

# St Edward's RC School

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105720
<b>Local Authority</b>	Oldham
<b>Inspection number</b>	336545
<b>Inspection dates</b>	22–23 June 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Garry Jones

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>	Primary
<b>School category</b>	Voluntary aided
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	3–11
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	248
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Canon E Dolan
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Damian Harrison
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	27 March 2007
<b>School address</b>	Rowland Way Lees Oldham OL4 3LQ
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. Sixteen lessons were observed and nine teachers seen. Meetings were held with a parent, groups of pupils, the Chair of the Governing Body, staff and a representative from the local authority. The inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at the school improvement plan, evaluations, a range of policies including those relating to the safeguarding of pupils and 96 questionnaires from parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- The consistency of the progress of pupils across Key Stage 2, particularly in English.
- The quality of teaching and the use of assessment data.
- The effectiveness of the revised curriculum in meeting the needs of all pupils.
- The extent to which leadership and management at all levels are bringing about improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is of average size. It serves its local parishes and the surrounding area in the east of Oldham. The overwhelming majority of pupils are of White British origin and there are few pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is very low. The percentage of pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities is well below that found nationally as is the number of pupils with a statement for their identified special educational needs.

There is provision for before- and after-school care on the site that is not managed by the governing body. This is the subject of a separate inspection. The school is currently led by an associate headteacher following the retirement of a long serving headteacher. The school has gained the Activemark award and National Healthy School Status.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**3**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**3**

## Main findings

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory, but there are a number of good features. An effective programme of care and guidance ensures that pupils are well looked after in a calm and safe environment. The result is that personal outcomes for pupils are good. Most parents and carers are happy with the school and most pupils enjoy their education. Pupils develop a very high level of social, moral and spiritual awareness and they are keen to contribute to the development of the school and to the wider community.

Pupils' attainment is consistently above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Given their starting points at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make overall satisfactory progress. Progress in some classes is good. This reflects variation in the quality of teaching. In some lessons, activities do not sufficiently engage the interest of the pupils and are not designed sufficiently well to allow pupils to make good progress towards the learning goals. Teachers' use of assessment is developing, but does not yet consistently support effective learning in all classes by giving pupils advice and clear targets for further improvement. The curriculum has recently been revised to better meet the needs of all pupils. These developments are embryonic and are not yet sufficiently embedded for their impact to be seen in pupils' accelerated progress.

The current senior leadership team is effective and is contributing well to improvement. It has put in place appropriate plans for development, but there has not been sufficient time for there to be proven evidence of their impact. The role of middle managers is developing, but they are not yet fully involved in monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning or of the curriculum, or in planning for improvement. Self-evaluation is broadly accurate, but not all partners, including governors, are sufficiently involved in the process. These factors, together with the uncertainty over the long-term leadership of the school and the lack of significant improvements in outcomes and provision since the last inspection, mean that the capacity for improvement is no better than satisfactory. Despite this, the strong commitment of all partners, the careful planning for improvement and the positive ethos, provide a solid foundation for further development.

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

- Increase pupils' progress, by:
  - ensuring greater consistency in the quality of learning by planning challenging activities that consistently engage pupils' interest and allow them to achieve precise learning goals

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- giving pupils clear, short-term targets for improvement
- ensuring that pupils receive regular and clear information on how well they are doing.
- Improve the quality of provision and of leadership and management, by developing the contribution of middle leaders in:
  - monitoring and evaluating the quality of learning and of the curriculum
  - planning the development of provision including the curriculum.
- About 40% of the schools whose overall effectiveness is judged satisfactory may receive a monitoring visit by an Ofsted inspector before their next section 5 inspection.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****3**

Overall, pupils' achievement and enjoyment are satisfactory. Pupils attain standards at the end of Key Stage 2 which are consistently above average. Attainment in mathematics and science has risen over the last three years, but attainment in English has remained steady. This represents satisfactory progress for those pupils given their starting point at the end of Key Stage 1. There is some evidence that the current Year 6 has made better progress. Pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress. The school recognises that the progress of pupils is not consistent across the year groups. Inspectors observed pupils in Key Stage 1 making satisfactory progress in their lessons while in Key Stage 2, progress ranged from satisfactory to good. In the better lessons, pupils show real interest in and enthusiasm for their work. They show the ability to work effectively independently, and in groups, concentrate on the task in hand, and are keen to answer questions and to explain their understanding. Where progress is no better than satisfactory, pupils do not show the same interest, at times their concentration lapses and as a result, the pace of their learning slows.

Pupils' outcomes in other areas of their personal development are good. This is a strength of the school. Most pupils enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. Their behaviour is good, although there are lapses when pupils are not fully engaged with their work. Overall, pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Their spiritual, social and moral development is outstanding, and they have a good cultural awareness. Pupils have a clear understanding of how to stay safe and healthy. They are keen to contribute to the development of the school, particularly through the work of the school council. Pupils' involvement in the wider community, through charity fund-raising, musical events and sporting activities, is well developed.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	3
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective is the provision?**

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Inspectors observed teaching that was good, but too high a proportion of the teaching was no better than satisfactory. In the most effective lessons, teachers use their good subject knowledge and their understanding of their pupils' abilities to plan a range of activities that capture the interest of pupils. They ensure that pupils work at a good pace and use questioning well to assess learning. Where lessons are no better than satisfactory, activities do not sufficiently meet the needs of all pupils and fail to engage their interest. On occasion, activities do not promote the intended learning objective closely enough and resources are not sufficiently stimulating. The pace of learning is too slow and at times the teacher talks for too long, preventing pupils from engaging sufficiently with the task. Pupils' work is regularly assessed, but not all teachers give clear advice on how pupils can improve their work.

The curriculum meets statutory requirements and has recently undergone a review to incorporate a new cross-curricular, thematic approach to teaching. This approach is not yet fully embedded within the school and it is too early to fully evaluate its effectiveness. There is effective use of the local environment and trips to other areas to enhance the curriculum. Out-of-school activities are popular, but the leaders are aware that there is scope to extend these, and plans are in hand to achieve this.

The provision for the care, support and guidance of pupils is good. There are effective arrangements to ensure that pupils settle in to the school quickly. Staff know the pupils well and provide effective support to ensure that pupils are cared for well. Support for students whose circumstances have made them most vulnerable is effective and there

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are good links to a wide range of external agencies when required. A recent focus has been on the earlier identification of pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities, which now ensures that interventions commence as soon as possible after these pupils join the school. The effectiveness of this is evident in the good progress that these pupils make.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	3
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>2</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

The associate headteacher and deputy headteacher form a strong senior leadership team that is driving forward new developments in teaching and in the curriculum in order to raise standards. Systems for monitoring and evaluating the quality of provision are in place, and middle managers' involvement in these activities is being developed further. There is a clear focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning, but strategies to achieve this are not sufficiently embedded for the impact to be fully evident.

There is a strong commitment to building on the strengths of the school to raise achievement further by all staff and the governors. There is also a determination to ensure equality of opportunity, and the success of this is evident in the outcomes for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The governing body is aware of its responsibility to promote community cohesion. The school is a cohesive community, but links to the wider community are still developing. Governors fulfil their statutory duties and are particularly aware of their responsibilities with regard to safeguarding the well-being of pupils and staff. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. The governing body is reviewing its role to ensure that it enhances its contribution to monitoring and evaluating the school's performance.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	3
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>3</b>

<b>Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate</b> Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms	
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>3</b>

## Early Years Foundation Stage

The provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage is good, but there are aspects of excellent provision within the nursery. Children enter Nursery with skills that are in line with expectations and most children make good progress towards the early learning goals in most areas of their learning. A warm and caring environment ensures that children feel happy and secure. Staff have a good understanding of the needs of individual children and plan effectively to support their learning. In the most effective lessons, support staff are well used to make good quality interventions to support learning. The newly-developed outdoor area provides children with excellent opportunities for explorative and imaginative play. However, such opportunities for children within the Reception class are more restricted due to the absence of direct action. The day-to-day management of provision is good, but strategic leadership requires development.

*These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers who responded to the inspection questionnaire are happy with the education that the school provides and believe that the school is a safe environment in which their children enjoy their education. They are content that they are kept sufficiently informed of their child's progress. They believe that the school helps to keep children healthy and prepares them well for the next stage of their lives. A few parents and carers have concerns that the teaching is not sufficiently good and that their



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children do not make sufficient progress. Inspectors agree that there is potential for improvement in these areas. A minority of parents and carers expressed concerns over the handling of misbehaviour and about the leadership and management of the school. Inspectors can understand that the uncertainty around the absence of a permanent headteacher is a concern, but believe that current arrangements are effective and that the rare incidents of serious misbehaviour are handled effectively.

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at St Edward's RC School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 96 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 248 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	66	69	26	27	2	2	1	1
The school keeps my child safe	61	64	31	32	4	4	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	40	42	41	43	14	15	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	41	43	34	35	13	14	4	4
The teaching is good at this school	43	45	37	39	12	13	1	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	45	47	43	45	5	5	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	48	50	42	44	4	4	2	2
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	47	49	38	40	6	6	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	46	48	39	41	9	9	2	2
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	43	45	34	35	9	9	6	6
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	38	40	39	41	13	14	3	3
The school is led and managed effectively	35	36	37	39	17	18	2	2
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	56	58	32	33	4	4	2	2

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



24 June 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of St Edward's RC School, Oldham, OL4 3LQ

You may remember that with two colleagues I recently visited your school to carry out an inspection. I would like to thank you for the warm welcome you gave us and your willingness to talk to us about your work and to share your views of the school.

Your school provides you with a satisfactory education. You make satisfactory progress to achieve above average standards when you leave the school. This equips you well for the next stage of your education. There is some good teaching within the school and you make good progress within those lessons, but overall teaching is satisfactory. Some lessons do not hold your interest and at times teachers talk for too long, which can cause you to lose interest and concentration. You are well looked after in school. This allows you to develop a good range of personal skills. Your behaviour is good and you are polite to visitors. You are keen to contribute to the development of the school through the school council, and to the wider community.

The associate headteacher and his colleagues have plans to improve your school further. We have agreed with them that they should help you to make faster progress by planning lessons that always interest you and give you challenging goals to achieve. We have also asked them to give you clear advice on how well you are doing and to set you targets for improving your work. We have also suggested that the teachers with extra responsibility should be increasingly involved in checking on the quality of the work of the school and in planning for its improvement.

You can all help them by telling them the sort of work that helps you to learn best and by ensuring that you work hard at all times.

Best wishes for the future.

Yours sincerely

Garry Jones

Lead inspector

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