

# Irlam and Cadishead Community High School

## Inspection report

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105976
<b>Local Authority</b>	Salford
<b>Inspection number</b>	336595
<b>Inspection dates</b>	23–24 September 2009
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Mark Williams HMI

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>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	909
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	56
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Mark Halliwell
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr John Ferguson
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	October 2006
<b>School address</b>	Macdonald Road Irlam Manchester M44 5LH
<b>Telephone number</b>	0161 775 5525
<b>Fax number</b>	0161 775 0599
<b>Email address</b>	John.b.ferguson@salford.gov.uk

<b>Age group</b>	11–18
<b>Inspection date(s)</b>	23–24 September 2009
<b>Inspection number</b>	336595

## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three additional inspectors. The inspectors visited 22 lessons and held meetings with two governors, a number of staff, groups of students and a representative from the local authority. Because the school has introduced 100-minute lessons, inspectors made extended visits in 20 of the lessons seen. They observed the school's work, looked at a range of documentation including school policies and assessment data and analysed the responses of the 153 questionnaires returned from parents and carers.

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

- the progress and attainment of students in English and mathematics and whether there is now consistency of attainment across subjects in Years 10 and 11
- whether or not the overall outcomes for students in their personal development and well-being are as strong as the school suggests
- outcomes for sixth form students
- the school's capacity for sustained improvement.

## Information about the school

The school is broadly average in size compared with other secondary schools. It holds specialisms in business and enterprise and in mathematics and computing. In addition, it holds a number of external awards, for example for anti-bullying. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals has risen since the previous inspection and is now just above the national average. Nearly all students are from White British backgrounds and just a few speak English as an additional language. The proportion of students identified as having special educational needs and/or disabilities is broadly average. The school is to be rebuilt under the Building Schools for the Future programme. At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for just three weeks.

Also on the school's site is a privately run pre-school which was inspected at the same time as the main school. Its report is available separately.

**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?**

**2**

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

**2**

## Main findings

Outstanding levels of care, guidance and support and equally outstanding partnerships to promote learning and students' well-being lie at the very heart of this good school. High levels of care exist and the school involves and works with external partners in an excellent fashion. As a result, by the time they leave school at the age of 16, students demonstrate good attitudes and attributes in their personal development and well-being and make good progress in their learning to attain broadly average standards. Students in the improving sixth form make satisfactory progress overall but this has increased in tempo over the last 12 months owing to a transformation in the curriculum. Leaders here are aware that the challenge is to sustain and build on these good improvements.

Governance and the leadership and management of the school are good, although leaders recognise the need to engage parents and carers more effectively. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection, not least in ensuring that students make better progress in Years 7 to 9 and in English, and that previous inequalities in attainment at GCSE are being ironed out. Coupled with accurate self-evaluation, good teaching and successful developments to the curriculum, leaders, managers and governors are demonstrating good capacity to sustain this improvement. Standards and progress in mathematics, however, remain a concern. In 2009 the proportion of students attaining a higher grade of A\* to C in their GCSE mathematics was disappointing, in part as a result of students not being entered for the most appropriate examination level. Results over time in mathematics have been up and down, while those for English have improved.

The quality of teaching is good with outstanding examples evident. In these lessons students more often than not make good progress in their learning and a wide range of needs are met. This is less evident where teaching is satisfactory because it is not always clear in these lessons what different ability groups should learn and do. There have been good improvements to the curriculum. The school offers a good range of traditional and vocational courses which are supported well by enrichment activities. The curriculum is further enhanced by specialism opportunities in business and enterprise. A good number of lessons observed in the inspection made good use of teamwork and problem solving to link the content of what was being taught to the skills of putting it into practice in a workplace setting. An example of this was a Year 11 science lesson in which students, when studying how ammonia could be made into fertilizer, looked at how it had been used positively and detrimentally in history and then worked in pairs to establish costings to set up a modern ammonia

**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

processing plant. This is one reason why students' preparation for the next stage of their education and for work is so good.

Overall, the outcomes achieved by students demonstrate the school is providing good value for money from the resources at its disposal.

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

- To raise the proportion of students gaining at least five higher grade GCSEs including English and mathematics, leaders, managers and governors should ensure that the proportion gaining an A\* to C grade in mathematics should reach national average levels by 2011 by:
  - allocating students to the most appropriate examination level to their need
  - ensuring that existing strengths in mathematics teaching are routinely shared
  - enabling students to make better than satisfactory progress from their starting points
- To enable students to benefit fully from the overall good-quality teaching in the school, leaders and managers should ensure that teachers always make clear what different ability groups should learn and do
- Leaders and managers of the sixth form should build on recent improvements to meet the needs of all students so that they achieve as well as they are able
- Governors, leaders and managers should seek ways of engaging parents and carers more actively in supporting their children's progress.

**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

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

The majority of outcomes for students in this school are good.

Students demonstrate many positive attributes in their personal development and well-being. They are confident they are safe in school and show this through generally good behaviour. Students particularly value the work of peer mentors, who support younger students well. Students make a good contribution to the life of the school and the wider community and have been actively involved in discussions and plans for the new building. Their preparation for the next stage of their learning and the acquisition of workplace skills is very good and students make excellent use of the opportunities for business and enterprise the school's specialist status affords them. This aspect of their development would be outstanding if it were not for their attendance levels. Over the last three years these have improved greatly and are about average. Also satisfactory is the way students demonstrate their understanding of healthy lifestyles and the choices they make in terms of eating and exercise to improve this. While there is much that is good in the curriculum to promote this, students are not always putting this learning into practice. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Those spoken with articulated clearly, for example, the 'wow' moments they experience in school or the moments in their learning that cause them to consider the needs of others. One student told how she was deeply moved to consider her response to infant mortality rates across the globe.

Students' achievement is good overall and they enjoy their learning. They enter school with a range of skills and abilities and make good progress in their learning. Since the previous inspection the proportion of students gaining five or more GCSEs at the higher grades of A\* to C has been significantly above the national average and nearly all have gained at least five at grades A\* to G. However, the proportion gaining the higher grades including English and mathematics has been below average in this period. Nonetheless, improvements have been made in English and, over a three-year period, the proportion gaining higher grades has risen from 47% to 57%. There is a different picture in mathematics where, despite an improvement in 2008, the proportion gaining a higher grade fell to below average levels in 2009.

At the last inspection there were some inequalities between subjects. These are being successfully ironed out. In geography, for example, more students are attaining passes at the higher levels. Overall, the results students attain in their examinations represent good progress from their starting points. This is especially true for students with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The high levels of support they receive mean they make equally good progress to their peers.

**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

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	3
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
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>3</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>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

The school's provision is effective in securing good outcomes for students in terms of their learning and personal development. Particularly strong features are the outstanding levels of care, guidance and support, especially for vulnerable youngsters.

Teaching and support staff know students very well. The systems of support the school has in place contribute significantly to the progress, enjoyment and well-being of individuals. Looked after children are catered for very well with personal plans meeting specific needs. The needs of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities are identified quickly and effectively and very good levels of support and timely interventions are put into place. A range of external agencies are involved very effectively by the school to ensure that those students with a wide range of difficulties not only make good progress in terms of learning but do so equally well in terms of their social and emotional development. Transition arrangements are also strong, including those from primary school and those into the sixth form, further education and work. Excellent work has been undertaken to improve attendance from previously very low levels and reduce rates of persistent absenteeism significantly.

The quality of teaching and the curriculum are both good.

<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

**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

The good teaching in the school is typified by high expectations, clear explanations and good levels of questioning which demands that students think carefully about their responses. This was particularly evident in a good mathematics lesson in which the teacher skilfully had the students describe and explain properties of quadrilaterals. In such lessons teachers displayed high levels of subject knowledge and made good use of their assistants to track the progress students were making. Teachers were then able to amend their lessons accordingly to meet the range of needs in their classes. The result is that, in these lessons, students always make at least expected rates of learning and more often than not make better. In a minority of lessons, including some in mathematics, the teaching is only satisfactory and, as a result, students' learning and progress is never better than this. In such lessons there is too much talk by the teacher and insufficient engagement by students. This is because what is expected of the different abilities in the class is not always clear.

The curriculum has been recently enhanced through the introduction of 100-minute lessons which provide opportunities for extended coverage of subjects and for making concrete links to the school's business and enterprise specialisms. Information and communication technology is integrated well into all aspects of school life. There have been improvements in the Key Stage 3 curriculum including early entry into some examinations. This allows the more able students to be stretched in their learning. A good range of vocational opportunities is available at Key Stage 4 to complement more traditional subjects thereby meeting a wide range of students' needs. A good choice of enrichment activities, including citizenship days at Salford University, sporting opportunities and involvement in the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, enhance enjoyment and learning.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

## How effective are leadership and management?

Over time leaders and managers have proved themselves effective in ensuring the good overall quality of provision and securing positive outcomes for students. This demonstrates their capacity for sustained improvement. In just three weeks the new headteacher has continued in this vein and has already begun to further improve systems to support the school in its next stage of development.

Leaders and governors have high expectations for the school and these are shared effectively. The school has an accurate view of its strengths and areas for

**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

improvement and what it needs to do to improve. Statutory requirements are met. Much has been done recently to equip staff with the skills required to promote good outcomes for students. The effectiveness of this is evident in the good-quality teaching that exists in the school, some of which indeed is outstanding. Leaders have also secured improvements at Key Stage 3 and in English, both of which have been most welcome. While improvements in mathematics have not been sustained in 2009, the school has already put plans into action to rectify this.

The school's engagement with parents and carers is satisfactory. While inspectors saw good and excellent examples of engagement, nearly one fifth of those parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire commented they did not receive sufficient information to help them support their children. Governors spoken to also agreed that it had been difficult to engage parents and carers in the life of the school. Partnerships with other agencies are outstanding. The school deals very effectively with a wide range of agencies to provide coordinated services to promote learning and well-being. This results in very high levels of satisfaction on the part of students about the way the school cares for them and prepares them for the future.

The school's arrangements for safeguarding students are good as is its promotion of equal opportunities and community cohesion. School leaders have evaluated how the school and community may cooperate together and have established clear, meaningful links in the curriculum so that students learn about the contributions of themselves and others globally as well as learning about their immediate community.

*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>1</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>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

**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

## Sixth form

The sixth form is very small in comparison with those in other schools and has a highly distinctive nature. It caters for those who prefer to continue studies in a school and those who traditionally would not progress to a college of further education. When it was established just over three years ago its prime focus was on AS- and A-level courses. Results in 2008 for these courses were disappointing. Since then good leadership has transformed the curriculum so that the focus is firmly on the needs and aptitudes of each student. An example of this is an innovative partnership between a local employer and the school which has led to the establishment of a popular BTEC Information Technology (IT) for Practitioners course with strong links to employment and higher education opportunities. Results overall improved in 2009 indicating good progress on several BTEC and vocational courses. Level 2 results have improved and there is now a developing pattern of increased progression between levels. Teaching in the sixth form is satisfactory overall and improving; good teaching was observed on several courses, the BTEC IT for Practitioners and Health and Social Care for example. Pastoral care, support and guidance are good and students are confident in their teachers. Relationships are good. As a result of good leadership, a culture of high aspirations has been established and the sixth form is now becoming the first choice for many who wish to pursue a distinctive vocational pathway.

*These are the grades for the sixth form*

<b>Overall effectiveness of the sixth form</b>	<b>3</b>
Taking into account:	3
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

## Views of parents and carers

Most parents and carers said that their children were happy at school and that they were happy with the experience Irlam and Cadishead Community High School gave. Inspectors support these views. Views in other areas of the questionnaire were equally positive, although nearly one-fifth of respondents said that they were not always provided with help to support their children's learning. While inspectors saw some good and indeed outstanding examples of this, particularly in the case of vulnerable young people, it is clear that the engagement of parents and carers has not always been easy. Leaders and governors are anxious to improve this and see opportunities to do so via, for example, encouraging more parents and carers to stand for election as parent governors.

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

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Irlam and Cadishead Community High 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 12 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 153 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 909 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	43	28	90	58	6	4	2	1
The school keeps my child safe	31	20	64	70	12	8	0	0
The school informs me about my child’s progress	32	21	88	58	14	9	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	30	20	96	63	10	6	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	30	20	98	63	8	6	1	1
The school helps me to support my child’s learning	18	12	90	58	24	16	3	2
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	16	10	99	65	17	11	4	3
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)	23	15	103	67	9	6	0	0
The school meets my child’s particular needs	21	14	102	66	12	8	1	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	24	16	92	60	16	11	3	2
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	21	14	94	62	19	13	2	2
The school is led and managed effectively	28	18	97	63	10	7	1	1
Overall, I am happy with my child’s experience at this school	38	25	87	57	13	9	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 all 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 inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

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>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 pupils' 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.



25 September 2009

Dear Students

## **Inspection of Irlam and Cadishead Community High School, Salford, M44 5LH**

I am writing to you on behalf of the inspection team to thank you for your help and willingness to share your thoughts with us during the course of your school's inspection. Thank you! I am also writing to share with you our findings.

Nearly all of you told us you thought the school was good. We agree. We especially like the way you make good progress in your learning and display positive attitudes and attributes. We thought your workplace skills were developing particularly well and that these will prepare you well for later life. The school's business and enterprise specialism is benefiting you well in this area. You also benefit from good teaching and a good curriculum, especially the range of vocational and traditional courses. Those of you in the sixth form will have seen quite a change in your curriculum over the last year and we have judged these changes to be very positive.

There are two aspects of your school's work which are outstanding. These are the wider partnerships your school is involved in and the levels of care, guidance and support offered. We know you are confident in the school's ability to care for you and we were able to see several quite moving examples where this school has made a real difference to you in your learning and, as importantly, in your social and emotional development.

So what does your school need to do to improve? In many cases it needs to build on improvements that have been made, for example in the sixth form to ensure that all there achieve as well as they can, and in teaching so that all lessons help you make good or better progress by making clear what the different ability groups need to learn and do. Another improvement we have suggested involves your parents and carers. We have asked the school to consider ways in which they may be involved more. The most important improvement your school needs to make, though, is in the proportion of students who gain an A\* to C grade in mathematics. This has been up and down in recent years and in 2009 was too low. Now it is our judgement as inspectors that your school can do these things because we have seen good leadership and management. We are also confident that you will do your best in order to support them. We all wish you the very best of luck, particularly in preparation for your exciting new building.

Yours faithfully

Mark Williams (Her Majesty's Inspector)

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaining about inspections', 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 **08456 404045**, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).