

# **School Survey 2007: Briefing Report**

## **Summary**

The Audit Commission ran the School Survey 2007 in the Summer term. This briefing report summarises the early results received by the Audit Commission. The results for this year show huge improvements on the previous survey.

Key strengths emerging include:

- Effectiveness of the school meal service
- Promotion of sport, recreation and exercise outside of school
- Support to improve personnel processes, financial and resource management in schools
- Local services promoting community cohesion
- Provision for 14-19 education in meeting local needs
- Support for promoting pupil attendance
- Support for combating racism and discrimination

All of which were in the top national Quartile.

There were an impressive 40 areas, which showed significant improvement on last year's survey. This is in comparison with only 3 areas that showed significant improvement in 2006. Further details on these areas will be shown later in this report.

## **Areas For Action**

Based on analysis of the survey, the following areas are seen as causing the most concern and need to be addressed. These could be key areas for action, for which responses should be made to schools. These are not in order of importance.

1. SEN strategy and rationale for deployment of SEN funding
2. Support for developing Children's Centres
3. Support for combating bullying
4. Health advice for parents and carers
5. Provision for Early Years education in meeting local needs
6. Behaviour Support Programmes
7. Specialist Learning Support
8. Monitoring/Intervention/Assessment of children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and/or special learning needs
9. Looked After Children information, advice, support and/or training
10. School Place Planning

All of which were in the bottom national Quartile.

It should be stressed that inclusion above may not imply a service/strategy performing poorly overall, but perhaps one that needs to be more integrated with and supportive of schools in their roles.

## **Background**

The School Survey takes place annually in the Summer term, and is administered by the Audit Commission. It contains questions across Children's Services, divided into the 5 Every Child Matters outcomes, plus a Service Management section. While questions are administered nationally, there was a supplementary list of 6 questions chosen by Oldham on areas of concern for us.

In Oldham, 27% of secondary schools (a decline on last year) and 43% of primary schools responded, 42% overall. The main comments received during ring-rounds were that the survey was not a high priority and that head teachers did not have the spare time to complete the survey. The overall response rate this year was just below the 44% response rate for the 2006 survey.

Of schools that responded, just under 98% used the web with just over 2% (1 school) using paper. This is a vast improvement on last year when 46% of respondents used the paper survey.

Our statistical neighbours had response rates as follows;

<b>Council Name</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>
Rochdale	33%
Kirklees	36%
Tameside	75%
Walsall	51%
Bradford	29%
Bolton	52%
St Helens	76%
Calderdale	N/A*
Redcar & Cleveland	43%
Halton	53%

\* Calderdale did not participate in the 2007 School Survey.

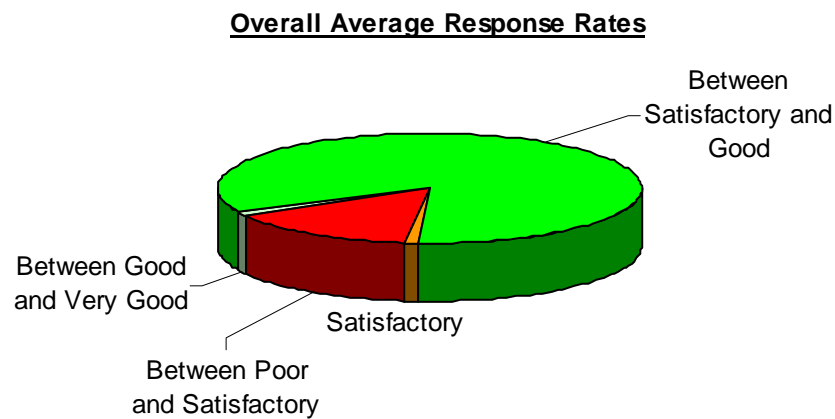
## **Criteria For Analysis**

In terms of analysis, the depth and quality of analysis received is such that there is almost too much information to bring together. As such, rather than attempting to provide tables of information, we have identified key areas of strength and weakness. These are identified by the following criteria

- Top or bottom quartile responses (i.e., relatively strong/weak performance)
- Comparison with 2006 data- indicators significantly better or worse
- Highest and lowest performing questions by Oldham rank
- Free text comments made by schools
- Performance against Statistical neighbour averages

## Overall Trends

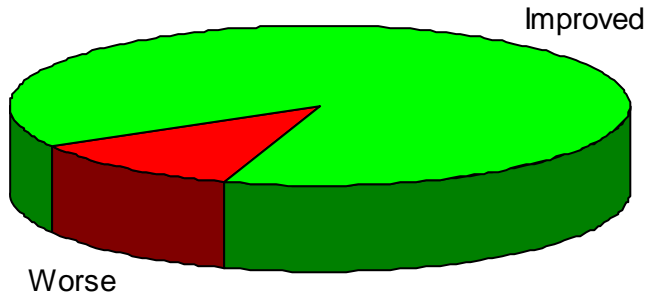
One question has an average response rating of “Between Good and Very Good” with sixty eight having “Between Satisfactory and Good” one “Satisfactory” and a further twelve having “Between Poor and Satisfactory” See chart below.



Compared to 2006; There were 60 better responses to questions, of those 40 were significantly better, a huge improvement from 11 questions that had better responses in 2006 compared with 2005.

8 questions showed worse responses and of those, 2 were significantly worse, another large improvement from 54 questions that had worse responses in 2006 compared with 2005. See chart below.

Trend in responses compared to last year










The following table shows how the questions in the different sections were rated by quartile:

	Quartile 1 (Top)	Quartile 2	Quartile 3	Quartile 4 (Bottom)	% Top Quartile	% Bottom Quartile
1. Being Healthy	2	3	2	1	25%	13%
2. Staying Safe	1	4	6	1	8%	8%
3. Enjoying and Achieving	1	12	11	9	3%	27%
4. Making a Positive Contribution	0	2	4	0	0%	0%
5. Achieving Economic Well-being	1	1	1	0	33%	0%
6. Service Management	3	9	5	3	15%	15%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>10%</b>	<b>17%</b>

**Attachments**








Attached are the summary analysis sheets for the best and worst performing questions as provided by the Audit Commission, which lists each question with basic statistics and significant performance changes. There are further spreadsheets with multiple datasets, which are also available on request.

## Top Performing Questions – National Quartile

Survey Question	Current survey (2007)		Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale: 1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>							
<b>1.2 The effectiveness of the school meals service in encouraging children and young people to eat healthily</b>	2.04	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	23%		Significant
<b>1.3 The effectiveness of your council's promotion of sport, recreation and exercise outside the school for children and young people</b>	2.13	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	8%		Significant
<b>2.6 The effectiveness of your council's support for combating discrimination and racism</b>	2.02	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	3%		
<b>3.13 The effectiveness of your council's support for promoting pupil attendance</b>	2.09	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	6%		Significant
<b>5.2 The effectiveness of the provision for 14-19 education in meeting local needs</b>	2.44	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	0%		
<b>6.13 The effectiveness of local services in helping you to promote community cohesion</b>	2.42	Above satisfactory	Above average	1			
<b>6.15 The effectiveness of your council's support to improve resource and financial management in your school</b>	2.18	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	12%		Significant
<b>6.16 The effectiveness of your council's support to improve personnel processes and management in your school</b>	2.09	Above satisfactory	Above average	1	8%		Significant



### Bottom Performing Questions – National Quartile

Survey Question	Current survey (2007)		Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale:</b> <b>1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>							
1.1 The effectiveness of local services in providing parents and carers with advice to keep the children and young people in their care healthy	2.70	Above satisfactory	Below average	4	2%	↗	
2.5 The effectiveness of your council's support for combating bullying	2.81	Above satisfactory	Below average	4	3%	↗	
3.1 The effectiveness of the provision for early years education in meeting local needs	2.54	Above satisfactory	Below average	4	-4%	↘	
3.12 The effectiveness of your council's behaviour support programmes	3.21	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	3%	↗	
3.16 The effectiveness of your council's specialist learning support	2.89	Above satisfactory	Below average	4	4%	↗	
3.19 The effectiveness of intervention and assessment of young children with disabilities and/or special learning needs	3.09	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	0%	↗	
3.20 The efficiency with which statutory assessments of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are made	3.16	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	10%	↗	Significant









Survey Question	Current survey (2007)		Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale: 1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>							
<b>3.21 Your council's effectiveness in monitoring the progress of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities</b>	2.98	Above satisfactory	Below average	4	-2%		
<b>3.22 The quality of advice, support and training from your council for teachers with a designated responsibility for looked-after children</b>	2.90	Above satisfactory	Below average	4	3%		
<b>3.23 The quality of the information you receive from your council about looked-after children in your school</b>	3.06	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	12%		Significant
<b>3.26 The effectiveness of your council's school place planning</b>	3.23	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	-10%		Significant
<b>6.9 The quality of your council's SEN strategy</b>	3.27	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	-1%		
<b>6.10 The clarity of your council's rationale for the deployment of SEN funding</b>	3.23	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	5%		Significant
<b>6.20 The effectiveness of local services' support for developing children's centres</b>	3.33	Below satisfactory	Below average	4	0%		

### Top 10 Performing Questions – by Rank

Survey Question	Current survey (2007)			Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Rank	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale: 1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>								
<b>3.5 Your council's effectiveness in challenging your school to perform better</b>	1.91	Above satisfactory	1 (Best Performing)	Above average	2	13%	↗	Significant
<b>2.6 The effectiveness of your council's support for combating discrimination and racism</b>	2.02	Above satisfactory	2	Above average	1	3%	↗	
<b>1.2 The effectiveness of the school meals service in encouraging children and young people to eat healthily</b>	2.04	Above satisfactory	3	Above average	1	23%	↗	Significant
<b>3.13 The effectiveness of your council's support for promoting pupil attendance</b>	2.09	Above satisfactory	4	Above average	1	6%	↗	Significant
<b>6.16 The effectiveness of your council's support to improve personnel processes and management in your school</b>	2.09	Above satisfactory	5	Above average	1	8%	↗	Significant
<b>1.3 The effectiveness of your council's promotion of sport, recreation and exercise outside the school for children and young people</b>	2.13	Above satisfactory	6	Above average	1	8%	↗	Significant
<b>3.2 Your council's support to develop self-management in your school in order to secure school improvement</b>	2.13	Above satisfactory	6	Above average	2	5%	↗	Significant
<b>6.15 The effectiveness of your council's support to improve resource and financial management in your school</b>	2.18	Above satisfactory	8	Above average	1	12%	↗	Significant

Survey Question	Current survey (2007)			Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Rank	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale:</b> <b>1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>								
2.9 The clarity of guidance on when to make a child protection referral to the relevant service	2.23	Above satisfactory	9	Above average	2	5%		Significant
3.32 The quality of your council's financial information, including comparative data for schools	2.24	Above satisfactory	10	Above average	2	1%		

### Bottom 10 Performing Questions – by Rank

Survey Question	Current survey (2007)			Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Rank	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale: 1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>								
<b>1.6 The effectiveness of local services in meeting the mental health needs of children and young people</b>	3.41	Below satisfactory	82nd (Worst Performing)	Below average	3	7%		Significant
<b>6.20 The effectiveness of local services' support for developing children's centres</b>	3.33	Below satisfactory	81st	Below average	4	0%		
<b>3.25 The accessibility of the social workers responsible for the looked-after children in your school</b>	3.32	Below satisfactory	80th	Below average	3	12%		Significant
<b>6.9 The quality of your council's SEN strategy</b>	3.27	Below satisfactory	79th	Below average	4	-1%		
<b>3.26 The effectiveness of your council's school place planning</b>	3.23	Below satisfactory	78th	Below average	4	-10%		Significant
<b>6.10 The clarity of your council's rationale for the deployment of SEN funding</b>	3.23	Below satisfactory	77th	Below average	4	5%		Significant
<b>3.12 The effectiveness of your council's behaviour support programmes</b>	3.21	Below satisfactory	76th	Below average	4	3%		
<b>2.12 The effectiveness of support from local services to help families in danger of harming or neglecting their own children</b>	3.17	Below satisfactory	75th	Below average	3	4%		

Survey Question	Current survey (2007)			Comparison with national data (2007)		Comparison with previous survey (2006)		
	Oldham Average	Above/below 'Satisfactory' (on the 5-point scale)	Rank	Above/below 'All participating councils' average	Quartile	% Change	Trend	5% Test of Significance
<b>Survey scale:</b> <b>1: Very Good 2: Good 3: Satisfactory 4: Poor 5: Very Poor</b>								
3.20 The efficiency with which statutory assessments of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are made	3.16	Below satisfactory	74th	Below average	4	10%	↗	Significant
4.6 The effectiveness of local services in providing a range of interventions to deflect children and young people from anti-social behaviour	3.14	Below satisfactory	73rd	Below average	3	6%	↗	

## **Detailed Analysis of Survey Outcomes by Every Child Matters Area**

### **1. Being Healthy**

There is an increase in the number of questions in this section, bringing the figure up to 8. Seven of these are rated as “Above Satisfactory”, two of which are in the Top National Quartile, these include:

- Effectiveness of the school meals service in encouraging healthy eating.
- Promotion of sport and exercise outside of schools.

There was only one question rated as “Below Satisfactory” therefore placing it in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quartile. That area was:

- Local services meeting the mental health needs of children and young people.

In comparison with statistical neighbour average, there were two questions given a worse rating. They were:

- Parental and carer advice in keeping children and young people in their care healthy.
- Local services meeting the mental health needs of children and young people.

Although the above question was rated as “Above Satisfactory” overall, it was placed in the bottom National Quartile.

### **Comments**

Comments show support for sports projects, Health Schools Standards and partnership working. The only concern expressed was a lack of recreational facilities in the Saddleworth area:

“Excellent support for Healthy Schools Standard through the team at Connexions and regular network meetings.”

“Unity in the Community is an excellent sports project which supports community cohesion.”

“The development of providers working together in partnership is growing from strength to strength.”

“We would like more facilities in Saddleworth.”

## **2. Staying Safe**

Responses for Stay Safe have shown significant improvements from last year's survey results. Of the 12 questions in this area, ten were rated as being "Above Satisfactory". The most positive areas, which were also placed in the top two National Quartiles, were:

- Support for combating discrimination and racism.
- Effectiveness of local services in reducing and preventing crime in children and young people.
- Council's effectiveness in keeping track of children so they do not become missing from the system.
- Clarity of guidance on when to make a Child Protection referral.
- Support from the council to enable the effective use of the Common Assessment Framework.

The following two questions were rated as "Satisfactory or Below":

- Effectiveness of local services in reducing the fear of crime in children and young people.
- Support from local services to help families in danger of harming or neglecting their own children.

Support for combating bullying was also listed in the bottom Quartile although it was rated as "Above Satisfactory".

### **Comments**

Commentary highlighted how support from Social Workers can often differ depending on the individual Social Worker involved. Commentary was also made with reference to support with social issues within schools:

"Guidance is available to make referrals for Child Protection. The response appears often to depend on the individual and their capacity/willingness to intervene rather than a coherent system with clearly understood triggers for action."

"We have received excellent support from a social worker involved with one of our families but not the same quality in another case. Often dependent upon individual staff."

"Thresholds too high. None but the absolute horror cases get attention, the rest are not bad enough and schools are expected to deal with social issues with no extra resources."

"All schools should be allocated Learning mentors and family support workers."

### **3. Enjoying and Achieving**

There is an increase in the number of questions in this section, bringing the figure up to 33. Twenty-seven of these are rated as “Above Satisfactory”. One question achieved Top National Quartile responses:

- The effectiveness of the Council’s support for promoting pupil attendance.

The following questions were rated as “Above Satisfactory” and also have above average responses, putting them in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quartile:

- The council’s support to develop self-management in schools in order to secure school improvement.
- The clarity of the Council’s definition of monitoring, support and intervention.
- The effectiveness in challenging schools to perform better. (This question received the best rating out of all the questions in this year’s survey)
- The council’s knowledge and understanding of your school and the community it serves.
- The effectiveness of the council’s support for meeting the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.
- The effectiveness of the council’s support for meeting the needs of pupils from minority ethnic groups, refugee families and Traveller communities.
- The effectiveness of the council’s management of the procedures for re-admission of excluded pupils.
- The effectiveness of council provision for pupils out of mainstream schools, including pupils who have been excluded.
- Reliability and effectiveness of the Council’s home to school transport.
- The effectiveness of the council’s support to improve building management and development in your school.
- The effectiveness of the council’s support for promoting sustainable development in schools.
- The quality of the council’s financial information, including comparative data for schools.

A total of 6 questions were rated as “Below Satisfactory”. Issues for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as looked after children dominate this section:

- The effectiveness of the council’s behaviour support programmes.
- The effectiveness of intervention and assessment of young children with disabilities and/or special learning needs.
- The efficiency with which statutory assessments of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are made.
- The quality of the information you receive from the council about looked-after children in your school.
- The accessibility of the social workers responsible for the looked-after children in your school.
- The effectiveness of the council’s school place planning.

There were also four questions that, although rated as “Above Satisfactory”, were in the Bottom National Quartile:

- The effectiveness of the provision for early years education in meeting local needs.
- The effectiveness of the council’s specialist learning support.
- Your council’s effectiveness in monitoring the progress of children and young people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.
- The quality of advice, support and training from your council for teachers with a designated responsibility for looked-after children.

### **Comments**

A variety of comments were made in this area. The most common was with regards to the admissions process:

“Particular difficulties with admission number - relates to strategic planning and building issues - very particular to our school.”

“Very good support to parents at meetings for secondary choices & online applications and excellent support at appeal.”

“There were issues regarding the co-ordinated admission process this year and confusion among some parents who were late completing an application for a place for their children in our reception class.”

“Educational Psychologist who works in our school is very good, but the cover when she was on maternity leave was poor. There also needs to be more of them as they are very overstretched.”

“Statutory Assessment process far too complicated. Vulnerable children are in danger of not accessing correct support because of bureaucracy. Barriers put in place mean that the children who should be receiving help are not accessing it.”

“Support from the Attendance Improvement Service has been affected by staff absence.”

“The Admissions system needs some involvement from schools to identify and assist parents who are unable to follow the process/don’t fully understand the system; at both Reception and Secondary transition.”

“The term support is not prevalent in the way the authority deals with schools. The authority is for more "tough it's your responsibility get on with it or else", would be more reflective.”

#### **4. Making a Positive Contribution**

There is an increase in the number of questions in this section, bringing the figure up to 6. Performance in this area last year was very disappointing with three of the four questions being rated as “Between Poor and Satisfactory”. There has been an improvement this year with only one question receiving this rating:

- The effectiveness of local services in providing a range of interventions to deflect children and young people from anti-social behaviour.

However, although the remaining five questions were rated as “Above Satisfactory”, three were still below the National average:

- The opportunities provided through the council for children and young people to make their voices heard on decisions which affect them.
- The effectiveness of local services in helping children and young people to understand their civil and legal rights and responsibilities.
- The effectiveness of local services in supporting young carers to achieve positive outcomes.

#### **Comments**

There were a number of comments in this area on a variety of subjects:

“Would be very good if Primary Schools council was still in existence.”

“Our requests for early intervention are ignored.”

“The Groundwork Trust - who have some council funding - have been excellent at providing & supporting community and environmental projects within schools.”

“The leadership of the borough's Youth Service does not engage well with schools.”

“The Council is too target driven and about ticking boxes for the powers that be. Resources are squandered on initiatives and quangos rather than put into sustainable community resources for all children. The younger children are continually missed and funds spent on teenagers.”

## **5. Achieving Economic Well Being**

There were 3 questions surveyed in this area. All three were rated as “Above Satisfactory”, two of which were in the Top two National Quartiles:

- The effectiveness of advice from local services to your pupils on their future beyond your school. (2<sup>nd</sup> Quartile)
- The effectiveness of the provision for 14-19 education in meeting local needs. (1<sup>st</sup> Quartile)

The other question in this area, although given a rating of “Above Satisfactory”, was below the National average and placed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quartile:

- The extent to which local community and regeneration programmes and initiatives take proper account of the needs of children and young people.

### **Comments**

Comments were mainly focused around initiatives:

“Needs to be more joined up thinking between initiatives so that proper account is taken of the needs.”

“The Council too initiative driven and focused on box ticking rather than sustainable investment.”

## **6. Service Management**

This section surveys the quality and effectiveness of Council provided services. It covers improvement, development, strategies, planning and support for schools over a wide range of areas.

There were a total of 20 questions in this area. Seventeen of these questions were rated as "Above Satisfactory" with three placed in the Top National Quartile:

- The effectiveness of local services in helping you to promote community cohesion,
- The effectiveness of the council's support to improve resource and financial management in your school.
- The effectiveness of the council's support to improve personnel processes and management in your school.

There were only three areas that were rated as performing "Below Satisfactory" therefore placing them in the Bottom National Quartile. The questions were in relation to SEN and Children's Centres:

- The quality of the council's SEN strategy.
- The clarity of your council's rationale for the deployment of SEN funding.
- The effectiveness of local services' support for developing children's centres.

## **Comments**

There were positive comments for the Link School Project and ICT support:

"Excellent support from Link School Project."

"Much improved ICT support this year but started from low base - needs more staffing to deliver to schools."

There were also a number of negative comments with regards to Children's Centres and SEN:

"There is no current strategy for Children's Centres within our area."

"The implementation of Children's Centres has been poor. Budget information has been lacking. There has been a lack of strategic planning in meeting the needs of disadvantaged groups. There has been over-reliance on free market solutions."

"Children's centres, SEN and funding are a fiasco! Consultation is meaningless and always last minute. Communication is NOT two way."

## **Local Questions**

The following questions are extra questions asked by Oldham Council on areas of particular interest.

Enjoying and Achieving:

- The effectiveness of the Parent Partnership Service in supporting parents of children with SEN to work in partnership with your school; this question drew an improved response in comparison with last year. 66% of schools rated this question as “Satisfactory or Above” compared with 44% in 2006. 13% rated it as “Poor” or “Very Poor” compared with 26% in the previous survey.
- The quality of the council Music Service; this was the best performing question in the survey with 75% of schools rating it as “Good” or “Very Good”, which is again an improvement compared to 66% of schools last year.
- The quality of the Outdoor and Environmental Education Service; this question received an excellent response with 69% of schools rating it as “Good” or “Very Good”.
- Your council’s support for children at risk of exclusion from school; this question received a “Below Satisfactory” response from schools. Only 48% of schools rated this questions as “Satisfactory or Above”. However, this is an improvement from the 2006 survey where only 34% of schools gave it this rating.

Management and Leadership of services:

- The quality of data and analysis on pupil performance provided by your council; as in 2006 this question received a very good response with 91% of schools rating it as “Satisfactory or Above”, with 77% rating it as “Good” or “Very Good”.
- The transparency of your council’s asset management planning process; the rating schools gave this question has declined compared with last year. 67% of schools rated this as “Satisfactory or Above” compared with 74% in 2006.

## **Comments**

The following comments apply to local questions asked by the Council as well as other areas within the survey. Schools were given the opportunity to add additional comments on any subject at the end of the survey. The main issues causing concern are social care, lack of school support, joint working between services and processes between schools:

“Transparency of process within our school ok but between schools more work needs to be done.”

“Little work done to rationalise primary provision and plan for demographic changes. Good investments in new schools, but no clear rational for where and when new investment is made.”

“Learning Network Support funding helpful over last year.”

“Primary Collaborative initiative supportive for curriculum development of Modern Foreign Languages.”

“The council is always approachable and willing to offer support even though there is some way to go before all services are working closely together.”

“There has been a big improvement in communication and a willingness to work pragmatically with schools to improve outcomes for children. Social care still causes concern. It is vital that joint preventative strategies develop as well as reactive ones.”

“This authority has become obsessed with reaching targets and ticking boxes rather than seeing the big picture. It shunts responsibility to schools but deprives them of support. The authority has increased school workload but not the resources and support to match them.”

## **Statistical Neighbour Comparison**

This section gives a breakdown of the Council's performance in the 2007 School Survey compared with our statistical neighbours who took part in the survey.

Analysis of the survey results shows that Oldham received better ratings than the statistical neighbour average for 46 of the 82 questions (56.1%). This is a huge improvement from 2006 survey where only 16 of the 76 questions (21.1%) received better ratings than the statistical neighbour average.

The worst performing outcome area for Oldham was 'Enjoying and Achieving' where Oldham schools rated the Council worse than statistical neighbour average for 18 of the 33 questions (54.5%).

The best performing outcome area for Oldham was 'Being Healthy' where Oldham schools rated the Council better than statistical neighbour average for 6 of the 8 questions (75%).

Three of the questions in the survey were given the worst rating out of all statistical neighbour ratings:

### Enjoying & Achieving

- The effectiveness of the provision for early years education in meeting local needs.
- The effectiveness of your council's school place planning.

### Service Management

- The effectiveness of local services' support for developing children's centres.

Three of the questions in the survey were given the best rating out of all statistical neighbour ratings:

### Staying Safe

- The effectiveness of your council's support for combating discrimination and racism.

### Enjoying & Achieving

- The effectiveness of your council's support for promoting pupil attendance

### Service Management

- The effectiveness of local services in helping you to promote community cohesion