



# Bootle High School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104957  
**LEA** Sefton  
**Inspection number** 277265  
**Inspection dates** 28 September 2005 to 29 September 2005  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Georgina White

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Browns Lane
<b>School category</b>	Community		Netherton
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16		Bootle, Merseyside L30 5RN
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 521 1734
<b>Number on roll</b>	639	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 525 3517
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr D Duncalf
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	11 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr P Fryer

<b>Age group</b> 11 to 16	<b>Inspection dates</b> 28 September 2005 - 29 September 2005	<b>Inspection number</b> 277265
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## **Introduction**

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

## **Description of the school**

Bootle High School is an averaged sized secondary school, with slightly more boys than girls. Pupils enter the school with below average attainment and poor language and communication skills. Most pupils come from socially deprived backgrounds. One in three pupils have free school meals; this is well above national averages. The proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is above average and they, along with the numbers of children the school identifies as vulnerable and requiring additional educational support, represent one third of the school roll.

The school receives additional resources through the leadership incentive grant and the Excellence in Cities programme to help it to improve children's achievement and to combat the disadvantage in the local community. Children are supported by a broad range of learning mentors and welfare staff who work alongside teachers to help pupils achieve.

## **Key for inspection grades**

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

Inspectors agree with the school's evaluation that Bootle High School provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and has some good features. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory, the school is improving and the headteacher and senior staff have a clear idea about what it does well and where further improvement is needed. Action has been taken to address the concerns parents, pupils and others had about instability in staffing.

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and they make very good progress in mathematics. Standards are below average. The school's latest test and exam results are a significant improvement from the dip in performance in 2004. The school recognises that there is some way to go to raise standards, to improve the satisfactory progress made by children with low literacy levels, eliminate the uneven performance across subjects, and to meet all school targets. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although the challenge and rigour of assessment practice are variable. Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. However, the low amount of curriculum time provided sits uneasily alongside the school aim of raising performance. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development and well-being and for their care guidance and support. Parents and pupils rate this aspect of the school highly. Behaviour in and around the school is good; most pupils feel safe and enjoy school. Learning mentor support and the help for pupils with challenging behaviour are both good. More children are re-engaging with learning in this supportive environment; overall school attendance is improving but remains below national rates. On the whole, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

**Grade: 3**

### What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that pupils have enough curriculum time to bring their entitlement in line with
- Improve attendance.
- Secure consistency in the quality of teaching and learning across the school by establishing clear and robust tracking systems.
- Establish clear and robust procedures to quality assure the work of subject leaders
- Develop planning, monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure that the criteria for evaluation are rigorously focused on pupils' learning and their outcomes.

### Achievement and standards

When pupils enter the school in Year 7, their standards are below average with particularly low levels in writing and communication skills. From this starting point,

the standards they reach at the end of Key Stage 3, and by the time they leave school, remain below the national average. Given the levels of disadvantage and other contextual factors pupils face, their achievement is broadly satisfactory. The school's latest set of results show a significant upturn in performance, particularly in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) at both Key Stages, and in English literature at Key Stage 4. The school has had mixed success in meeting its targets and is more successful at Key Stage 3 than at Key Stage 4.

Pupils' achievement in mathematics is very good, and a significant strength of the school. Standards are rising fast, particularly at Key Stage 3 following a dip in 2004. Pupils' progress in English in 2004 was significantly below average. Staff absence and disruption to learning that led to this situation have been addressed. Results for 2005 show that standards in English have risen significantly, although they remain well below national results.

At both Key Stages, pupils with very low prior attainment, learning difficulties and/or disabilities make satisfactory progress. Some of the school's actions to improve boys' achievement are meeting with success. Able boys made significantly more progress in Key Stage 3 tests in 2004 compared to national averages. The school has identified some pupils, with low levels of literacy, who have had mixed success and are taking action to develop a support strategy more closely tailored to meet individual needs. The school has targeted additional support to improve standards in science. However, strategies are not yet in place to address the underperformance identified in music at Key Stages 3 and 4. The school is successful in re-engaging children in learning. By the end of Key Stage 4, most pupils move successfully on to further education and training.

**Grade: 3**

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

The provision for pupils' personal development and well-being is good. The school provides well for pupils' overall cultural and spiritual development, and is particularly strong in promoting moral and social development. Race equality is promoted satisfactorily and regularly monitored.

Pupils enjoy their education and take pride in it. They report that they feel happy and safe from bullying while they are at school. Pupils respect and value the staff and believe their opinions are valued by 'teachers who care' and who encourage them to learn.

The school council and prefect system enable older pupils to exercise responsibility well, but inspectors agree with the school, and with pupils, that more could be done to involve younger pupils more fully.

Behaviour is good in class, around the school and particularly where pupils socialise. Strategies to promote good behaviour are very effective. Few pupils are excluded from school and numbers have fallen sharply in the past 12 months. Attendance remains unsatisfactory; a wide range of strategies is in place and it is improving. The importance of healthy lifestyles is strongly promoted; pupils are adopting them in the choices they make in the school canteen.

**Grade: 2**

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Senior managers have an adequate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of staff. They make secure judgments on the quality of teaching across the school. Strategies to manage pupils' behaviour during lessons are implemented consistently by most teachers. Extensive additional support and guidance are provided for all teachers to draw upon when needed. ICT is used effectively in some lessons, for example, in geography, science and media studies, to enhance teaching and learning. However, this practice is not yet embedded throughout the school. Most teachers set clear objectives, although these do not always reflect a suitable level of challenge to pupils. Some subject teachers and support staff routinely provide tailored work to support the learning of individual pupils and groups. This practice firmly engages pupils and helps them to make rapid progress in lessons.

The quality and use of assessment is inconsistent across subjects. There is good practice for the school to draw upon; in English lessons, pupils are taught to assess their own work and that of their classmates, and this helps them to understand what they need to do in order to improve. Pupil data are used successfully in mathematics to set realistic and challenging targets for pupils. The practice is beginning to be shared across other subject areas.

Systems for identifying and targeting support to meet pupils' individual needs are secure. Support staff are knowledgeable and able, but their strengths are not always used effectively in some lessons.

**Grade: 3**

### **Curriculum and other activities**

The school provides an appropriate range of curriculum opportunities for pupils. However, the amount of curriculum time provided during the week falls short of the minimum expected in a secondary school. Option procedures at Key Stage 4 are clear and courses of study are well matched to pupils' needs. Particular care is taken

to match pupils to an ICT course that meets their interests and aptitude. Access to vocational learning is adequate and provided in collaboration with a local college. Work-related activities and guidance receive appropriate attention. Pupils are well prepared for their future careers. Gifted and talented pupils benefit considerably from enrichment activities, such as 'science Olympics', provided in collaboration with local agencies. The school recognises, and inspectors agree, that the range of enrichment activities available to all pupils outside lessons is limited; plans to develop this are underway.

### **Grade: 3**

#### **Care, guidance and support**

Pupils are very well cared for. A safe physical environment is provided and appropriate consideration is given to their health and safety. Arrangements for child protection meet requirements. The breakfast club is well attended, providing a useful function and contributing to pupils arriving on time for school. The after-school study group is popular with pupils: they find the support and guidance in specific subjects helps them to be aware of things they may have missed in lessons. Some pupils do not fully understand their learning targets to know exactly what they need to do to improve their work further.

Learning mentors and other support staff provide a useful counselling function and are readily sought out by pupils. This helps pupils to settle quickly into learning and engage fully in lessons. Behaviour support is effective. Important and constructive work is carried out to meet specific needs of individuals and groups of children, for example, helping to raise their self-esteem and enabling them to manage anger. Monitoring and review of pupils' progress in meeting their behaviour targets are thorough and timely.

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Leadership and management**

The school judges leadership and management to be good, but this does not take enough account of their effect on pupils' progress and achievement. The inspection team found leadership and management to be satisfactory. The headteacher provides clear leadership, well focused on promoting personal development and achievement for all pupils. In this respect, the school is fully inclusive. Both the headteacher and the senior leadership team are relatively new in post but they have taken effective action to dismantle barriers to learning that have arisen since the last inspection. This has laid a strong foundation for the next stage of development and demonstrates a sound capacity for further improvement. Good standards of care, guidance and support have been strengthened; support systems are meeting children's acute needs. Behaviour strategies have been implemented successfully

and day-to-day management is effective. Staffing has now stabilised but high turnover in the past has left a trail of uneven progress in reaching school targets.

The leadership and management of subjects are inconsistent as shown by the differences in performance and the variability in teaching and learning practice. Initiatives and training to bring greater consistency and improve the quality of teaching and learning are at an early stage. These training activities, sampled during the inspection, are matched well to the school's current needs. Robust systems to quickly track improvements and to quality assure the work of subject leaders have yet to be established.

The school's self-evaluation demonstrates that the school knows where it needs to improve its practice. The school uses the information from surveys of parents and pupils to guide further development. Despite the hard work, the school does not yet focus sufficiently in its planning, monitoring and evaluation on pupils' learning and their outcomes.

Governors know the school well; they keep close track of resources and are forward planning to manage the school through local-authority-wide reorganisation plans. Parents are regularly consulted about general school issues. Returns from the inspection survey show most parents support the school and value the work it is doing to improve the quality of education. The school provides good value for money.

**Grade: 3**

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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	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	3	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	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>	3	NA
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	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	4	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	3	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>	3	NA
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3	NA
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	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>	3	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	3	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	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

N/A

Thank you very much for your contribution to the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed our visit. We were able to visit lessons, talk to some of you in meetings and we met a number of you at lunchtime and around the school. All of you have helped us to make our judgements. Some of your parents/carers responded to a confidential questionnaire and this was very helpful.

Here is a summary of our main findings, which I hope will be of interest to you.

- We decided that your school is satisfactory, with some good features. The school makes good arrangements for your care and support. We agree with you that learning mentors are a good source of help. Your school is helping you to develop and most of you enjoy your education and feel happy and safe at school. We were impressed by your good behaviour and responsible attitudes. Most of you work hard during your lessons.
- The headteacher and senior staff lead and manage your school well. They have a clear idea about what the school does well and what needs improving. We were pleased to hear they are planning to provide you with more activities and things for you to do outside lesson times. We agree with you, and with your teachers, that younger pupils need more opportunities to be involved in the school.
- Standards in examinations and tests are improving but they are still a long way behind what we would expect to see in a secondary school. Overall, we can see that you make satisfactory progress at school. We know that you make very good progress in mathematics.
- Teaching across the school is satisfactory although in some subjects you are not challenged enough or given sufficient information to know what you need to do to improve your work further.

We are asking the school to help you to achieve more by:

- increasing the amount of time during the school day that you spend in lessons
- looking more closely at how well you do in each subject and taking action, along with subject leaders, to ensure that teaching and learning in all subjects are the best they can be
- improving your attendance so that more of you consistently achieve 100%.

We feel that the school, with your support, can make these changes and improve further in the future. We wish you every success.