide range of lunchtime and evening clubs that are well attended. The care and guidance provided for students is outstanding ensuring that they feel safe and secure.

Achieving technology college status has played an important role in the college's improvement. It has allowed the college to enrich and extend its curriculum, develop links with industry and improve its resources. The college leadership demonstrate a determination and strong capacity to improve even further.

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

- \* Improve learning by ensuring that all lessons fully engage and challenge students.
- \* Improve the attendance of a small minority of students.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Inspectors agree with the college that achievement and standards are good and improving. Students enter the college with average levels of attainment and good progress ensures that they reach above average standards by the end of Year 9. Students make good progress in both core and foundation subjects. In 2005 the proportion of students obtaining grades A\* - C in GCSE examinations significantly improved and was in line with the national average. However, there was some inconsistency in the performance of students in different subjects. The school has

addressed this issue and inspection evidence shows that standards in Years 10 and 11 have continued to improve and students now make good progress.

The number of students who take ten or more subjects at GCSE is very high compared with other schools. Standards in design technology and information and communication technology (ICT) are high, reflecting the college's specialist status. Students who have learning difficulties and disabilities receive strong support and achieve well.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The personal development and well-being of students are good. Their spiritual, moral, and social development is good, and their cultural awareness is becoming a real strength. Students behave well and have positive attitudes to their learning. Attendance is broadly average and improving, although a small minority of older girls are away too often in spite of concerted efforts by the college to improve the situation.

The large majority of students enjoy their time in the college and appreciate the education they receive. Those we spoke to were keen to tell us how good they thought the college was. They told us that they knew how to stay safe and how to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Healthy options for lunches assist in promoting the latter, as do the many opportunities for them to take exercise within and outside lesson time. They are involved in the life of the college in a variety of ways that enhance their awareness of living and working in the community.

The 'College Board' provides them with an effective forum through which their views and opinions can be listened to. Membership of this board comes as a result of a very thorough democratic process. Students are used to working in teams and are equipped with the skills and knowledge to cope well in the lives they will lead when they leave the college.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning is good overall and several lessons observed had outstanding features. Teachers have good subject knowledge and in many lessons this is used well to plan a range of stimulating activities and place a real focus on independent learning. In these lessons all students, including those with learning difficulties, make good progress because of the close match between the teaching and the needs of the learners. However, there are inconsistencies in teaching and in some lessons there is a lack of pace and an over reliance on worksheets. In these lessons a few students fail to give their full attention to learning. High quality monitoring and support is reducing this inconsistency. The use of ICT is good although occasionally insufficient use is made of available facilities. Study supervisors are ensuring continuity in learning when teachers are absent. Marking is effective and students benefit from assessing their own and others' work. This ensures that students are clear about how they can improve.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

The college provides a good curriculum. Recent initiatives have resulted in some outstanding features. As well as offering a broad range of academic subjects in years 10 and 11 the college has responded to the needs of its students by introducing a number of vocational courses. The breadth of this vocational curriculum is extended through its links with a local college. More able students are provided with the opportunity to follow an accelerated learning programme in mathematics from Year 8 and follow an advanced level (AS) course in critical thinking from Year 10.

In addition to a very good programme of work related learning and work experience the curriculum is further enriched through links which have been established with outside institutions such as VT Shipbuilders and IBM. In collaboration with Southampton University there is a well attended Saturday morning science club for Year 7 students. The curriculum is well supported by a range of lunchtime and after-school activities which include sport, music and drama. The college has plans to increase the flexibility of its curriculum for years 7 to 9 and to extend the range of vocational courses on offer for older students.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

The care, guidance and support given to students by the college are outstanding. The arrangements for risk assessments and child protection are extremely thorough, and vulnerable students receive a high level of care. Students who need help are able to go to adults or older students and get support. In particular, they speak glowingly of the support given by the 'Teaching and Learning Centre', and the co-ordinators for special needs and personal development. The programme for personal, social and health education is delivered by dedicated specialist teachers and promotes good personal development amongst the students, so that they know how to stay safe and healthy.

A strength of the college is the use of assessment data. The extensive data they collect is used very effectively to set targets and show students how well they are doing. The college's mentoring system makes effective use of this data to give students very good advice and guidance.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management of the college are good. The headteacher leads the college well and is rigorously driving the move to raise standards. Her clear vision is communicated effectively to staff. Senior leaders share her commitment and help to promote an ethos in which all students are valued

and in which achievement is rapidly improving. The college works closely with external agencies to ensure good support for students. Due to effective day to day management the college operates calmly and efficiently.

The college has good systems of self evaluation. It takes account of the views of students, staff and parents and has clearly identified key priorities for improvement. These priorities are effectively addressed in the college improvement plan. Subject leaders undertake lesson observations, scrutinise work and conduct student interviews. This process is proving to be effective in improving teaching and learning although some inconsistency remains. Performance management is well established, reinforces accountability and is closely linked to professional development.

The governing body knows the college well and provides effective support and challenge. Resources are well managed. The strength of leadership and management and the effectiveness of the developments already introduced provide the college with a good capacity to improve further.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**



## 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>
--	-----------------------	--------------

### 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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

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

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

<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**

Students

As you know we have recently inspected your college. We met and talked with many of you, sat in some of your lessons and looked at work you had done. We would like to thank you for the help you gave us. Now that we have finished the inspection I am writing to tell you of our findings.

We judged that your college provides you with a good education and the following points are its key strengths.\* Your headteacher gives a strong direction to the college. With the help of other senior staff she is making the college even better.\* Your behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Many of you have good attitudes to learning and enjoy being at the college.\* Teaching is good and this is helping you all make good progress in your learning.\* Your teachers keep you well informed about how well you are doing and how you could do better.\* Your teachers take outstanding care of you. You told us you feel safe and secure while in the college.\* In Years 10 and 11 there is a wide range of academic and vocational courses you can chose to follow.\* Many of you attend the range of lunchtime and out of hours clubs offered by the college.\* Your school's award of Technology College status has helped bring around changes that are benefiting all of you.

In order for your college to become even better we have asked it to do the following:\* Most, but not all, of your lessons have a range of interesting activities so that you enjoy them and are actively involved in them. We want the college to ensure that all your lessons are like this.\* Most of you attend well but there is a small number of you who do not come to college often enough. We have asked the college to make sure these students attend more regularly.Thank you again and I wish you all good luck for the future.

Yours sincerely

Peter Sanderson

Her Majesty's Inspector