

# Royton and Crompton School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105734
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	324260
<b>Inspection dates</b>	13–14 November 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Janet Palmer HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School (total)	1166
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Diane Williamson
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr D Herlihy
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	5 October 2005
<b>School address</b>	Blackshaw Lane Heyside Royton Oldham Lancashire OL2 6NT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01706 846474
<b>Fax number</b>	01706 842874

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Royton and Crompton is a larger than average school with specialist science college status. A higher than average percentage of students receives free school meals. The proportion of students of minority ethnic heritage, or at the early stages of learning English, is lower than the national average. The number with learning difficulties and/or difficulties is higher than average. The school holds Investors in People status, Healthy Schools, Eco Schools, Sportsmark and Artsmark awards.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Royton and Crompton School offers its students a good education. The headteacher provides well focused leadership with a clear vision to raise standards through good teaching and learning. He is well supported by an able senior team that is committed to improvement.

Overall, students achieve well: they make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3 and good progress in Key Stage 4 to reach standards that are above average by the time they leave school. The school achieved its best ever performance in 2008 with unvalidated GCSE results showing a steep rise in the proportion of students reaching the key thresholds. Observations of lessons support the view that standards and achievement are good. Strategies to improve the quality of teaching and learning, together with the effective use made by senior and middle leaders of challenging progress targets, have had a positive impact on standards. Students are well motivated by a system of rewards which values their achievement, attendance, and good behaviour.

Achievement is good as a result of good quality teaching and learning. Relationships in lessons are good and teachers foster positive attitudes to learning. Teachers conscientiously track students' academic progress and keep them informed about what they need to do to improve. In many of the good lessons observed, interactive white boards were used effectively and creatively to enhance teaching and learning. However, in some less successful lessons they were used to display objectives and tasks, but not to exploit wider learning opportunities.

The personal development and well-being of students is good. During their time in school students mature into well-rounded and caring young citizens with good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They have a good understanding of diversity and respect the beliefs, values and customs of others. Typical comments from students included, 'at school, we all mix in and don't think about skin colour or other differences'. Many students value the opportunities they are given to show initiative and make a positive contribution to the school community. The broad academic curriculum is well supported by a wide range of enrichment activities. Students in Key Stage 4 have good access to work-related education through work experience and enterprise projects. Partnerships with the public sector are extensive and well utilised; however, opportunities to engage with the world of business and private enterprise are not well enough developed to ensure a broad understanding of the world of work.

As a consequence of effective monitoring and self-evaluation by leaders and managers, they have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Issues from the previous inspection have been tackled effectively. Governors discharge their responsibilities well, taking a full part in the strategic development of the school. They are well informed and strike an appropriate balance of support and challenge. Leaders and managers provide the school with good capacity to improve further.

### What the school should do to improve further

- Embed good practice in the use of information and communications technology (ICT) to enhance teaching and learning across the school.
- Develop business links to broaden students' experiences of work-related learning.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students enter the school with standards which are broadly average. Given their starting points, they make good progress and attain standards above the national average by the time they leave.

Students make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 3. The unvalidated results of the 2008 national tests show that they reached standards which are near national averages in English and science and above the national average in mathematics. There has been a gradual improving trend over recent years. At Key Stage 4, the 2008 unvalidated results show 82% of students gained five or more A\* to C grades at GCSE which is the best the school has so far achieved and is a very significant increase from 66% in 2007. The school also reached its best ever results for the proportion of students gaining at least five good GCSE passes including English and mathematics: this improved considerably from 37% overall in 2007 to 59% overall in 2008. Boys did particularly well in 2008; provisional results show that 61% gained five or more A\* to C grades including English and mathematics. Vulnerable students, such as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, also make good progress.

Standards are improving and targets linked to the school's science specialist status have been met. However, there is not yet a sustained or consistent picture. English, mathematics and science performed well at Key Stage 4, although French, music and design technology resistant materials did less well. Standards at Key Stage 3, although improving, are not as good as those at Key Stage 4.

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

### **Grade: 2**

Attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. Students demonstrate a high level of self-discipline and consideration for others. Students say that any bullying is taken seriously by the school and dealt with effectively. Enjoyment of school life is good and this is reflected in gradual but good improvements in attendance, which is satisfactory overall. Students show good attitudes towards healthy living. They have a well-developed understanding of the risks attached to smoking and drug abuse and their participation in extra-curricular sport is good. Students also have a good understanding of how to stay safe; for example, they know who to turn to in school if they have any worries. Students contribute well to the school community, for example, through the work of the student council and eco councils. The student council has made several good suggestions for school improvement, including to the accommodation and was influential in building up the number of younger students acting as peer mentors. Students' high standards in literacy and numeracy and good progress in developing ICT skills prepare them well for their future economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Lessons are well planned with an appropriate range of activities to engage and interest the students and encourage independent learning. Teachers are enthusiastic and demonstrate good subject knowledge. They make sure that students understand what they are learning and why. End of lesson activities consolidate learning and promote a sense of achievement. There is

much good practice in the use of ICT to enthuse students, promote understanding and extend the range of activities. However, lessons are less engaging and varied where this is not embedded. There is a good mix of teacher and self-assessment that helps students to improve. Teachers' marking is mostly effective and students are clear about their targets and how to reach them. Vulnerable students and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress and have good attitudes to learning as a result of the good teaching in the Thomas Huxley Building.

## **Curriculum and other activities**

### **Grade: 2**

Students enjoy school and achieve well because the curriculum encourages good personal development and is well designed to meet their needs. Students have a good range of academic and vocational options in Years 10 and 11. Alternative curriculum arrangements for disaffected students and those with particular learning needs are effective in raising standards and enabling, for some, a good reintegration into mainstream classes. This is due in part to the very good collaborations with colleges of further education and 'Connexions' services.

Students develop a good understanding of how to stay safe and maintain their health and well-being through a well developed personal, social, health and economic education programme. The needs of gifted and talented students are well met through a range of activities organised through its science specialist college status as well as links with Oxford University.

The curriculum is enhanced by themed weeks such as 'Who do we think we are?' where students explored identity and diversity. This formed a successful element of the school's good promotion of community cohesion. The many extra-curricular sports, subject clubs and special interest activities such as karaoke and photography are popular with students and successfully help broaden their horizons. Students' participation in out-of-hours activities is monitored well to ensure that the interests of all groups are met and there is equality of access.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

Care, guidance and support are good. Students report that, 'teachers and support staff are always approachable and willing to go the extra mile to help us'. Procedures for safeguarding, health and safety are in place and regularly reviewed. In this supportive environment, most students reach challenging targets and achieve well. Pastoral support and guidance is effective. The school provides well organised and effective support for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, vulnerable students and those with other barriers to learning such as challenging behaviour. Both the learning and special needs support areas of the school are impressive in the success they have in addressing individual issues through intensive support.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

A number of effective measures have been put in place by leaders and managers to raise standards. Appropriate systems for checking the quality of lessons contribute well to improvements in teaching and learning. The good practice identified in some subject areas is used well to influence the practice of others. The school effectively uses 'standards weeks' to monitor specific areas or themes. This is successfully increasing the accountability of middle

managers for standards and progress in their respective subjects and for the performance of departmental staff.

The school has established coherent links between academic monitoring of students' performance and pastoral support. The process for setting challenging targets and tracking students' progress is very effective in raising standards. Robust systems are in place for monitoring and evaluation of the school's work, leading to effective improvement planning at departmental and whole school level. The school's specialist status in science has had a positive impact on raising standards, not only in mathematics and science, but across most subject areas. A particular success has been the work with primary partner schools to raise the profile of mathematics and science.

The school regularly canvasses parents on various aspects of its work and takes responses into account, for instance, in planning the curriculum for Year 9. A very high proportion of parents have positive views of the school's provision, outcomes and leadership.





## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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### Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

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<sup>1</sup>Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Personal development and well-being

<b>How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	2
The attendance of learners	3
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

## The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?</b>	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	2
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

**Annex B****Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you know, your school was inspected recently. I would like to begin by thanking you for making the team of inspectors feel so welcome. Our discussions with you were particularly useful in helping us find out about the quality of education at your school. This letter is to let you know that we judge your school to be good.

These are the main things that we found during our visit.

- Royton and Crompton is well led by the headteacher, senior staff and governors.
- You make good progress during your time at the school. This year's GCSE results are the best in the school's history.
- Your teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable. In turn, you show good attitudes to learning and behave well.
- Many of your teachers use interesting resources including interactive white boards to help you learn. However, we have recommended that this technology is used effectively in all subject areas.
- The school provides good care, guidance and support and this helps you progress and make the best of your time in school.
- You told us that you enjoy school and feel safe because there is little bullying and where it does occur it is effectively dealt with by the school.
- The school provides a good range of curriculum options, sports and clubs.
- You learn about the world of work through work experience and enterprise activities. We have recommended to the school that these opportunities are widened to give you more experience of industry and business.

You are rightly proud to be members of Royton and Crompton School. Your teachers and the staff have worked hard to bring about improvements and they want to carry on doing this. You can help them by continuing to work hard and making the most of the opportunities the school provides.