



REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF EDUCATION LEEDS

EXECUTIVE BOARD: 24 JANUARY 2007

SUBJECT: Annex 1: Ofsted Summaries – Leeds High Schools and SILCs

SUMMARY OF SCHOOL OFSTED INSPECTION REPORTS

1 Brigshaw High School (November 2006)

- 1.1 Brigshaw High School is a good school. It is particularly successful in integrating a wide range of pupils, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and with physical difficulties, into the school, allowing them to participate and achieve as well as other pupils. The provision for these pupils is impressive. Pupils, including the most vulnerable, speak highly of the school and what it has done for them. The school is over-subscribed. It serves its community well: facilities are open in the evening, there is further education provision adjacent and there are excellent links with other schools and outside agencies which support pupils well in their learning.
- 1.2 The school occupies new buildings, which offer a superb range of resources and facilities, such as extensive sports facilities, and a suite of rooms for modern foreign languages. Although it is a big school it does not feel crowded because the accommodation is spacious, light and bright. These factors contribute considerably towards the good attitudes pupils have to learning. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and around school. Some parents expressed concerns about behaviour. Inspectors found that, where behaviour was not as good, it tended to be related to the quality of the lessons and to a minority of pupils. Overall, lessons are good. Managers have focused effectively on this aspect of the school and standards are rising as a result.
- 1.3 Pupils reach average standards for their age and are doing well compared to pupils in schools operating in similar circumstances. Standards in English and English literature at GCSE are above average. However, pupils' achievement is below average in a few subjects, especially science, where several factors have hindered progress. Pupils do not progress as fast in the first three years in the school as they do in Years 10 and 11. The school is aware of these issues and has made changes which are having a positive impact, for example on the progress boys make. The system for monitoring pupils' progress in Years 7 to 9 is not effective. Pupils are not clear about academic targets and how to improve.
- 1.4 Standards and progress in the sixth form are good. The joint provision has allowed a greater range of subjects to be offered, which means that the school can cater for quite a wide spread of ability. This has encouraged many pupils to stay on in education after age 16.

- 1.5 What is most striking about the school is the pervasive sense that it is a place where learning languages matters. The school has extensive provision for languages, with good links across subjects so that pupils can see how and why they can apply their language skills and knowledge. Pupils appreciate the very good opportunities to get involved in visits abroad. New courses are ensuring that, whilst everyone has to study a language throughout their time at school, there are courses to suit different needs. Extensive use is made of the expertise in the language college to support other schools and the community.
- 1.6 There is strong, purposeful direction from the senior managers, who have a clear vision for the future. The school meets its targets but could set itself more ambitious ones.
- 1.7 Since the last inspection the school has made good improvement. It represents good value for money and has good capacity to improve further.

Grade: 2

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

The sixth form is good. Good leadership, a developing curriculum and a focus on the needs of individual students mean that there is good capacity for further improvement. The head of the sixth form provides strong leadership focused on raising attainment. Attainment in Year 13 has risen consistently since the last inspection and is now above the national average. Attainment in Year 12 is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are good, backed up by a rigorous system for monitoring and reviewing students' progress. These factors enable all students to make good progress.

- 1.9 Year 12 is open to students of quite a wide spread of ability and the range of courses here is still developing. The curriculum has been expanded to include more vocational options and pupils have more choice as a result of effective working partnerships with a neighbouring high school and the further education college. There are appropriate work placements for students following vocational courses.
- 1.10 The provision for students' personal development and well-being is good. Students enjoy being in school and are supported by a very effective tutorial and guidance system that is successful in helping them to transfer to education, training and employment at the end of their course. Students play a useful part in the day-to-day life of the sixth form and the wider school community.

Grade: 2

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

- Ensure pupils make faster progress in Years 7 to 9.
- Improve attainment in science in Years 10 and 11.
- Establish an effective system to monitor pupils' progress in Years 7 to 9.

2 Cockburn High School (October 2006)

- 2.1 This inspection is still the subject of a formal appeal.
- 2.2 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 circumstances it could be reasonably expected to perform. The school is therefore given a Notice to Improve. Significant improvement is required in relation to

pupils' achievement, the standards they attain and their attendance. Because of these weaknesses, the effectiveness of the school is inadequate.

2.3 Pupils enter the school with below average attainment and they leave with exceptionally low standards. This represents inadequate progress. In 2005 only a third of pupils gained five or more GCSEs at grade C or above, and only a fifth gained C grades in English and mathematics. Standards in these subjects are too low. Almost a quarter of pupils did not gain five or more grades at G or above and over a tenth left with no qualifications at all. The achievement of this group of pupils over their time in school was amongst the poorest in the country. Provisional results for 2006 show a similar picture. Pupils' achievement from when they enter the school until when they leave is inadequate. However, there are signs of improvement. Standards have risen in recent years at Key Stage 3 and pupils' achievement at that key stage is now satisfactory. Although standards at Key Stage 4 are still too low, they have nevertheless risen over the past few years from an even lower level. Many pupils, especially the more able, are currently making satisfactory progress in Years 10 and 11 from where they were at the end of Year 9, but overall pupils are not progressing at a rate that compensates for their earlier underachievement in the school. Pupils' attendance is also inadequate; it has been under 90% for the past few years. There are early signs of improvement so far this term, but in Years 10 and 11 attendance is still only around 90%.

2.4 Leadership and management are satisfactory. School leaders are very committed to the pupils and are taking a wide range of actions to improve the school for them. High quality care is provided to help meet pupils' personal needs, with outstanding support for particularly vulnerable pupils. This helps keep many involved in their learning. Pupils generally feel safe and well looked after within school. Teaching and the curriculum are satisfactory. The curriculum has been redesigned to extend the ways in which the needs of different groups of pupils in both key stages will be catered for. This is resulting in improvements, especially at Key Stage 3, although is not yet successfully engaging all pupils at Key Stage 4. The school's specialist arts status is having a positive impact. Senior leaders have ensured a consistent approach to planning the content and structure of lessons. Many teachers manage to motivate pupils and ensure adequate progress in lessons but some are less successful in this. Most pupils have good relationships with staff and the recent approach to promoting positive discipline is resulting in fewer referrals for bad behaviour. The school is aware of its weaknesses but has too positive a view of its effectiveness. In its evaluations, it has focused more on actions being taken rather than whether they are having enough impact on the learning and achievement of all pupils. Nevertheless, the school has satisfactory capacity to improve further, as demonstrated by the effect of the actions already taken by senior leaders and by their clear commitment to improving the quality of education provided.

Grade: 4

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

- Improve pupils' achievement by raising standards, especially for lower-attaining pupils in Key Stage 4, and in English and mathematics throughout the school.
- Improve pupils' attendance to at least satisfactory levels.
- Ensure that evaluation of the school's strategies for improvement focuses more closely upon their impact on the learning and achievement of all pupils.

3 Corpus Christi Catholic College (November 2006)

3.1 Corpus Christi Catholic College is a good and improving school. It is popular with students and parents and this is reflected in the significant increase in numbers on roll over recent

years. Standards have risen substantially and the college has a good capacity for further improvement.

- 3.2 The college has improved in a number of important respects since the previous inspection. In particular, standards have risen consistently. Attainment is below average on entry to the college. Standards remain below average at the end of Key Stage 3 but have improved steadily over recent years. The unconfirmed results for 2006 are the school's best ever. The improvement at Key Stage 4 is even greater and the number of students who achieved five or more good GCSEs has risen in recent years from 24% to 53%. Although unconfirmed results for 2006 are not quite as good as the previous year, the upward trend remains and standards are close to the national average. All groups of students make good progress, including those with severe learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- 3.3 Students make good progress because of good teaching and an effective curriculum. The best teaching is well planned and involves students fully in their own learning. The curriculum for older students is especially strong and now offers a range of choices, combining academic and vocational courses. Students who might otherwise have become disengaged are motivated by this programme and this is reflected in improved attendance. The curriculum at Key Stage 3 is more limited and does not motivate the students as much.
- 3.4 The college has a very positive ethos for learning. Behaviour is good and students respond sensitively to others. Relationships are very good. Bullying is not a significant factor in the school and is well dealt with when it does occur. Parents support the school well: for instance, nearly all of them attended the target-setting day this term. Students are very well cared for. The college monitors their performance systematically and uses this data to provide extra support, when needed. However, students are not clear enough about how to improve their work and the quality of marking and the learning targets identified by teachers should be better.
- 3.5 The quality of leadership and management is good. The college is very well led by the headteacher, ably supported by a good management team and a knowledgeable governing body. The role of middle leaders has developed significantly and they are now much more involved in monitoring performance within subjects. The specialist status of the school has contributed to improvements in the curriculum, the use of information and communication technology (ICT) and resources. There are very good links with other schools, organisations, parents and carers. There is no complacency despite much improved standards. The college is open and honest about its achievements and, as a result, the capacity to make further improvements is good.

Grade: 2

- 3.6 ***What the school should do to improve further***
- Develop students' understanding of how to improve their work through better marking and clearer learning targets.
 - Enhance the curriculum for students at Key Stage 3 in line with existing strengths at Key Stage 4.

4 Farnley Park High School (November 2006)

- 4.1 Farnley Park High School is an improving and inclusive school which provides a satisfactory education for pupils aged 11 to 18. Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in one respect, relating to students' achievement in the

sixth form is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress that it has made in remedying this weakness. The school would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

4.2 Most pupils enjoy coming to school: attendance is improving and close to the national average. Pupils appreciate the good care, guidance and support that is provided which enables them to make satisfactory progress in their personal development and well-being. Improvements in behaviour have had a positive impact on the climate for learning and led to improvements in the quality of teaching which is satisfactory overall. As a result, although standards are below average, the rate of pupils' progress has increased and is satisfactory. However, the school recognises that more teaching needs to be good or better to close gaps in learning and raise achievement and standards further.

4.3 The headteacher provides clear direction. He has established a team approach to school improvement and sharpened the school's focus on raising achievement. With the able support of senior and middle leaders he has implemented sustainable actions to tackle underperformance. Good self-evaluation has enabled senior and middle leaders to accurately identify the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation are not all used to drive further improvement rigorously enough. Partnerships with all stakeholders, including parents are improving although some would appreciate more communication with the school so that they are better informed. Governors undertake their duties appropriately. However, checks to ensure compliance with aspects of health and safeguarding procedures are not fully in place. The school has tackled areas identified in the last inspection and provides satisfactory value for money. There is good capacity for further improvement.

Grade: 3

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

inspectors agree with the school's judgement that students' achievement in the sixth form is inadequate. Standards attained by students are below average. In 2006 more than half the results of Year 12 students were below target grades. In Year 13, there was too much inconsistency between subjects. However, the newly appointed head of sixth form has produced a clear agenda to tackle weaknesses. Good capacity exists for future improvement. Targets are shared with students and new arrangements have been introduced to formalise the review of progress on a regular basis. As a consequence of underperformance at the end of Year 12 in 2006, students' progress is now systematically tracked. The quality of teaching in the sixth form is improving, supported by appropriate training. Effective partnerships with other sixth form providers have resulted in a more relevant curriculum, which is appreciated by students. An increasing number of students have opted to join the sixth form and enjoy the experiences offered. They talk positively about the personal enrichment programme and appreciate the improvements in accommodation including a dedicated and suitably resourced study area. Students' personal development and well-being are satisfactory. Good care, guidance and support enable most students to gain maturity and confidence.

Grade: 4

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

- Raise levels of achievement throughout the school and eradicate inadequate achievement in the sixth form.
- Increase the proportion of teaching that is good or better.
- Use the outcomes of monitoring and evaluation to drive improvement even more rigorously.

- Increase the involvement of all stakeholders so that they are better informed.
- Ensure compliance with all health and safeguarding procedures.

5 **Mount St Mary's Catholic High School (November 2006)**

- 5.1 Mount St Mary's High School is a good school. It provides a caring, supportive and safe atmosphere which pupils and parents value highly. This was captured by one pupil who felt, 'Education at this school is good: it makes you feel like you are really getting somewhere.' Pupils arrive at the school with below average levels of attainment and most make at least the progress expected of them. Overall, standards of work are satisfactory and improving. The rise in pupils' achievements and standards over the last two years, particularly in Years 7 to 9, is impressive considering the school's recent amalgamation with another local school. Pockets of underperformance remain, however. Managers have correctly analysed the reasons for the underachievement of certain groups of pupils. One of the key challenges for the school is to continue to improve the standards and achievement for all pupils, particularly those in Years 10 and 11.
- 5.2 The development of pupils' personal development and well-being is good. Their spiritual awareness and moral values are outstanding, reflecting the school's strong Catholic ethos. Behaviour in and around the school is good with a few exceptions. Attendance has improved and is in line with national averages. Many pupils are involved in fundraising activities within the local community and there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their levels of responsibility. The school has given priority to improving teaching and learning across all areas. The systems for setting individual targets and tracking pupils' progress are excellent and well understood by pupils. Consequently, in most lessons pupils make good progress. However, in a few subjects where teaching is less effective, pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- 5.3 The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets pupils' needs well. The designation of specialist status has had a positive impact in developing the curriculum, and access to improved resources is enabling ICT to be used effectively as a tool for learning. Results in mathematics and ICT show an improving trend. The quality of care, guidance and support is good. Pupils appreciate the encouragement given by teachers to help them achieve as well as they can. A wide range of support is provided for pupils with complex learning difficulties and recent improvements have been made in better capturing the progress these pupils make. Parents hold the school's work in very high regard.
- 5.4 Leadership and management are good. A highly experienced headteacher provides strong leadership and clear vision. This, along with an effective senior management team, has led the school successfully through a period of considerable challenge with sensitivity and with minimal disruption to pupils. The school regularly completes a thorough self-evaluation which is used effectively to drive improvement. Strategies put in place to address underachievement are mostly effective. However, in some areas of the school's work, monitoring and measurement of actions taken are not sufficiently rigorous to check the extent of impact. Good progress has been made in dealing with issues raised at the last inspection and the school demonstrates a good capacity to improve its provision further.

Grade: 2

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

- To raise the achievement and standards of all pupils, particularly in Years 10 and 11.
- Ensure that effective monitoring and evaluation for improvement is consistent across all areas of the school's work.

6 North West SILC (November 2006)

- 6.1 This is a good school. Upon opening in January 2005 the principal inherited a huge budget deficit. He has successfully clawed it back without compromising the quality of education for the pupils. Staff reductions have been skilfully managed, achievement has been raised and an increased number of pupils have been provided with opportunities to work alongside their peers in mainstream schools. A small number of pupils achieve remarkable academic success as a result of this strategy. A staffing structure has been put in place to shape three distinct 'Centres of Excellence' to provide support for pupils with autism, very profound learning difficulties, and challenging behaviour across north west Leeds. The vast majority of parents are thrilled with what this school achieves for their children. However, a small number of parents are angry about the staff cuts that have resulted in increased numbers of pupils in classes. Communication with these parents is not always as sharp and effective as it could be. This is exacerbated by pupils' progress reports not always being written in parent friendly language. Reports do not always inform parents about the magical moments of achievement in their children's lives. For example, breakthrough moments such as a turn of the head in response to a particular stimulus provided, or the gorgeous smile which cries out, 'I am comfortable in this position'. This type of progress is regarded understandably by these parents as far more important at this stage than achievement in literacy or numeracy.
- 6.2 The rapid gains the vast majority of pupils make in communication and independence lie at the heart of this successful school. There is a determination on the part of staff that all pupils who are capable of entering the world of work when they reach adulthood will have the necessary skills to do so. The school is effective in meeting this aim. Teaching is good and focuses on developing important life skills. Looked after children and those from families where English is not the first language achieve well. Overall, pupils with the most complex needs are stimulated in lessons and make good progress. There are rare occasions, though, when some of these pupils are left sitting passively without targeted intervention and support from teaching assistants. On these occasions they under perform. During the inspection pupils who benefit from using the hydrotherapy pool did so. This requires one-to-one support. Some parents are legitimately concerned that this does not always happen as it should because teaching assistants required for this activity are deployed elsewhere in the school. Inspectors agree with their point. Feeding programmes are managed satisfactorily but insufficient attention is paid to focusing on lunch time as a curriculum opportunity to develop pupils' social and independence skills. Nonetheless, achievement is good overall and the school provides good value for money.
- 6.3 Pupils' personal development is good. They enjoy school. Overwhelmingly, they have positive attitudes to learning. All are included in physical exercise. Pupils in wheelchairs are enthralled as they dance to music. Healthy diets are provided, including very specialist provision of food for those pupils with complex medical needs. Overall, the quality of care is good. Guidance given to those pupils capable of entering the world of work is a particular strength.
- 6.4 The newly established leadership team has already successfully implemented its plans for significant change which has improved the quality of provision for pupils in many areas of school life and raised achievement. Mainstream schools value the support and advice they are given from staff of this school. It enables them to meet better the needs of pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in their schools. Capacity for improvement is good.

Grade: 2

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

Provision is good. A rich curriculum and good accreditation opportunities ensure students make good progress and achieve well. Students make rapid gains in independence and learn important life skills. They are skilful communicators and express themselves confidently. Links with college are good. High expectations that the majority of students will enter the workforce are met. Personalised programmes are matched to need and those students capable of doing so are encouraged to travel independently using the bus and train. The quality of teaching and learning is good.

6.6 Leadership and management are good. There are fewer students with complex needs than lower down the school, a legacy from the time when more students with moderate learning difficulties were placed in special schools. However, the requirements of those few students with complex needs are also met well and they are fully included in learning experiences alongside their peers.

Grade: 2

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

- Deploy teaching assistants consistently in lessons to ensure that no pupil is ever left sitting passively but is always engaged in suitable learning experiences.
- Ensure that sufficient teachers and teaching assistants are available at lunch time to support pupils develop important social and independent skills whilst eating their dinner.
- Improve communication with parents by providing them with a meeting to learn about their children's progress each year in addition to the annual review and ensure that reports are written in parent friendly language.
- Enable pupils who benefit from being free from pain when they are in the hydrotherapy pool to experience this activity regularly by targeting sufficient staff to ensure it happens.

7 **Temple Moor High School Science College (October 2006)**

7.1 Temple Moor High School Science College provides a satisfactory standard of education and has some significant strengths. These strengths are in the leadership structures focused on raising achievement and standards across the school and in the sixth form. Results in tests and examinations in 2006 represent improvement from underperformance in the past and the school is well placed to consolidate this rising trend. The dynamic leadership of the headteacher inspires and empowers all. Faculty leaders, linked to the work of the senior leadership team, fully understand what needs to be done to raise standards further.

7.2 Teaching is satisfactory overall with examples seen of good and outstanding practice. However, the quality of teaching is not consistent and information is not always used effectively to identify and track progress of all groups of students. This leads to variations in students' progress.

7.3 The curriculum is good and meets the identified needs of students and their community by, for example, the inclusion this year of an accredited option in horticulture. Students receive good levels of support and make good progress in their personal development. The acquisition of Advanced Healthy Schools status underpins the commitment to promote the well-being of all. Governors are effective in their work and use their understanding of strengths and weaknesses to fulfill their role of 'critical friend'. They play a unique part in working with families whose children are at risk of exclusion.

7.4 Science college status has had a significant impact on providing high quality resources and improving standards. It ensures strong links with feeder primary schools, the local business and enterprise community. As a result there are increased opportunities for work-placed learning and enrichment activities within the school. Through the provision of advanced skills teachers and enhanced information and communication technology (ICT), it has promoted improvements in core subjects.

7.5 Effective action has been taken to address the issues since the last inspection. The school gives good value for money and has a good capacity to improve.

Grade: 3

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

Post-16 provision is good. Students achieve well in response to the good teaching they receive. Standards are broadly average. Leadership and management are effective and ensure good value for money. Any weaknesses are identified by effective systems which monitor and evaluate performance: they are tackled successfully. The school's partnership with two other sixth form providers ensures a broad curriculum that meets students' needs and aspirations well. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of activities in sport, the arts, music and voluntary activities. Students contribute to the well-being of their younger peers by acting as mentors. This provision helps to ensure students' good personal development. Students are given good academic and pastoral guidance preparatory to joining the sixth form, during their time there and before leaving to pursue further studies or employment. Individual targets are used well to help students maintain their progress and to give accurate information about what they need to do to improve further. Students state that they find the support they receive is good and they enjoy their life in the sixth form. The large majority of students complete their courses successfully.

Grade: 2

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

In order to raise standards the school should:

- make better use of the information about students in order to monitor the progress and performance of different groups
- improve the consistency and quality of teaching and learning.

8 West Leeds High School (October 2006)

8.1 West Leeds High School is a welcoming, inclusive school that provides a satisfactory education overall. The general trend of progress for students over the last eight years has been one of modest but steady improvement. In 2004 and 2005 the school experienced a fall in the results students achieved in national tests and examinations. In 2006 students attained better results, and in Key Stages 3 and 4 progress overall was broadly satisfactory. In 2006, the proportion of those who gained five A* to C grades in the GCSE examinations improved for the seventh year in succession. A minority of students in Years 9, 11 and in the sixth form did not achieve as they should have done, but most are currently making better progress in their lessons.

8.2 Achievement for most is now satisfactory, as is the curriculum and teaching. However, students could achieve more than they do and the school needs to improve the proportion of good and outstanding lessons to ensure this. Although the school's overall effectiveness is satisfactory, its performance in clearly showing progress for those with learning difficulties is inadequate. Before its next section 5 inspection, Ofsted inspectors may visit the school to monitor the progress it has made in remedying this weakness. The school

would receive two to five days notice of such a visit.

- 8.3 The school gives much attention to the personal development and well-being of its students; students have benefited significantly from encouragement to adopt safe and healthy lifestyles. Care, support and guidance are good. The effectiveness of other initiatives, policies and specialist technology status has yet to be evaluated by the school. Students enjoy being at West Leeds and talked about how they have been helped to improve their learning. An overwhelming majority of parents who responded to the questionnaire are positive about how well the school supports their children. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, but a minority of students disrupt the learning of others.
- 8.4 Improvements in outcomes for students indicate that the school provides adequate value for money. The school manages its finances very well and provides an exemplary model which other schools follow. The school leadership has addressed all the issues from the last inspection.
- 8.5 Students' attendance remains below that of most schools, but the school has been energetic to secure continuing improvement. There is regular communication with parents about their children's progress. The headteacher and senior staff are supported well by middle managers who have a good grasp of what is needed to improve. Management has an increasing understanding of the reasons for underachievement, it can show improvements in students' progress and it has the capacity to improve further.

Grade: 3

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

The effectiveness of the sixth form is satisfactory and improving. Standards reached by students are below average but taking their starting points into account, achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is also satisfactory.

- 8.7 Students' personal development and well-being are good. They mostly enjoy their time at school and develop into balanced and mature individuals. The good care, support and guidance they receive contribute significantly to their personal development. Students speak highly of the support they receive both academically and personally.
- 8.8 The leadership of the sixth form is satisfactory. The impact of the recent changes in the curriculum and monitoring of student progress are yet to be seen in improved achievement. However the head of sixth form gives clear direction with an appropriate emphasis on improving attainment.

Grade: 3

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

- Improve attainment and achievement across the school. Improve teaching so that more of it is good and outstanding.
- Ensure that all staff have a clear understanding about the relationship between data analysis, target setting, focused teaching and assessment for learning.
- Track and monitor the progress of students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so that the school is clear about progress across all subjects and that intervention is effective.
- Monitor the effect of policies and initiatives on outcomes for students so that their impact can be evaluated and the school's self-evaluation improved.
- Ensure that all teachers can effectively deal with the poor behaviour of some students which hinders their learning and disrupts that of others.

9 West SILC (October 2006)

- 9.1 This is a satisfactory and improving learning provision with some good features. It provides sound value for money. The SILC was slow to take off at first because of a number of factors, including a serious fire at one of the two schools shortly before the amalgamation. It is now gathering momentum, thanks to strong and effective leadership and management, and pupils are reaping the benefits. Though standards are exceptionally low because of pupils' special needs, achievement overall is satisfactory, as are teaching, learning and the curriculum. However, there are differences in the quality of education on the different sites.
- 9.2 In the five terms it has been operating, much has been achieved in enabling pupils to be educated in mainstream schools. Pupils in this part of the SILC achieve especially well. Provision for young children in the Foundation Stage is good. All these children are educated in mainstream primary schools. They make good progress. Their achievements in communication and in their personal development are very good because, although they have their own base in the mainstream school, they spend much of their time in Nursery and Reception classes. With support, they join in all activities and are eager to do the same as their mainstream classmates. This has resulted in children with considerable learning difficulties taking responsibility, for example, for their bags and books and endeavouring to talk despite severe communication needs. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 based in the primary classes achieve equally well for similar reasons.
- 9.3 Though not based in mainstream schools, pupils in Years 7 to 11 gain new skills. Where appropriate, they take GCSE in subjects such as double science and design and technology through successful links with a number of secondary schools. Furthermore, physical activities, the creative arts and history modules make a substantial contribution to pupils' academic, social and cultural development. Headteachers in the linked schools report that their establishments gain much from the partnership and, as a result, their staff have developed invaluable additional skills in areas such as signing Makaton and managing behaviour.
- 9.4 Staff on the Victoria Park site have adapted well to the changes. As a consequence, pupils there achieve well. However, things are moving at a slower pace on the Milestone site. Some staff have taken longer to adjust to the increased range and complexity of pupils' needs. Many have embraced the challenges presented, undertaken training and are providing well for their pupils. Others, however, have been slow to adapt their practice to meet the complex range of pupils' learning needs and, despite the considerable effort of managers, this is affecting pupils' achievement.
- 9.5 The attitude and behaviour of pupils in all parts of the SILC are good. All pupils make good gains in their personal development because of the good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are helped to adopt safe practices and are encouraged to consider a healthy lifestyle. They make a positive contribution to the community and work for the school committee promotes a greater understanding of citizenship. Attendance is satisfactory. Pupils receive satisfactory care, support and guidance.
- 9.6 Leadership and management are improving and are good. This is evident in the success of the inclusion programme to enable pupils to return to mainstream schools and the increased rate of school improvement. For example, the bringing together of students in Years 12 and 13 on one site is resulting in more effective provision, with a clear plan for development. The leadership team have a very accurate view of what the SILC does well

and what needs to be improved, although their overall view of the school reflects the more successful parts of the provision.

Grade: 2

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

The achievement of students in post-16 education (the sixth form) is satisfactory. Students have been together for less than a year. Prior to this time, those of differing capabilities were educated on different sites. The upheaval of transferring to new premises, and staff and students learning how to get along together resulted in students not doing as well as they should have done, especially in attaining national awards. To tackle the problem, an assistant head was moved to manage the post-16 group. Her decisive leadership and knowledge have led to clear improvements. Time spent training staff and working with students has engendered a sense of common purpose with challenging plans for development. Under her dynamic leadership there have been clear improvements but there is still a way to go, particularly in terms of improving the quality of teaching and extending the range of qualifications offered.

Grade 3

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

- Ensure teaching on the Milestone site meets the full range of pupils' learning needs, so that all pupils achieve as well as they can.
- Ensure plans for provision in the sixth form are fully implemented, so that all students have the opportunity to achieve nationally recognised awards.