# An Introduction to Saddleworth School

# Oldham Metropolitan Borough

The Metropolitan Borough of Oldham was created in 1974 by the amalgamation of the former County Borough of Oldham with Division 23 of the former Lancashire County Council, together with a small part of the former West Riding of Yorkshire (Saddleworth). The Borough has a population of about 220,000 and an area of 55 square miles. A considerable part of the Borough consists of open space including part of the Peak National Park, and there is easy access to the Yorkshire Dales and the Lake District, via the excellent motorway system. There is a wide range of cultural and sporting activities within the Borough and in the neighbouring City of Manchester.

Oldham is an amalgamation of towns and villages, new suburbs and isolated farms, well-built terraces and executive homes. There is a comprehensive range of housing available over a wide price band.

***Saddleworth School***

Saddleworth School is a 10-form entry, 11-16 Comprehensive School, situated in pleasant rural surroundings at the foot of the western slopes of the Pennines, some four miles east of Oldham. The school enjoys a good reputation. In its Ofsted inspection of March 2015 it was rated “Good” for Leadership and Management, Behaviour and Safety, Quality of Teaching, Achievement of pupils, and Overall effectiveness. It caters for the whole rural district of Saddleworth and also for the nearby residential areas on the eastern side of Oldham. This district contains nine large villages with varied industrial undertakings and farming activities. Manchester and the M62 are within easy reach and the region is popular with commuters. Housing development is mainly of the higher value residential type. A wide range of housing is available within reasonable travelling distance. The school is situated at the northern end of Uppermill Village on the main A670 Ashton-Huddersfield Road which links with the A669 Oldham Road. A bus service from Manchester via Oldham terminates in Uppermill Square.

The school is oversubscribed and the number on roll is currently 1370 but will expand to 1500 when the school moves to brand new premises in the nearby village of Diggle in 2020. This new building is being funded by the Education Funding Agency through the Governments Priority Schools Building Programme. The current site was opened in 1911 and has had a number of buildings added over the years with the major capital project being completed over 30 years ago. In addition to the normal classrooms, facilities include 8 Science laboratories, 11 Art design and Technology rooms, multi-media resource centre, gymnasium, sports hall, computer facilities, assembly hall, dining hall, and canopied social areas. The outdoor sports facilities include an all-weather pitch and muga; further playing fields and swimming pool are available, some 15 minutes walk away.

On entry, children in Year 7 are placed in mixed ability classes, but set by ability in Maths as soon as possible. From Year 8 onwards, there is increasing use of setting, the nature of which varies from subject to subject. There is a long standing record of success rates in external examinations and our Progress 8 figure for 2017 was -0.01. A wide range of extra curricular activities is available. Fieldwork and outdoor pursuits are very strongly supported; a full programme of sporting activities is maintained, as are a wide range of excellent musical and drama activities and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme is particularly well represented.

The school day is shaped around three, hour and fifty minute periods of learning. Some departments use half periods but most use the longer sessions and break up learning to sustain focus and gain depth. The pupils leave early on a Wednesday and all staff engage in training that runs from 1.30pm to 3.30pm.

The pastoral system is organised on a year basis, with each year led by a Home School Leader. Form tutors play a crucial role and it follows; therefore, that all candidates for teaching posts at the school must be fully committed to the education of the ‘whole child’ and be prepared to contribute to the school as an active and caring form tutor. Standards of pupil dress and behaviour are good and children are encouraged to play a part in the running of the school, through the elected prefect body and the school council.

The school has become the focus of many of the leisure pursuits of the local community. It is widely used after school and in the evenings for sport and cultural activities. The element of community service in the Duke of Edinburgh scheme has involved helping the Tame Valley wardens with their conservation work, helping at the museum, and the St John Ambulance, and giving support to the old people in the area.

The school’s high standard of inclusion is well supported by Pastoral Support Assistants who are attached to each Home School. The school also has a Student Support Centre for pupils in need of additional support or time out from mainstream learning. We also have a “Seclusion” facility for pupils who have been unable to maintain the high standards of behaviour we expect.

Saddleworth School is a stimulating and rewarding environment in which to work. This is a school where teachers and pupils can really flourish. By coming to Saddleworth, successful candidates have an excellent opportunity to fulfil their full potential in the teaching profession.