

# The Radclyffe School

Hunt Lane, Chadderton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL9 0LS

**Inspection dates** 3–4 October 2013

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	Previous inspection:	Good	2
	This inspection:	<b>Requires improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Achievement of pupils		Requires improvement	3
Quality of teaching		Requires improvement	3
Behaviour and safety of pupils		Good	2
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

- In English, not enough students make better than the progress expected of them from their individual starting points.
- Some teaching requires improvement. Some lessons do not provide the right level of challenge. This slows the progress that some students make.
- Marking is inconsistent in showing students clearly what they need to do to improve their work and too often students present their written work untidily and inaccurately.
- Leaders and managers have not made sure that teaching promotes students' literacy and communication skills effectively enough across a range of different subjects.
- In English, leaders and managers have not assessed students' progress accurately enough. This results in predictions for grades at GCSE that have been too high and, until recently, has prevented leaders and managers from identifying accurately what weaknesses need to be tackled to bring about the necessary improvement.

### The school has the following strengths

- In recent years, attainment has risen significantly in a number of subjects, especially in mathematics where students achieve well.
- The proportion of students that attain the highest grades at GCSE has risen sharply since the previous inspection across several subjects.
- The quality of teaching across the school is improving, including in English because leaders and managers have been more rigorous in checking on its quality and have placed a high priority on the professional development of staff.
- Students behave well in classrooms and around the school. They have good attitudes to learning.
- They feel very safe in school.
- Attendance has risen over the last three years and is now above average. The number of exclusions has fallen significantly.
- The curriculum and a wide range of enrichment activities contribute well to students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- Leaders, including governors, know what needs to be done to bring about further improvement.

## Information about this inspection

- Inspectors observed teaching and learning in 46 lessons taught by 46 teachers. An inspector listened to two younger students read.
- Inspectors held meetings with: senior and middle leaders; a group of teaching staff; groups of students; three members of the governing body and the school improvement partner and a representative of the local authority..
- Inspectors scrutinised a wide range of documentation including: information on students' achievement; school records relating to the monitoring of teaching, behaviour, attendance and safeguarding; school policies; minutes of meetings of the governing body; the school's own summary of its effectiveness and the school's development plan.
- Inspectors took account of 87 parental responses to Parent View (Ofsted's on-line questionnaire) and 64 questionnaires returned by members of staff.

## Inspection team

Stephen Wall, Lead inspector	Additional Inspector
Jonathan Woodyatt	Additional Inspector
Jane Alexander	Additional Inspector
Fiona Dixon	Additional Inspector
Mary Lanovy-Taylor	Additional Inspector

## Full report

### Information about this school

- The Radclyffe School is much larger than most secondary schools nationally.
- The proportion of students known to be eligible for support through the pupil premium is well-above average. The pupil premium is additional funding for those students who are known to be eligible for free school meals, children from service families and those children who are looked after by the local authority.
- About 60% of students are from ethnic minority backgrounds, mostly of Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage. The proportion of students who speak English as an additional language is well above average.
- The proportion of students supported through school action is below average.
- The proportion of students supported by school action plus or with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards that set minimum expectations for students' attainment and progress in English and mathematics.
- The Radclyffe School is a cooperative trust school. It has a board of trustees from the local community to advise and support the school on a wide range of issues. The governing body of the school has direct responsibility for the running of the school, its finances and the outcomes it achieves.

### What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise achievement further, especially in English, and ensure that teaching is consistently good with more that is outstanding by ensuring that:
  - the tasks that teachers set in lessons are neither too easy nor too hard for students' differing abilities but challenges all students equally well
  - the pace of teaching is always brisk enough to engage students fully and drive progress at a fast pace
  - students take much more care over the neat and accurate presentation of written work in their exercise books
  - marking always gives students a clear guide about the steps that they need to take to improve their work and students follow up on their teachers' comments.
- Improve the impact of leadership and management on raising achievement in English by:
  - making sure that students' progress is monitored more accurately and that targets that are set reflect this
  - making sure that there is a consistent approach across all subjects to developing students' skills in literacy.

## Inspection judgements

### The achievement of pupils

### requires improvement

- Although achievement in several subjects, including mathematics, has improved significantly in recent years, in English improvement has not been fast enough. For this reason, achievement requires improvement.
- Students join the school with skills that are typically significantly below those expected for their age.
- In recent years, by the end of Key Stage 4, the proportion of students attaining the benchmark of five or more GCSE passes at grades A\* to C including English and mathematics has been below average. This is because, while attainment in mathematics has risen to be in line with the national average, attainment in English has remained below average.
- In mathematics the proportion of students making expected progress and more than expected progress from their individual starting points has grown and is now above the national averages. Achievement in mathematics is now good. This growth has not been matched in English where not enough students make better than the progress expected of them.
- However, evidence gathered during the inspection from robust data provided by the school, observations of teaching and learning, scrutiny of students' books and discussions with pupils shows that the progress students are currently making in English is accelerating at a faster pace.
- The achievement of most-able students in nearly all subjects has risen rapidly. The proportion of students attaining GCSE grades at A and A\* across a range of subjects has risen steeply and is above average.
- A much sharper focus on using pupil premium funding effectively has seen the gap between students known to be eligible for pupil premium funding and other students in the school close rapidly. In 2012, the attainment of students known to be eligible for free school meals was above that of similar students nationally but approximately one GCSE grade lower in mathematics and English in comparison with other students in the school. End of Key Stage 4 data for 2013 show a significant narrowing of this gap in both subjects. This demonstrates the school's effective promotion of equality of opportunity.
- Most students who are disabled or with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well from their individual starting points because of the effective support and guidance that they receive.
- Students from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who speak English as an additional language achieve at least as well as, and sometimes better than, other students in the school. Their attainment is generally in line with national averages. This demonstrates the school's success in tackling discrimination.
- The school enters students early for GCSE in mathematics. The outcomes are used to identify weakness and to target support where it is most needed to help students improve their grades. This approach has been successful in driving up attainment in recent years. A similar approach is being introduced this year in English.
- The school uses the Year 7 catch-up funding very effectively. It has trained staff in teaching phonics (letters and sounds) to weaker readers in Year 7. School data and listening to students read confirm that this is having a positive impact on students' reading skills. The majority of older students say that they enjoy reading and that they read regularly.

### The quality of teaching

### requires improvement

- The quality of teaching requires improvement because, although improving securely, not enough is yet consistently good or outstanding.
- Teaching does not always take account of students' differing abilities and needs in lessons to set tasks that are appropriately challenging. Consequently, some students find the work too hard

and others too easy. This acts as a brake on accelerating progress at a faster pace, especially in English.

- In some lessons, the pace of teaching is not brisk enough to keep all students fully engaged in their learning. This results sometimes in some students being too passive and this, again, slows their progress.
- The quality of teachers' feedback to students on their written work is too inconsistent. Too often it fails to give students clear step-by-step guidance on what they need to do to improve the quality of the work. There are very few examples in students' books of them responding to or acting on their teachers' comments, including in English.
- Teachers too frequently accept without comment or correction, written work from their students that is poorly presented and in which handwriting and grammatical accuracy are of poor quality. This acts as a barrier to developing pride in their work and to the development of their writing and communication skills.
- In the best lessons, students are fully engaged and show a real thirst for learning. In two art lessons, for example, where teaching was outstanding, every student worked with a passionate interest and a real desire to give of his/her best. The teachers asked challenging questions that students were keen to answer. Students' progress was checked regularly during the lessons and judicious questioning and prodding in the right direction by the teachers quickly tackled any misunderstandings or lack of confidence. The work that the students produced showed real pride in presentation and the progress that the students made was truly outstanding.
- Again, in a Year 8 English lesson on preparing an extended piece of writing where teaching was outstanding, the range of tasks set for the students was perfectly matched to students' differing needs and abilities. Teaching was brisk and purposeful. Students responded with a real desire to tackle challenging work and made outstanding progress as a result. Students took great pride in presenting their work because the teacher made expectations totally clear.
- The positive relationships between students and their teachers in many classrooms result in students' positive attitudes to learning. Students say that the quality of teaching is improving and that they are learning more, especially in English. A view confirmed by observations of teaching and learning carried out by inspectors.
- Teaching assistants are used effectively in the majority of lessons to support students who are slower learners.

### **The behaviour and safety of pupils** are good

- The vast majority of students have positive attitudes to learning. They are well-mannered and treat each other and the adults who work with them with respect.
- In lessons, students are keen to give of their best but occasionally interest wanes when teaching is too slow or the tasks that they are set are too easy or too hard. This expresses itself in some passivity. Disruption to lessons caused by poor behaviour is rare.
- The number of fixed-term and permanent exclusions has declined rapidly in recent years. Internal exclusion is used judiciously to send out a message about expectations for behaviour and to support students in learning to take responsibility for their own behaviour management.
- Students report that they feel very safe in school because the care, guidance and support that the school provides is of high quality. They say that bullying of any kind is very rare and on the few occasions that it happens it is dealt with quickly and effectively. The school's own records of bullying incidents confirm their view.
- Students of different ethnic backgrounds and religions interact seamlessly with one another in a harmonious atmosphere that pervades the school.
- Students show good awareness of the importance of personal safety. They can talk knowledgeably about what may be unsafe situations and how to deal with them or avoid them. They are acutely aware of the risks posed by misusing the internet and social web-sites.
- Attendance has risen year on year since the previous inspection and is now above average. Persistent absence has followed the same pattern and has fallen significantly.

- The large majority of parents responding to Parent View agree that behaviour is well-managed. Few responses expressed any concerns.

## **The leadership and management** requires improvement

- Despite a trend of rising achievement in many subjects, including mathematics, leaders and managers have not brought about rapid improvement in English nor have they, until recently, taken effective action to improve students' literacy skills. For this reason leadership and management require improvement.
- In the past, leaders and managers have relied too heavily on inaccurate data about students' progress in English and have consequently predicted attainment at GCSE that has been unrealistically high. Much more robust tracking of students' progress is now in place resulting in a much sharper focus on what needs to be done to tackle weaknesses and targets for attainment at GCSE are much more realistic.
- Leaders and managers are also more rigorous in monitoring and improving the quality of teaching across the school, and especially in English. English lessons observed during the inspection were nearly all good or outstanding indicating strong capacity for achievement to improve.
- A much sharper focus on reading skills and staff training in literacy is bringing about improvement to teachers' understanding and practice in developing students' skills in literacy.
- Leaders and managers hold teachers to account and manage their performance regularly and rigorously. The outcomes are used effectively and objectively to decide on promotions up the teachers' salary scale.
- There is strong teamwork across the school in pursuit of improvement.
- The curriculum is broad and meets students' needs. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities in sports and the arts. Educational trips broaden students' horizons and promote well students' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. Students are well-prepared for life in a multi-ethnic society. However, leaders are yet to ensure that there is a consistent approach across all subjects to developing students' skills in literacy so that their skills improve at a good rate.
- The school has forged strong relations with parents, the vast majority of whom are supportive of the school.
- Policies and procedures for safeguarding students are fully in place and give no cause for concern.
- The local authority is aware of the improvements required and provides appropriate support to develop the quality of teaching.
- **The governance of the school:**
  - Governors are highly committed to the success of the school. The governing body is now holding leaders and managers to account more effectively but, in the past, has been slow to challenge leaders to bring about more rapid improvement in achievement in English. It uses information about the school's performance well to compare its effectiveness with other schools both locally and nationally to identify where it could do better. It is fully aware that achievement in English is not as high as it should be and is asking the necessary questions of leadership to make sure that the quality of teaching improves. The governing body fully understands the operation of performance management in the school and monitors closely its links with salary progression. The governing body has a firm grasp on the school's finances including the effective allocation of pupil premium funding to close the gap in attainment between students who are supported by it and those who are not. Governors take part regularly in relevant training so that they keep abreast of developments and hold the school to account for its effectiveness.
  - The board of trustees of the cooperative trust works effectively with the governing body to offer support and challenge.

## 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	105738
<b>Local authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	427295

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Foundation Trust School
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1,470
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Jim Greenwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Hardial Hayer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	24 November 2010
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 6223200
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 6528006
<b>Email address</b>	admin@theradclyffeschool.co.uk



Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit [www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk), or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

To receive regular email alerts about new publications, including survey reports and school inspection reports, please visit our website and go to 'Subscribe'.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store St  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

© Crown copyright 2013

