



# Savio High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104959  
**LEA** Sefton  
**Inspection number** 284972  
**Inspection dates** 16 March 2006 to 17 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Cathryn Kirby HMI

This inspection was carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005 which gives Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools the authority to cause any school to be inspected. The inspection was also deemed a section 5 inspection under the same Act.

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Netherton Way
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided		Bootle
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		Merseyside L30 2NA
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 521 3088
<b>Number on roll</b>	813	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 525 8435
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr T Lawless
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	17 March 2003	<b>Headteacher</b>	Fr G Briody

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	16 March 2006 - 17 March 2006	284972

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## Introduction

When Savio High School was monitored in March 2005 the visit raised serious concerns about the standard of education provided. The school was subsequently inspected by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors in March 2006.

## Description of the school

Savio High School is a smaller than average Catholic comprehensive in Bootle, Merseyside. It serves an area that suffers from social and economic deprivation, as reflected in the relatively high proportion of pupils who are entitled to free school meals. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average. Almost all the pupils are white British. There are 813 pupils on roll, including 96 in the sixth form. The headteacher joined the school in September 2005.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 4**

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, HMCI is of the opinion that this school requires significant improvement, because it is performing significantly less well than in all the circumstances it could reasonably be expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to achievement and standards. The school also requires significant improvement in relation to the sixth form.

Savio High School is not an effective school because pupils underachieve in Key Stage 3 and in science and mathematics between the ages of 11 and 16. Girls underachieve compared to boys. In the sixth form, achievement and standards are unsatisfactory and the curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of the small number of students. The new headteacher has strengthened links with external agencies and the local authority and arranged appropriate training for managers. The school has been successful in securing a bid for specialist status in business and enterprise. Since its last inspection in March 2002, the school has improved the quality of teaching and learning, although the proportion of lessons in which pupils make good or better progress is too low. Resources and provision for teaching information and communication technology (ICT) have improved; so too has attendance, from a very low base, although it remains below average. The school's systems for checking the progress of many of the actions it initiates and gauging their impact are not rigorous enough.

Pupils make satisfactory progress in their personal development. Their behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. The care, guidance and support they receive are satisfactory overall and the school cares well for its most vulnerable pupils. Arrangements to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are underdeveloped. Staffing levels are satisfactory but, when viewed against the inadequacies in provision, the school does not provide satisfactory value for money.

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

### **Grade: 4**

Achievement and standards in the sixth form are inadequate. The curriculum is limited by the small numbers of students in each year group and is not well-matched to the needs of the pupils, particularly those in Year 12. Self-assessment and review do not effectively inform development plans, therefore leadership and management are inadequate. The school is in negotiation with a partner school to offer a more suitable range of courses. Entry requirements for academic courses starting in September 2006 have been reviewed and tightened. A new system of monitoring the students' progress has recently been introduced but it is too soon to gauge its impact on raising standards.

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

- Raise standards, particularly in science and mathematics, and improve the achievement of girls.

- Sharpen systems for checking the progress and gauging the impact of school improvement work.
- Increase further the proportion of lessons in which pupils make good or better progress.
- Ensure sixth form students are enrolled on courses which are appropriate to their needs.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 4**

Pupils enter the school having achieved broadly average results in their primary schools. By the end of Key Stage 3 standards are below average. Although standards rose slightly in English, mathematics and science between 2004 and 2005, the school did not meet its targets. Between the ages of 11 and 14 pupils underachieve; they do not make the progress that they should.

In Key Stage 4 standards are below average and the proportion of pupils gaining five A\* to C grades at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) fell between 2004 and 2005. By the end of Key Stage 4 many pupils make up for some of the ground lost in the earlier key stage and their progress is broadly satisfactory, although they do not make the progress they should in mathematics and science. Girls do not do as well as boys; none achieved an A\* to C grade in GCSE science single award. Considerable variation exists between subjects at GCSE; pupils make good progress in physical education and sociology. Overall the pupils' progress by the end of Key Stage 4 declined slightly between 2004 and 2005.

The school has recently introduced a system for tracking each pupil's progress and is beginning to develop a view of standards across subjects. Although the quality of teaching has improved, the proportion of lessons in which pupils make good or better progress is too low to have a significant impact on raising standards.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. The values underpinning the school's faith are evident in the courteous and considerate manner with which most pupils conduct themselves. Behaviour is good and pupils are sensible in situations where safety is important. There is an adequate range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, including serving on the school council, raising funds for charities and acting as mediators in conflict. Sixth-formers help younger pupils in lessons. However, there is no close monitoring of the extent of pupils' involvement in opportunities to make contributions to the wider school community

The pupils' attitudes to school and learning are satisfactory. Attendance, although improving as a result of a systematic and closely monitored range of procedures, is still below average. Punctuality at the beginning of the school day is poor. However, where teachers encourage and help the pupils to take a more independent approach to their learning, attitudes are much better. Pupils are aware of the importance of

health-related issues such as diet and exercise, but this awareness is not always apparent in their choice of food at lunchtime. Older pupils demonstrate a good range of work-related skills when using computers, but these are not matched by their skills in literacy and numeracy.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 4**

The quality of teaching has improved and is now satisfactory overall. Some good or better teaching was seen across a number of subject areas including mathematics. However, further improvement will be needed if all pupils are to reach the standards of which they are capable. In the best practice teachers realise the value of structured lessons with clear aims, where pupils are allowed to share and discuss what they think. The pace of many lessons is good, so that pupils can get a lot done. Outstanding lessons in GCSE physical education and sociology were characterised by a clear and shared purpose, brisk pace and motivation which drove pupils to do their best. Relationships are a major strength; pupils and teachers show care and respect for each other. The quality of lesson planning however is too variable; this results in agreed areas of focus, like literacy and relating work to pupils' needs, being overlooked. Many lessons present tasks and information in the same way for all pupils. While some attention is given to those seen to be struggling, teachers pay too little regard to how to develop the ideas and expression of pupils of average ability or challenge the most able pupils. In these lessons, this is the main reason why pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress.

Teachers have good subject knowledge and present and explain things clearly. Pupils are given many opportunities to do practical tasks and discuss work in pairs. They generally concentrate well, but remain too reliant on the teacher for ideas. Teachers are beginning to understand and use assessment information as a means to track pupils' progress and, although pupils know what grades and levels they should be aiming at, this system is in the early stages. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall, but departmental reviews have not resulted in a consistent approach to marking, which will help pupils to improve their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 3**

**Grade for sixth form: 4**

The curriculum provides a satisfactory range of courses. In Years 7 to 9 there is good emphasis on the core subjects of English, mathematics and science; these take up nearly half the week. The provision for teaching ICT as a discrete subject has improved across the school and all pupils have sufficient opportunity to develop their skills. However, the use of ICT to support teaching and learning in the wider curriculum is

underdeveloped. The curriculum is enriched by a range of additional subjects. There is a limited but suitable range of vocational subjects. The school is wisely reviewing the curriculum pathways and the guidance pupils receive at Key Stage 4. Business Studies is popular and fits well with the school's new status as a specialist business and enterprise college. An alternative curriculum for a small number of pupils who find academic study difficult combines courses at a local college and work experience. A suitable range of external visits and activities enriches the curriculum and pupils appreciate the good choice of activities after school. However, they would like more to do at lunchtime.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Overall the care, guidance and support given to pupils are satisfactory. Support for the most vulnerable pupils is a strength of the school. A whole-school system to track pupils' academic progress has made a promising start, but it is too soon to assess its impact on eliminating underachievement. Provision to make sure pupils are safe in school and during school activities is good. However, arrangements to support pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are underdeveloped and not well understood by staff; the school does not formally review the progress these pupils make. A recently established and rigorous induction process means that pupils intending to join the sixth form are guided well in their choices; this has not been the case in the past.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 4**

The headteacher joined the school in September 2005. He has begun to establish a professional dialogue around teaching and learning, the curriculum and other key areas of the school's work. He has strengthened links with local schools and the local authority's school improvement service and has secured appropriate training for middle and senior managers. The school has been successful in bidding for specialist status in business and enterprise. There is an emerging understanding amongst the staff of the strengths and weaknesses of provision. The school's work has improved the quality of teaching and learning since the monitoring visit in March 2005 and this is now satisfactory. However, not all managers demonstrate the capacity to lead and manage the actions necessary to raise standards with the required urgency. Some middle managers still have difficulty seeing the main messages from analysis of examination results and linking them to what is going on in classrooms. The school's approach to evaluating the progress of actions taken is not sharp enough; consequently it does not have a wholly accurate view of its provision. Persistent unsatisfactory performance is not challenged rigorously enough. Governance is satisfactory but would benefit from holding the school to account more rigorously and frequently for the progress of actions intended to raise standards.

The school's own evaluation is detailed but lacks an objective review of actions taken to improve the quality of provision. Some departments are rising well to the challenge of increased responsibility and accountability for the quality of teaching and learning in their areas. In others, development plans do not link coherently with the wider school improvement plan. The school has worked hard to develop a common approach to the tracking of pupils' progress and the use of assessment information; this is in the early stages of development. Suitable plans have been implemented to improve the range of options and choices available at Key Stage 4. The school has plans to address a similar weakness in the post-16 curriculum. Deficiencies in accommodation and decoration make some teaching areas drab and uninspiring; this detracts from the school's efforts to raise standards.



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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>	4	4
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	4	4
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	No	No

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	4	4
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	4	4
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	4	

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	3	4
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	4
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3	3

<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	4
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	4	
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	4	
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	insufficient evidence

<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 making us so welcome when we came to inspect your school. All of you that we met and talked with were very polite and are a credit to your school. We observed that the vast majority of you behave well in lessons and around school. Relationships in lessons between teachers and pupils are good. The teaching you receive has improved since we last visited. You told us that you enjoy the activities after school but would like more to do at lunchtime. However, not all of you gain the exam grades you are capable of, so we have asked Father Briody and your teachers to do the following:

- increase the proportion of you who achieve Levels 5 and 6 in Year 9 and grades A\* to C in Year 11
- check that all the work the school is doing to improve things is really making a difference
- improve the teaching even more, so you make good progress in all your lessons
- make sure sixth-form students are enrolled onto courses which are best suited to their needs, so that more of you are successful and sixth-form exam results improve.

You can help too by making sure you attend regularly and arrive at school on time, so that the day can start promptly for everyone. Remember, employers, colleges and universities are interested in people who have a good record of attendance and punctuality!

We have recommended that your school is inspected again, in around a year's time, to check particularly that your results are improving. We wish you well for the future.