

2005/2006 Urmston Grammar School



Urmston Grammar School

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<http://www.urmstongrammar.org.uk>

Local Authority:	Trafford
Age Range:	11-18
Number of pupils:	878
Head Teacher:	Mr. M. G. Spinks.
Chair of Governors:	Mr. E. May

What have been our successes this year?

Academic:

Urmston Grammar School is one of the best schools in the country. Our academic results continue to be excellent but notable successes this year include our GCSE Food Technology results and GCSE Drama but our overall 'A' level and GCSE scores placed us at the top of Grammar schools in Trafford - the highest achieving Authority in England. The SATs results in Maths and Science in 2005 were outstanding. 'A' Level results were also pleasing, particularly in Physics and Maths, according to ALPs data. The Good Schools Guide awarded prizes to Home Economics, Sociology, German, Business Studies and Economics – a rare achievement in one school (these awards can be seen at goodschoolsguide.co.uk).

Our status as a Science college continued to be reinforced under Mrs Wall's leadership (who was picked out for praise in the 2006 OFSTED). New activities include Café Scientifique, more lectures for the public (including lectures on 'Chemistry with a Bang' and 'Working on a Cure for Cancer') and our *expo@ugs* in July (a festival of science and mathematics). OfSTED commented that our Science College status is 'making a positive impact on the work of the school.'

Extra-curricular Activities

The Geography department's trip to Iceland was regarded as an 'amazing experience' by pupils and staff alike. The school play was a sell-out success. Sporting achievements were also prominent this year, with the school's football, hockey, rounders, cricket and cross-country teams all winning Trafford Competitions. Young Enterprise Group won 5 out of 9 National awards, against tough national competition. It was another outstanding year for our charity work, with record amounts being raised by pupils for a variety of charities, including 'Little Heart Matters', a new fund-raising initiative. Many students have qualified as St John's ambulance First Aiders this year. A team of four Sixth Form students were chosen to represent UGS at the Royal Institute of Engineering. Three students applied for the Nuffield Bursary Scheme and other sixth form students were involved in Paper Clip Physics and the Biology Olympiad.

Buildings and Premises

The new theatre was finished this year and the new gym was fully furnished and used by pupils and staff. The new study centre and the new Sixth Form Common Room were opened. Plans for the new wing to the school (which will house new Music and ICT facilities) have been approved and building will be completed in 2007.

Initiatives

The Website Learning Group established the principles of the Learning Support via our website, which went live in June 2006, with expansion throughout the coming year. Under the new Head of Sixth Year, Mrs Lyons (who was also picked out for special mention by OFSTED), the Sixth Year Improvement Group met extensively throughout the year and have already instigated major changes in the school's goals (see Sixth Form Section). We also appointed a new Senior Teacher for School Improvement, who will continue to develop initiatives for success throughout the year. The Healthy Eating Strategy was launched early in the Year and has made changes to the school's curriculum and dietary provision. The whole school survey was conducted and yielding outstandingly positive results. We also introduced a new School Counsellor, whose services were much appreciated by her small clientele.

What are we trying to improve?

The 2006 OfSTED report indicated that we need to challenge the Gifted and Talented more often in our teaching and this is now a central part of our School Improvement Plan for the next three years and is the driving force behind key initiatives in KS4 and KS5. The new Head of Sixth Year has been focussing extensively on improving 'A' Level performance in a huge variety of strategies this year. She has also been working on improving the students' (internal and external) transition into KS5 at UGS, despite the high levels of satisfaction indicated by the Whole School Survey. The Advanced Skills Teacher has been working to improve the quality of teaching by improving the opportunities for observation this year; next year he will be focussing extensively on Assessment for Learning, in order to improve performance. The Senior Teacher for School Improvement will also be working on Monitoring teaching and learning in the coming year. The Head of Sixth Year and the Senior Teacher have also launched Report Writing workshops and a handbook, in order to improve the quality of target setting via reports and in order to improve UCAS reference writing. As mentioned above, the Learning Support Material available on our website (password protected) will expand enormously this

year. Citizenship in KS4 will be extended this year, as will our use of subject mentoring. ICT and Interactive Whiteboard resources will also expand this year. We also intend to continue to develop our links with our stakeholders, including with parents and industry.

How much progress do pupils make between 11 and 16?



Our AAT Value Added Score for KS2 - KS4 indicates a score of 1006.3 which places us in the above average category. This is common to Grammar Schools in Trafford because the spread of ability upon entry is much higher than other similar schools but because we have far fewer disadvantaged pupils (whose scores are loaded by the governments VA tool) our Contextual Value Added scores (the scoring system the government uses to rate schools) will be almost impossible to improve: in many subjects in UGS we achieve 100% pass at A* - C and our score over all subjects was 96% in 2005. OfSTED stated that our pupils make 'very good progress over five years.'

How well do our pupils achieve in year 11?

96% pass at Grade A* to C. OfSTED described our GCSE achievement as 'outstanding' and an as 'excellent achievement'. We are one of the highest achieving schools in the UK.

			Entered for 5+ GCSEs or GNVQ equivalent	Achieving		Entered for 1+ GCSEs	Achieving	
				5+A*-C	5+A*-G		1+A*-G	No passes
Total	UGS 2005	No	131	126	131	131	131	0
		%	100	96	100	100	100	0
	All schools 2004	%	92.3	53.4	88.6	97.2	95.8	4.2

How well do our pupils achieve at age 14?

SUBJECT	National Curriculum Levels												
	D	A	W	B	N	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
ENGLISH													
Teacher Assessment - School	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	56	40	-
Teacher Assessment - National 2004	-	1	-	-	-	-	2	6	21	37	24	8	1
Test - School	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	55	25	-
Test - National 2004	-	4	-	10	-	-	-	-	15	37	24	10	0
MATHEMATICS													
Teacher Assessment - School	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	63	33
Teacher Assessment – National 2004	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	7	17	26	26	18	4
Test - School	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	60	29
Test - National 2004	-	3	-	3	-	-	-	7	14	21	29	19	4
SCIENCE													
Teacher Assessment - School	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	26	59	11
Teacher Assessment – National 2004	-	1	-	-	-	-	1	7	20	333	27	10	-
Test - School	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	29	66	-
Test - National 2004	-	4	-	3	-	-	-	6	21	32	24	11	-

OfSTED described our achievement in KS3 as 'well above average'. The 2005 PANDA indicated that our 2004 AAT Value Added score was 102.7, significantly higher than average. In 2005 99% of pupils achieved Level 5+ and above. In Science in 2005 67% achieved Level 7, 29% in Maths and 25% in English - superb results but ones which will improve further in the next few years.

How have our results changed over time?

Generally, our results have stayed remarkably consistent and good over the last 5 years: this is particularly true of GCSE and 'A' Level achievement. OfSTED commented that in 2004 '11 out of 15 subjects offered at A level had a 100% pass rate' and that at GCSE 'almost every subject' achieved '100% pass rate and a high proportion of students receiving grade A or B.' In 2005 the GCSE the national average point score was 354.9: ours was 437.3. In 2005 SATs the average point score was 34.5: ours was 42.8. In 'A' Level 2005 our point score was 342 - which put us only just outside the top 100 schools in the country.

How are we making sure that every child gets teaching to meet their individual needs?

Despite being a selective school, we have a wide range of ability in our classes - in Year 7 in English, for instance, TA assessment ranges from Level 3 to Level 6. We therefore have an a small but highly focussed and competent Special Needs Strategy, run by Mrs Ball, Assistant Headteacher and Head of KS3. This provides a specialist Dyslexia/Dyspraxia support as well as support for spelling and punctuation. A individual programme of study for all Special Needs pupils is delivered, with remarkable success, according to OfSTED 2006. Mrs Ball is also responsible for the Exceptionally Able and there a number of strategies in place to support these pupils' needs, including some extra lessons, extra opportunities for experience and individual action plans. As a staff we are always kept informed of Special Needs and of the needs of the Exceptionally Able. Recently we have also been looking at different forms of Emotional Intelligence. We use a wide range of teaching strategies to advance learning and OfSTED stated that they saw 'excellent classroom practice' in their 2006 inspection. 96% of pupils and parents rated teaching at good or above: 27% as excellent.

How do we make sure our pupils are healthy, safe and well-supported?

This is one of our greatest strengths as a school - and one which OfSTED stated we can take 'pride in'. The school survey revealed that 78% of pupils have never been bullied at UGS. 14% of pupils had only been bullied once or twice in their entire career at UGS. Many parents in this latter category actually wrote on the survey sheets that the Head of Year had resolved these issues immediately. We are immensely proud of the fact that 97% of parents stated that they felt their children were generally safe at UGS and that not one parent in the survey felt that their child was unsafe. 91% had never found it difficult to send their child to school and not a single parent felt that their child was usually reluctant to attend school. 92% of pupils felt that discipline was good or better at UGS, clearly indicating how safe they feel in class.

The Staff are made very aware of the necessity to look after our pupils' well-being and all take their responsibilities extremely seriously. Information from Every Child Matters has been highlighted in staff meeting and at academic board and all members of staff have been circulated a document which outlines how ECM should appear in the classroom. The School Handbook stresses our rigorous policy on bullying (zero tolerance). PSE and Citizenship also address bullying directly. Some subjects have also incorporated 'care issues' into their schemes of work - most notably English, which has units on 'Getting Along Together' and 'Prejudice' in KS3.

The key stage 3 PSE programme has been completely revised in recent years to ensure that all required aspects of SRE are covered - as well as other topics felt by the Head of School to be of value and importance in the developing child e.g. keeping safe on the streets; toxic shock syndrome.

Several Form tutors have been trained in mentoring and counselling and UGS now has a trained counsellor and access to 'Relate' counselling services within school. The counsellor reports any significant findings to relevant members of staff on a need-to-know basis and more serious matters directly to the designated member for Child Protection. Using Sixth Form pupils as Form Prefects for Years 7-11 has proved invaluable in allowing younger pupils to voice concerns, particularly as the prefects join them on their induction residential week ably helping to break the ice and offer themselves as highly approachable alternatives should any pupil feel unable to approach staff. A recent addition to the Lower School pastoral system was the introduction of the Year 9 Buddy system in which Year 9 pupils are elected

by their contemporaries to act as Buddies to the new Year 7 intake. A Buddy box has also been sited outside the office of the Head of Lower School. Part of the role of sixth form prefects and the Buddies is to listen, support and to communicate with pupils and with Form Tutors and to set up class events in the initial few weeks.

The Induction Programme for the 'new' Year 7 has been significantly reorganised in the last three years and now includes a Year 7 Residential Trip (amongst other elements), which takes place in the first two or three weeks of their career at Urmston Grammar. With the Head of Lower School, her Assistant Head of Lower School and the form tutors being in attendance, close relationships are established which then encourages future ease when needing help.

The School Council has dealt with issues relating to pupils' well-being over the years and all concerns are minuted. All SMT members have genuine Open Door policies to encourage discussion of problems. The Deputy Head is the Designated Teacher for Child Protection and periodically updates staff on our duties and upon spotting signs of abuse.

At Key Stage 3 pupils receive 105 minutes of Physical Education each week and 70 minutes at Key Stage 4. In Physical Education pupils are given the knowledge, skills and confidence to lead an active lifestyle; they undertake a variety of activities that allow them to be active and successful performers. Through Health Related Fitness lessons they learn the value of physical activity and its importance for a healthy lifestyle. At Key Stage 4 they design and undertake their own Personal Exercise Programs. The new fitness suite is used regularly in both Key stage 3 and 4 to promote physical activity and is available for use after school for all years - and is well used.

AS level PE launches in September 2006 and this will further enhance healthy living for KS5 pupils. Extra curricular PE is extensive at UGS; teams in hockey, cricket, rounders, basketball, football, aerobics and netball, are all tremendously successful and popular. Badminton activities also run as extra curricular activities and are well attended: in short there is every possible opportunity for all pupils to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The school works with local Primary Schools to extend this good practice through our partnerships in the Community Sports programme.

Changes to PSE which began in 2004 are now fully in place and mean that pupils in Years 7, 8 & 9 do work on 'Healthy Bodies Through Exercise' and units on food and nutrition in Years 8 & 9. 'Ranges of Body Shapes' are also studied in PSE in years 8&9. Food has also been the topic of whole school and sectional assemblies, emphasising healthy eating and the effects of poor diet. The curriculums in Science and in Food Technology have been used to underpin these issues, too.

UGS is a 'registered centre for the delivery of Basic Food Hygiene Certificate', endorsed by the Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH). We work closely with Trafford Environmental Health to deliver training programme to Year 10 Food Tech. pupils. Food Tech also supported the Healthy Eating initiative by providing posters for the Canteen.

Healthy Eating has been at the forefront of the school's development plan for this year. The canteen's meals have changed in line with the government's recommendations and now always have healthy food options and on some days only has healthy options. The major shift in the canteen's provision has been towards home cooking of highly nutritious food including cooking all vegetables on site. Unhealthy food and drink formerly found in the school's vending machines is gradually being removed and will be replaced with healthier options (especially fruit

and health snacks) during the course of 2006-2008. All of this can be evidenced through the Head of Catering's Order Sheets (which are available for inspection).

The alcohol unit in Year 12 PSE also emphasises healthy living.

Awareness of weight and height and age is also emphasised in GCSE Maths, where they become aware of the significance of weight changes.

We are enormously proud of our commitment to the health, safety and well-being of all our pupils. OfSTED graded our commitment to well-being as Grade 1 - Outstanding.

How are we working with parents and the community?

We work extensively with parents via parents' evenings, induction evenings, individual meetings, the Parental Survey and Open Evenings. We have a genuine Open Door policy and all parents are able to see senior members of staff usually within 24 hours of a request. The Whole School Survey this year produced significant changes to our School Improvement Plan. We also liaise with parents when arranging COPE, Work Experience and PSE. It is perhaps in COPE in Year 12 that our students make the most contribution to the community; here there are a huge variety of community activities, including charity raising events, Environmental work, teaching, assisting teachers, working in charity shops, working with the disabled, working in Old People's Homes or participating in the Envision project or Millennium Volunteers.

Outside of COPE the Head of Music arranges annual outings where pupils from across the age range perform music for the sick at the local hospital and for the elderly at local homes and for deprived children. This year, musicians have made links with our local feeder primary schools in terms of working jointly on the performance of orchestral and band ensemble music to offer young players an experience that they might only have gained in KS3 or above. Another member of staff and sixth form pupils run Christmas parties for OAPs and special needs, and the school provides the venue.

The Deputy Head has involved pupils from across the age range in political and citizenship related regional activities, competitions and meetings.

We believe that pupils at UGS are instilled with a caring attitude to the community as is illustrated by the wide range of communal activities they partake in. They are placed into activities which stimulate personal expression about a wide range of social issues. The school's PSE and COPE provision delivers a wide range of activities which promote awareness and participation in debate about rights and responsibilities. OfSTED commented on our commitment to the community, stating that 'all pupils and students are very committed to....events that benefit the community.'

What activities are available to pupils?

We are proud of the enormous range of activities which take place at UGS. The following list is merely a sample of the activities available to pupils:

- Drama productions
- A wide range of PE activities including football, basketball and badminton.
- Science Clubs including Café Scientifique.
- Music activities including choir and orchestra and 'Musician of the Year' competitions.

- COPE activities which include a massive range of experiences including sport, charity work, ecology work, self-defence, subject support work, crèche etc
- Mock Court
- Academic workshops or lectures out of school
- Coaching for National competitions in a variety of subjects including Citizenship
- Enrichment activities like Code Breaking and Paper Clip Physics
- A wide range of academic and non-academic school trips including to Hadrian's Wall, Wales, Cadbury's World, Jewish and Buddhist Museums, Art Galleries, Theatre trips and so on
- Open door entrance to ICT facilities
- A European Languages day
- Optional extra classes and revision sessions in a wide range of subjects

....each year we add more activities.

What have pupils told us about the school, and what have we done as a result?

In our surveys of pupils' opinions we have found that:

- Over 95% of pupils described the standard of teaching as good or above - 27% as excellent;
- Over 92% of pupils feel that standards of discipline are good or above - 26% as excellent;
- Over 91% of pupils feel that the standard of marking is good or above.
- Over 87% of pupils said that many or most of their teachers care about their academic progress;
- The Snapshot Survey showed that 80% of KS3&4 pupils enjoyed their lessons and only 1.5% did not.
- The Snapshot Survey of pupils showed that 84% of KS3&4 pupils felt that teachers enabled them to reach their academic potential and not a single pupil felt that teachers never did this.

Actions taken as a result of pupil consultation include:

- Faculties produced transitional documents for KS4 and KS5 - and now further plans to add KS3 documents
- The Parental survey of 2005 produced some major additions to the SIP, including this year's targets relating to PSE, Enterprise and self-evaluation;
- The English and Expressive Arts Faculty's consultation with Year 12 produced changes in their GCSE English schemes of work, although they judged that changes to Literature texts were unwise, based on pupils' exceptionally good GCSE English Literature results.
- Last year, the Maths faculty responded to requests from Year 12 students to teach AS further Maths and extra lessons were then introduced, taught by two maths teachers, after school.
- The school survey reveals that levels of satisfaction with PSE fall steadily from KS3 to KS5 and although satisfaction remains high in KS4 & 5, schemes of work for PSE in these Key Stages need revision. PSE in KS5 is in the process of being completely revised.
- Preparation for life after school is well established, the survey revealed, but 25% of KS4 & KS5 pupils indicated that this preparation was only 'quite well' done: the growth of Enterprise and Innovations has therefore become

a part of the new SIP adding to such as the Business Dynamic and the Careers convention.

- The survey of reporting in 2004 produced an overhaul of the school's credit system and was responsible for the creation of the Platinum - Silver attendance awards in lower school.
- Sixth Form were consulted in the Summer Term 2005, for their views on a recognition system. An 'Achievement Award' system was successfully introduced in the Autumn Term 2006. The first 'Achievement Awards' were posted home, directly to parents, in the Autumn Term, following the procedure suggested by the former Sixth Form.
- As a result of their comments on teaching, pupils are now actively involved in the appointment of teachers via observing them teach and feed back sheets and consultation with the Head or senior teachers.

How do we make sure all pupils attend their lessons and behave well?

Attendance is not a serious issue at UGS. OfSTED stated that 'pupils and students enjoy coming to school and attendance and punctuality are excellent.' However, we are not complacent about our achievements and this year we have made our pursuit of any absence more rigorous, giving responsibility for absence to a specific member of the support staff. We have also increased our links with Trafford's Attendance Unit to pursue any serious cases (currently only one pupil).

What do our pupils do after year 11?

An average of 90% of our pupils stay on to Year 12. Some leave to go on to College to take career related training courses, such as Marketing. Those few others who do not go on to FE usually gain employment in service or tertiary industry immediately. For instance, of those who left in July 2005, we believe that none are currently unemployed.

OfSTED's view of our school

OfSTED said that:

- Urmston Grammar School is an outstanding school; overall, the school's evaluation of its work shows an accurate awareness of strengths and areas for future development. Pupils progress very well during their time at school and standards are extremely high. Major strengths of the school include the pupils' excellent attitude and behaviour. There is a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development throughout the school, and all are encouraged to adopt healthy lifestyles. They are also committed to making a positive contribution to the wider community; for example, through a range of charity fundraising activities. Pupils are proud of the school and appreciate the opportunities presented to them.
- Leadership and management are outstanding. The school identifies clear and highly appropriate aims, designed to sustain a culture of high achievement. Particular strengths of the leadership and management include the innovative and dynamic work of the science college director and the vision and commitment of the acting head of sixth form. In addition, middle managers who work as part of the academic board make an invaluable contribution to the development of the school through their enthusiasm and dedication.
- The curriculum in Years 7 to 11 and in the sixth form is outstanding.
- Personal development and well-being: Inspectors agree with the schools' evaluation that this aspect of the school is outstanding. Pupils and students

enjoy coming to school, and attendance and punctuality are excellent. They feel safe around the school.

- Behaviour, both in and out of lessons, is outstanding, and pupils have very positive attitudes. Movement between lessons, at breaks and at lunchtimes, is very sensible and orderly. Parents value highly the education the school provides.

What have we done in response to OfSTED?

We have already done a considerable amount. Changes already made as a response to OfSTED include:

- The appointment of a Senior Teacher for Improvement
- New responsibility points for Assessment for Learning and Work Related Learning.
- Creation of a new study centre
- A new School Improvement Plan to include:
- Developing more effective communication systems for consultation with stakeholders
- Continuing to develop the Citizenship strand - including reporting to parents
- Increasing Faculties' use of self-evaluation
- Develop further Assessment for Learning
- Expand use of Interactive White Boards
- Further development of Enterprise Initiative
- Develop subject targets for all pupils in all subjects
- Further Develop the school website as a learning resource
- Development of subject specific transition guides for all key stages (e.g. 'KS3 English Guide')
- Develop Subject Mentoring for top and bottom in KS5
- Improve ALPs score to average 5 by end of 2006
- To extend the PSE system in KS5 including elements of Citizenship.

SIXTH YEAR

Our results this year:

- 100% pass in 11 out of 15 subjects in 2005
- Average point score of 342 - only just outside top 100 in the country
- Rising achievement in a significant number of subjects including Physics, Maths and Business and Economics

How have our results changed over time?

As with KS4, results have stayed fairly static and good over the last eight years. In terms of League tables we have the same fluctuation in attainment as all schools, so that our place in the country's league tables varies from 60 to 120. Over the last 5 years the trend of our average point score is up. OfSTED stated that 'in sixth form achievement is good...the progress that students make compared to their attainment at GCSE is good'. However, we are never complacent, and under the leadership of the new Head of Sixth Form we actively pursuing a wide range of strategies to improve the number of Grade As we achieve. As an outstanding school, we expect achievement to be outstanding, too.

What have been the successes of the sixth form this year?

As mentioned above, there were some outstanding academic achievements this year. Subjects which performed exceptionally well included Physics, Maths, Economics and Business Studies. Some individual students did exceptionally – two offered places at Oxford and three offered places at Cambridge.

The Raising Achievement Group has recommended a range of strategies to improve performance and some of these are already underway. Subject mentoring is at the heart of this strategy but the use of academic targets is also becoming a part of our everyday practice.

The Report Writing focus is already producing outstanding reports and will inform our UCAS references.

Outside the academia, the Sixth Form have contributed to the success of the school in a huge variety of ways including their COPE activities, their charity work, their contributions to school productions, school outings, Open Evenings, work on the school council, work experience and Young Enterprise.

What are we trying to improve in our sixth form?

We have only one central aim for the next three years - to raise achievement in the Sixth Year. To that end the following is taking place this year:

- A working party of representatives from all faculties, led by the Head of Sixth Year, is working to create academic and pastoral strategies to improve performance: This includes a review of mentoring and the introduction of all students in KS5 to attend Parents' Evening with their parents;
- Academic Board has a standing item on Raising Performance in KS5;
- Pupils from Year 13 are being used to give guidance to Year 12 on how to manage AS level;
- Greater use of peer marking, using Exam Board mark schemes and exemplar material from the Exam Boards, in order to focus upon exam technique and Assessment Objectives;
- Greater emphasis on KS5 performance in Staff Meetings, including a Lead teacher running a cross-curricular initiative on classroom observation to raise standards and share good practice;
- More senior examiners being invited into school to do workshops/lectures with pupils;
- Greater emphasis on Study Skills and general examination preparation in PSE; with a new programme for Year 12 and Year 13 being introduced 2005-06
- Departments are placing more emphasis on data analysis and preparing DIPs which are based on the principals of the SEF and the SIP;
- The Head of Sixth Form and other subject managers are already visiting other similar sixth forms to see what strategies they have implemented to raise standards. Some NQTs and subject teachers are also visiting schools

to see how their subject (e.g. same board and similar uptake) is being delivered.

What do our students do after leaving the sixth form?

The vast majority of our students go on to university. Over the last six years 85.6% of our students have gone on to university: in 2005 89.6% went on to university. Of those few who do not go on to university, unemployment is almost unheard of.