

Royton and Crompton School

Blackshaw Lane, Royton, Oldham, OL2 6NT

Inspection dates 12–13 June 2013

Overall effectiveness	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	Requires improvement	3
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Leadership and management		Requires improvement	3

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement. It is not good because

- Achievement requires improvement because students are not making enough progress in a number of subjects including English. This has resulted in GCSE results dropping to well below average.
- There is too much variation in the progress made by groups of students across different subjects.
- There is still a minority of teaching in the school which is inadequate and some that requires improvement.
- Not all teachers mark students' work regularly and provide students with clear guidance on how to improve their work. Opportunities for students to consider and respond to teachers comments are limited.
- Teachers do not create enough opportunities for students to find things out for themselves by learning independently.
- In some lessons learning and progress are interrupted by the poor behaviour of a small number of students.
- New, improved systems to monitor and improve progress and the quality of teaching are not yet rigorously applied by all subject leaders.
- The skills of the governing body need further development. Governors do not always ask searching enough questions of the school's leadership in relation to improving teaching and achievement.
- There is insufficient emphasis placed on the link between teachers' performance and the salary they receive.

The school has the following strengths

- In some lessons where teaching is either good or outstanding students make good progress.
- The acting headteacher and other leaders have a clear understanding of the school's priorities and what needs to be done to make rapid improvements. Improvements can be seen and progress is accelerating.
- The support the school provides for students whose circumstances make them vulnerable and for those at risk of exclusion is good.
- The school has worked successfully to improve attendance, which is now average.

Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed 43 lessons and 42 teachers. Two joint observations were undertaken with senior leaders.
- The inspectors spoke to groups of students about their learning in lessons, their behaviour and safety, and how they enjoyed their school.
- Meetings were held with senior and middle leaders, teachers, and members of the governing body and school staff. Discussions were also held with the school’s improvement partner.
- In addition, inspectors looked at the school’s view of its own performance, its development plan, data relating to current students’ progress, safeguarding information, school policies and the minutes of governing body meetings.
- The inspectors analysed 16 responses to the online questionnaire (Parent View) and received six letters from parents.
- The views of 36 staff who returned questionnaires were taken into account.

Inspection team

Gary Kelly, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Timothy Gartside	Additional Inspector
Mary Liptrot	Additional Inspector
Osama Abdul Rahim	Additional Inspector
David Thompson	Additional Inspector

Full report

Information about this school

- Royton and Crompton School is bigger than the average-sized secondary school, with the majority of students being of White British heritage and speaking English as their first language.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for the pupil premium, which provides additional funding for those students known to be children of service families, eligible for free school meals or looked after by the local authority, is above average.
- The proportions of students supported by school action, school action plus or who have a statement of special educational needs are broadly average.
- A number of students in Years 10 and 11 study vocational and personal development subjects at local off-site learning and skills providers: Groundwork, Kickstart, Youth Inclusion Project, OASIS, Reflections, The Oldham College, and Teens and Toddlers.
- Since the previous inspection significant changes to the school's leadership have occurred. The school currently has an acting headteacher, with a permanent headteacher expected to be in place from January 2014.
- The school has Investors in People, Healthy Schools, Achievement for All, Specialist Schools Trust, Eco Schools and Arts College England awards.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards for attainment and progress.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the quality of teaching and progress across all subject areas so that it is consistently good or better by:
 - eradicating all inadequate teaching
 - ensuring students make good and better progress in all subjects and attain in line with or above national averages for five or more A* to C grades including English and mathematics in their GCSE examinations
 - ensuring planning and teaching in lessons takes account of the abilities of individuals and groups of students so that all students achieve their best
 - providing students with opportunities to make their own decisions through discussion, group work and problem-solving activities and become more independent in their learning
 - ensuring teachers mark students' work frequently, provide better written guidance and opportunities for students to respond so that they can improve their work and make better progress.
- Improve leadership and management at all levels, including subject leadership and school governance, by:
 - ensuring subject leaders are further developed and take responsibility for rigorously implementing the school's strategies to further improve teaching and achievement
 - continuing to develop the skills of governors so they have a full picture and clear understanding of the school's performance and that they use this to hold senior leaders fully to account for their work, particularly when linking pay progression to performance
 - seeking an external review of governance in order to assess how this aspect of leadership and governance may be improved.
- Further improve students' behaviour by ensuring they take responsibility for their own behaviour, including their attitudes to learning in all lessons.

Inspection judgements

The achievement of pupils

requires improvement

- Achievement requires improvement. Students enter the school with standards that are similar to those of other students nationally. By the time they leave in Year 11 they generally attain average standards. However, in 2012 there was a significant dip in students' progress and attainment. The percentage of students attaining five GCSE A* to C grades including English and mathematics in 2012 was well below average.
- Given their starting points, some groups of students are not progressing as well as expected in their learning.
- In English too many students did not make their expected progress, as was the case in other GCSE subjects including geography, history, physical education, French and art.
- Standards in mathematics and science are broadly average.
- Since the acting headteacher has been in post, the school's systems for monitoring and checking students' progress have improved and recent examination information indicates that students' achievement for those finishing Year 11 in 2013 should improve considerably.
- The school's strategy for entering students early for examinations is bespoke to the needs of individuals and groups and has not been a barrier to students' achievement.
- Although gaps still exist between the points scores in national examinations for those students supported by the pupil premium, including those known to be eligible for free school meals, they are closing and progress is similar to that of other students. In 2012 these students attained half a GCSE grade less than other students in English and mathematics.
- The achievement of students who are disabled or have special educational needs requires improvement because some of these students are not achieving as well as they should. However, the acting headteacher and other leaders have recently reviewed and improved the tracking and intervention programmes for students with special educational needs. Latest assessment information indicates that these students are now making better progress.
- Students from minority ethnic backgrounds and those speaking English as an additional language make progress which is not significantly different from that of their peers. The school successfully ensures students have equal opportunities.
- Achievement seen in lessons during the inspection was variable. However, in the majority of lessons observed, students made good or better progress, suggesting that the school's plans to improve teaching and achievement are showing early signs of impact.
- Those students who study off-site at a range of alternative education providers make progress in line with other students. The school monitors progress and the quality of this provision closely.
- The numbers of students not in education, employment or training when they leave the school in Year 11 are small and students are prepared well for their next phase of learning or learning with employment.

The quality of teaching

requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because, while some teaching is good or better, it is not yet consistent across the school and there are still lessons where there is inadequate teaching.
- Where lessons are not planned carefully enough, students of all abilities are expected to work through the same tasks and little is done to bring lessons to life and engage students' interests through a variety of activities and varied questioning. In these lessons opportunities for students to learn and make decisions for themselves are rare.
- In some lessons poorly planned tasks occupy students' time, rather than challenging their understanding. Teachers' questioning lacks the necessary challenge to make students think for themselves, which occasionally creates conditions where students' behaviour towards learning

and the subject is less than positive.

- Although written feedback in workbooks is improving, it is not consistent across the school or used to the best effect.
- New leadership arrangements have created a sharper focus on improving teaching and learning, and early signs of improvement can be seen. In some lessons teaching enthuses and engages students' interests, teachers ask searching questions that make students think and solve problems for themselves and activities are planned that meet the needs of individuals and groups of students. These lessons are well paced and allow students of all abilities to make good progress.
- In an outstanding Spanish lesson students were immediately enthused by the teacher and trainee teacher as they entered the classroom. From the outset the teacher had very high expectations of each individual and students were expected to take responsibility for their own learning and progress, which they responded to well.
- Although written and verbal feedback between teachers and students has improved, it is still inconsistent and not always used to best effect. When marking and feedback is good, teachers provide students with a very clear idea of the quality of their work, the progress being made and what needs to be done to improve. However, there is still little evidence to suggest that students are given opportunities to consider and respond to this feedback, or to revisit work in order to improve and refine.
- The school's whole-school approach to literacy and numeracy has recently been improved. Early signs of impact can be seen by the use of key words and terminology across curriculum areas and there is much more focus on allowing students to read more widely.

The behaviour and safety of pupils

requires improvement

- Students' behaviour and safety requires improvement. Students' behaviour in and around the school, including their relationships with peers, adults and visitors to the school and their behaviour in the majority of lessons, is good. However, a few students need to improve their behaviour in lessons by showing a greater degree of respect for their peers and teacher.
- In lessons where teaching really enthuses and involves students in their learning, challenging them to think and make decisions for themselves, the students have very positive attitudes to their work and almost all make good progress. However, there are insufficient opportunities for the students to consistently practise, develop and refine these important learning skills regularly in all lessons.
- Students say the behaviour in the school has improved considerably in recent times and they told inspectors that, in lessons where teaching is good, students are well-behaved but that occasional poor behaviour is seen in lessons where teaching is less than good.
- Students declare that they feel safe and secure in the school, which is echoed by parents' responses to the online questionnaire, Parent View. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe including a good understanding of internet safety. Parents and students believe they are well cared for and those who face particular challenges are provided with good additional support and care.
- The school provides students with opportunities so that they have a good understanding of the different forms of bullying that may occur, such as homophobic or cyber-bullying. Students and parents feel that the school deals effectively with bullying incidents.
- There are only a small number of formally recorded incidents of bullying and racial or homophobic bullying.
- During this past year attendance has been average and inspectors commented that punctuality to lessons was good. There has been a slight increase in permanent exclusions in 2012 but overall exclusion figures are no worse than national averages. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and reduce both permanent and fixed-term exclusions in recent times.

The leadership and management requires improvement

- Leadership and management require improvement because policies and plans to improve the school and address underperformance have only recently been established and have yet to demonstrate their full impact. Improvements to students' progress and attainment have until recently been too slow and students have left the school without the qualifications they should have achieved.
 - However, the early impact of new leadership arrangements can be seen in some good and better teaching observed during this inspection.
 - The school's latest assessment information looks more positive across subject areas, year groups and for individuals and groups of students.
 - New leadership arrangements have been quick to evaluate the school's weaknesses and have introduced plans to ensure more rapid improvement is in place.
 - There is too much variability in the quality of some subject leaders, especially in their rigour to improve the quality of teaching and raise achievement. The expectations placed on senior and middle leaders have been raised. However, a thorough programme of continued professional development has not yet been established to ensure some senior and subject leaders can take responsibility for implementing and monitoring improvement plans.
 - The school has plans to introduce a range of professional development opportunities for senior and middle leaders in order to enable them to better eradicate weaknesses in teaching. There is evidence of early impact in this area with an improving profile of teaching since Easter 2013, alongside more positive progress and attainment information for current students in the school.
 - The school's leaders have an accurate view of the quality of teaching and learning and what needs to be done to improve this key area. Although the specific roles and responsibilities of senior and middle leaders are still being developed, the school's temporary leadership has ensured there is a sharper focus on accountability.
 - However, the school's approach to improving its performance management procedures is still not fully developed as there is not yet a clear link between progression up the salary scale and performance for leaders, managers and teachers at all levels.
 - Despite significant changes being implemented in the school over a short space of time, including turnover of senior leadership, staff questionnaires show that morale is high. Many staff commented to inspectors about the positive impact the new leadership was having in the school. The staff survey also showed that the continued professional development of additional adults in the school is a further area for development.
 - The curriculum continues to develop to meet the needs of all students. The recently developed intervention programmes for the students whose circumstances make them most vulnerable, including the school's 'student support' and 'internal exclusion', are strong, focusing on improved behaviour and progress. The school's deployment of pupil premium funding is beginning to demonstrate impact, with the gap between the performance of these students and that of their peers narrowing.
 - The school has recently improved its strategies to ensure that the provision of literacy and numeracy in subjects other than in English and mathematics is better, and early signs of impact were seen in lessons where literacy and numeracy provide a focus for learning. However, this is yet to be consistently the case in all subjects.
 - The school continues to improve its engagement with parents. For example, there are now more opportunities for the school to communicate with parents electronically. The online survey for parents, Parent View, suggested that parents are generally happy with the school's provision for their children.
 - Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is developed thoroughly in assemblies and during Personal, Social, Health, Citizenship Education (PSHCE) lessons. Students are positive about the opportunities they have to think about and reflect on their personal opinions and understanding of issues that impact on them locally and beyond their immediate
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community.

- Students believe they are prepared well for their next phase of education, employment or training. This is also true for the students in Years 10 and 11 who study vocational subjects part time at local off-site learning and skills providers.
 - The school's safeguarding and child-protection statutory duties are in place and meet requirements. The promotion of equality of opportunity is at the forefront of its work and discrimination in all its forms is rejected.
 - **The governance of the school:**
 - The governing body is fully committed to the continued improvement of the school and provides a regular visible presence in the school. The level of support and challenge governors provide is improving. However, further development is needed so that governors have the skills to hold the school and its leaders to account for students' progress and continued improvements to teaching and learning. Governors' knowledge and understanding about the link between performance and pay progression is also not as detailed as it should be. They have helped to guide the school through continued changing leadership and recent falling standards. Governors have made important recruitment decisions at senior leadership level and are passionate in ensuring the best standards are in place for students at the school. Governors have worked with school leaders to ensure the financial health of the school and have carefully considered how to spend additional funding, such as pupil premium funding, ensuring more effective equality of opportunity and that barriers to learning are removed for the most disadvantaged.
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What inspection judgements mean

School		
Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	An outstanding school is highly effective in delivering outcomes that provide exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs. This ensures that pupils are very well equipped for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 2	Good	A good school is effective in delivering outcomes that provide well for all its pupils' needs. Pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education, training or employment.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	A school that requires improvement is not yet a good school, but it is not inadequate. This school will receive a full inspection within 24 months from the date of this inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	<p>A school that has serious weaknesses is inadequate overall and requires significant improvement but leadership and management are judged to be Grade 3 or better. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p> <p>A school that requires special measures is one where the school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the school's leaders, managers or governors have not demonstrated that they have the capacity to secure the necessary improvement in the school. This school will receive regular monitoring by Ofsted inspectors.</p>

School details

Unique reference number	105734
Local authority	Oldham
Inspection number	412792

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

Type of school	Secondary
School category	Foundation
Age range of pupils	11–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1,166
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr B Devenport
Headteacher	Dr K O'Hagan
Date of previous school inspection	13 November 2008
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