



# Hindley Community High School - Arts College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 106528  
**Local Authority** Wigan  
**Inspection number** 287538  
**Inspection date** 3 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** David Moore HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Mornington Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		Hindley, Wigan
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11-16		Lancashire WN2 4LG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01942 767704
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	951	<b>Fax number</b>	01942 748054
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr S Shaw
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mrs Lees
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 May 2001		

<b>Age group</b> 11-16	<b>Inspection date</b> 3 October 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 287538
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## Introduction

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

## Description of the school

Hindley Community High School - Arts College serves the ex-mining community of Hindley. Parts of the area are adversely affected by social and economic disadvantage. The school was awarded specialist status in September 2002. There are 951 students and the proportion of students eligible for free school meals is well above the national average. There are few students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The proportion of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including those with a statement of special educational need, is above the national average.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hindley Community High School - Arts College is a good and effective school with outstanding leadership. Central to this success is the drive and energy of the headteacher, senior leadership team and efforts of all staff to raise the attainment of students and ensure they make good progress. Students display positive attitudes to learning and play their part in the success of the school. As one parent wrote, 'I am impressed with the school. We are kept informed of our daughters' progress regularly and any issues are dealt with promptly and efficiently. Well done to Mrs Lees and all the teaching and support staff.'

Examination success at GCSE confirms that students make good progress during their time at the school. Many on entry are just in line with or below that expected for 11 year olds nationally. Through good teaching and a well thought-out curriculum, the school has ensured that standards have risen consistently over time and are now in line with national expectations. Effective use is made of assessment information to guide teachers' planning, develop schemes of work and identify students who require additional support. This has led to extra classes being provided for particular groups and contributed to improvements in lower attaining boys' performance. In mathematics, improvements to the scheme of work had their origins in a detailed analysis of exam questions that students had misunderstood. Monitoring is used carefully to match students to courses particularly in Key Stage 4. Arts College status has benefited all students and supported curriculum innovation such as the introduction of early GCSE entry in some subjects. These changes have motivated and raised the aspirations of students.

The school provides a well ordered and positive atmosphere for learning and students are clear that they enjoy the wide curriculum offered. Opportunities to participate in and contribute to the overall well-being of the community are extensive. Students take a real pride in being year and school council representatives, prefects and buddies. The student voice has also influenced changes to healthy eating policies and the social facilities provided. Teachers and adults set high expectations for students and relationships are for the most part outstanding. Students understand the boundaries of acceptable behaviour and the consequences that follow any infringement. As one student remarked, 'They don't accept it's OK to bully and most of us don't and if someone does we want it to be dealt with fast and that's what the school does. We all know it's not good to bully people, we have assemblies about it and learn about what it does in PSHE so there is no excuse!'

Students feel safe and as a result are able to concentrate on learning. Teaching is good and staff are becoming more confident in using assessment to support planning. Good in-service training has also helped to improve their teaching. Senior managers use lesson observations and analysis of assessment data effectively to inform their daily management and long term planning. Heads of department are effective managers and they have led curricular change that has supported improvements in students' performance.

The award of Arts College status has influenced wider changes in the curriculum. Increased links with local colleges and employers have improved the opportunities for students to learn about the world of work and the school is exploring ways to develop further this provision. As a result, students are better prepared to understand the demands others will make of them and more able to make a positive contribution to their own economic well-being. Similarly, their knowledge of health related matters results in a better understanding of the importance of staying safe and healthy. Opportunities in lessons to explore complex moral issues and personal well-being are managed with great sensitivity and students' understanding about life choices and their consequences has increased.

The school's approach to inclusion is particularly good and students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities including those with complex medical needs referred to as CMD are able to participate fully in the curriculum. The recent addition of specialist facilities for CMD students has been well planned and placing mainstream teaching rooms in these facilities ensures they are not isolated from the rest of the school. Making other parts of the school accessible particularly science laboratories has allowed more students to use specialist rooms. As a result, these students are participating more in the wider life of the school while being supported from the centre.

Student mobility while only slightly above the national average over time has an accumulative negative influence on examination performance and attendance. The extensive range of strategies to improve attendance has resulted in the school exceeding its target set by the local authority but remains under the national average. Despite its efforts the most problematic non-attendees remains a challenge.

The senior leadership group operate in a coordinated way and all members understand and hold fast to the priorities set for the school. Governors are well informed and play an active role in the promotion of high standards by being linked to curriculum areas with particular members of the senior leadership team. Heads of department report to governors regularly. The governing body shares the priorities of the senior leadership team and acts as a critical friend.

The senior leadership team and headteacher are effective in communicating to staff and students what is expected. Progress since the last inspection is impressive and demonstrates the school has the capacity to continue its improvement.

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

- Improve attendance particularly for most problematic non-attendees.
- Explore ways of improving the range of vocational courses available to students in Key Stage 4.
- Improve the start to the day during tutor and registration.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Standards achieved by students at the end of Key Stages 3 and 4 are in line with the national average. A significant number of students enter the school with attainment

levels just in line or below what is expected for 11 year olds. Good teaching and a well thought-out curriculum motivate students and as a result, standards have risen steadily over time. Effective monitoring and evaluation informs planning and the progress made by some groups of students is rapid.

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

### **Grade: 2**

The school has a clear sense of community. The development of students' social, moral and cultural understanding is good and through religious education, spiritual development also occurs. Opportunities for students to participate in practical citizenship through school and year councils, prefects and a Year 11 buddy system contribute to their social awareness. Adults communicate the school expectations and model the behaviours required of students well. Curriculum opportunities also develop cooperative working skills and the ethos created contributes significantly to students enjoying their education. Students' awareness of personal safety and that of others is demonstrated hourly by how well they manage points of congestion in one particular teaching block.

The student council working with catering staff have helped improve students' awareness of the need to eat healthily.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching and learning are good and are effectively monitored through lesson observation and analysis of outcomes from assessment. Teachers have high expectations for students who respond well to them. The use of learning targets has motivated students who have a clear understanding of what is expected from them. Students appreciate information that helps them to make further progress. Teaching is strengthened by the quality of planning and the increasing use of information and communication technology that involves students and enlivens lessons. As one Year 11 pupil said, 'Lessons have gotten better each year I have been here, I really enjoy it when we use laptops in science and have to make presentations to the class.'

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The school curriculum is good and meets the needs of most students well. The school has piloted early entry to GCSE in a number of subject areas which students, particularly towards the end of Key Stage 3 and in Key Stage 4, appreciate. This innovation has motivated and raised the aspirations of students across the ability range and contributed significantly to the improvement of standards in both key stages.

The routes for students to progress to take additional qualifications are not fully developed but the pilots' outcomes are informing curriculum planning and the school is right to recognise the need to build further the range of opportunities available.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 1**

Hindley rightly prides itself on the level of care, guidance and support it offers students and inspectors judge it to be outstanding. This area of the school's work contributes significantly to students' progress, enjoyment and well-being.

Year 7 students settle well into school supported by Year 11 buddies. Teachers use their detailed knowledge of students to direct their learning effectively. Changes to pastoral support systems are resulting in staff intervening earlier to help students at risk and systems for monitoring students' academic progress are extensive and rigorous. The use of outside agencies such as the local police and others enables the school to meet a wider range of need than in previous years. Parents and carers endorse this very positive picture.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 1**

The headteacher and senior leadership team know their school particularly well and offer outstanding leadership. They understand the issues teachers face, recognise the need to support and know when to challenge. Effective monitoring has enabled them to plan and manage change and consolidate improvements. Training for teachers is good and has enabled them to raise standards. Senior managers are highly visible around the school. Governors

are well organised, understand and support what the school is attempting to do and work closely with senior managers. Since the last inspection leadership at all levels including heads of department and pastoral managers has demonstrated the school's strong capacity to improve.

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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
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	1
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>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	1

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

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	1
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, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

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

On behalf of the inspectors I am writing to thank you for the way you spoke with us during the recent inspection of your school and in particular to say how impressed we were with your attitudes to learning and conduct. We particularly appreciated the time senior prefects, school council members and groups of students gave us to help form our view of your school. I promised to write to inform you of the outcomes of the inspection and this is the purpose of this letter.

These are our key findings.

- You attend a good school whose leadership by the headteacher and senior staff is outstanding.
- Teachers are good at their job and as a result their work enables you to make effective progress over time in your studies and do well in end-of-key-stage assessments and at GCSE.

We realise that most students work very hard and take advantage of the wide range of opportunities the school offers. It is also clear that, through the year and school councils, your concerns as students are taken seriously and that you have contributed in making the school a positive place to be.

We were particularly impressed by how you conduct yourself around the school, especially in one of the teaching blocks where the narrowness of the stairs causes congestion. Your understanding and patience resulted in people being able to move about safely. We also noted how well most of you got on with your teachers and other staff, paid attention in lessons and made such an effort to do well. We are certain your parents and carers would have been proud of your attitudes to learning.

The report will also comment on how well you have responded to the opportunities to undertake early entry to GCSE in a number of subjects including art and how your success has improved the range of additional subjects you can now take. There are a number of things the school and you can do to improve your school even further.

- Attend more regularly so that you do not lose out on your education.
- The school needs to explore ways to offer more vocational courses.
- Improve the start to the school day so that you have less time sitting around in tutor and registration time.