

Chaigeley School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111498
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	356925
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
Reporting inspector	Terence McKenzie

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

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	8–16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Micheal Hennessy
Headteacher	Mr Drew Crawshaw
Date of previous school inspection	20 November 2007
School address	Lymm Road Thelwall, Warrington Cheshire WA4 2TE
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Email address	admin@chaigeley.org.uk

Age group	8–16
Inspection dates	6–7 July 2011
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Boarding provision	Chaigeley Educational Foundation
Social care Unique Reference Number	SC027019
Social care inspector	

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by one social care inspector and one additional inspector. Eight lessons were seen, taught by seven teachers and one teaching assistant. Meetings were held with senior staff, members of the governing body, education and boarding staff and two separate groups of pupils. The inspectors observed the school's work, including breakfast and lunch arrangements, the boarding facility and breaktimes. They looked at documents including those for safeguarding and the curriculum. Records of pupils' and boarders' achievements were studied as were the 19 parents' and carers' questionnaires together with those returned by pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key areas.

- The degree to which pupils' progress is aided by effective boarding arrangements for residents, good teaching and assessment systems.
- The 24-hour and school day curricula were analysed to ensure that they provide appropriate opportunities for all boarders and pupils.
- The care, guidance and support of pupils and boarders were examined to understand their impact on achievement, behaviour and the degree to which pupils feel safe.
- How effective leaders and managers are in utilising data and targets to improve the school and boarding.

Information about the school

Chaigeley provides for pupils with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). Most experience additional barriers to their learning such as communication difficulties and attention deficit hyperactive disorders (ADHD). All have a statement of special educational needs. Eight pupils currently board at the school but some pupils travel considerable distances to and from home each day. As a charitable foundation the school admits pupils from local authorities throughout the country. Pupils can join the school at any time in their school career and at any part of the school year. Consequently, pupil mobility is much higher than in most other schools. The number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals is not known because of the inclusive nature of the fee system. Eight are looked after by their local authority and almost all are of White British heritage. Chaigeley was recently approved to admit girls and currently there are very few.

The school was last inspected by Ofsted in November 2007 and some changes have since occurred in the boarding and education management teams. Recent changes in pupil numbers have resulted in reductions in staffing for both the school and boarding. The school achieved the Healthy School status in 2010.

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

Chaigeley provides good education, care and boarding and it meets most of the national minimum standards for residential special schools. The large majority of pupils make good progress. Parents and carers are highly supportive. Educational outcomes are good, having improved since the last inspection. Almost all pupils arrive having experienced highly disrupted education and very low attendance. Their behaviours were regularly extreme. Consequently, pupils' attainments upon entry are very much below the national averages. Attendance remains low overall because of the persistent absence of a few but for the majority it greatly increases to average or better during their time at the school. Through good teaching and good guidance and support from staff the very large majority of pupils demonstrate rapid progress in their educational, social and moral developments. Most begin to catch up with their peers in mainstream schools. Regular attendees gain key skills and boarders become noticeably more independent. Most gain qualifications and accreditations that support them satisfactorily in moving on to next stages. Pupils' good achievements at all ages are supported by the good curriculum. However, teachers do not always challenge pupils with individual targets matched to their needs that would provide opportunities for more independent learning.

Safeguarding is good and the very large majority of pupils report they feel safe. This is supported by parents and carers, and staff. Mainly, pupils learn to behave well and consequently settle better into their studies. They are generally polite and welcoming to visitors. Chaigeley practises its Healthy Schools status through the good take-up of healthy eating and exercise. Students contribute well through the school council and by acting responsibly during gatherings. Their good contributions extend into the wider community where they have opportunities to interact with others in a positive way through sports, Scouts and the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme. Community cohesion is satisfactory and managers have already begun the process of updating the community cohesion policy and providing an appropriate action plan. Through the impressive Eco Club pupils plant trees and grow food, some of which is sold to raise funds for the school.

The senior team, admirably supported by the outstanding governing body, have improved teaching since the last inspection. They have made significant changes including the provision of new buildings. The governing body challenges the headteacher effectively. Consequently, the processes of target-setting for improvement and self-evaluation are good. There is good capacity to improve further. However, the school has not yet devised a system fully capable of monitoring and tracking pupils' progress efficiently. Consequently, teachers do not always have access to the latest assessment information.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Increase efforts to improve attendance by working closely with local authorities and other agencies to secure links with the families of the few pupils who are persistently absent.
- By January 2012 ensure even better progress for pupils in lessons by:
 - providing high-quality, up-to-date assessment information for teachers to utilise in their planning
 - providing pupils with individual, carefully-matched learning targets designed to promote more independent learning.
- The school must ensure that it meets the national minimum standards for boarding which have not been met.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Pupils enjoy school and residents appreciate the boarding facility. One comment was, 'Staff look after us and manage our behaviour'. Pupils learn to control their own behaviour. They become able to contribute to lessons when previously they could not. For example, during the inspection in science pupils said they had rarely undertaken practical work in previous schools because of their behaviour. In this lesson they largely behaved well and enjoyed the success of scientific investigation. In physical education pupils were keen to start because they enjoy the well-planned activities. Thus, from very low starting points pupils settle into lessons and start to enjoy their work and celebrate new achievements. Boarders, and all groups of day pupils who attend, make good progress at every age. Consequently, they gain accreditations in the Unit Award Scheme and experience successes in Entry Level Certificates from Year 9. Some gain GCSEs and passes in vocational courses.

A few reported through their questionnaires that they do not always feel safe. This was thoroughly investigated by the inspection team and found to have been due to an issue that has since been fully resolved by the school. Consequently, the extent to which pupils feel safe is good. Pupils eat well. They enjoy breakfast and make sensible choices at lunchtime. They learn about being healthy in their lessons and receive good-quality advice from visiting health experts. Pupils maintain their fitness through physical education and enrichment activities such as gardening and are encouraged to de-stress with exercise at breaktime. Therefore, the extent to which they adopt healthy lifestyles is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good because pupils make significant gains such as in understanding about right and wrong. They learn to work in groups and often demonstrate mutual support. Pupils explore different religions and cultures through the curriculum and during assemblies and they gain further understanding through the extensive programme of trips and visits to places of worship and cultural centres.

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These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	2
Pupils' behaviour	2
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

How effective is the provision?

Most teaching is good. Teachers formulate good relationships and successfully encourage pupils to participate in lessons. In the best lessons activities are interesting; imaginative ways to engage pupils are deployed such as learning outside of the classroom. Teachers utilise technology to aid pupils' learning. For example, a teacher projected information from her desk to the interactive whiteboard to show pupils what to do. Pupils are taught to develop skills with computers to produce good presentations and they feel pleased with their work. Pupils appreciate the well-directed support received in class. Adults are patient and help with pupils' learning difficulties. Some lessons are planned to provide tasks for the class group rather than for individuals and this can sometimes dilute the impact on learning.

The good curriculum is tailored to provide encouragement for any disaffected pupils. Boarders have experiences that support school work whilst enrichment activities promote pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Literacy and numeracy are regularly taught through other subjects. Consequently, pupils from primary age onwards make good gains in English and mathematics whilst all utilise information and communication technology to aid learning. Older pupils have work placements whilst vocational courses and college placements are provided for those who express interest and aptitude.

Staff in boarding and school work hard to gain the trust of the pupils. The good care they provide encourages good behaviour. Advice is provided to pupils and their families.

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Parents and carers appreciate the good care, guidance and support. Some write sincere letters of thanks, such as, 'Our boy with no confidence has come a long way and is going from strength to strength'. The school is successful in improving the attendance of the majority of pupils. Furthermore, support through work with the local authority and other agencies extends where possible to families of persistent absentees, although this has not yet succeeded with all of these few pupils.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

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

How effective are leadership and management?

The senior team has improved teaching since the last inspection and is effective in encouraging a strong sense of purpose so that morale in the school is good.

Consequently, outcomes for pupils have improved because managers at all levels desire the best for boarders and day pupils. The current system for collating pupils' assessments and tracking information is satisfactory but it is cumbersome and dated by the time it is made available to teachers. Nevertheless, the good capacity to improve the school is evidenced by recent changes in the behaviour management that have reduced the number of exclusions and incidents of physical intervention. The effectiveness of safeguarding is good. All policies and procedures are in place and the required level of training has been provided for all staff and some have been trained to a high level. The school reacts quickly to safeguarding issues. For example, when a few pupils indicated that they did not always feel safe the headteacher took immediate action to further improve arrangements for supervision.

The outstanding governing body is stable and experienced. Furthermore, as trustees they occupy additional roles and responsibilities. Members are enthusiastic. They have a deep understanding of the work of the school, providing informed guidance on a wide range of matters. They challenge the senior team effectively and rigorously undertake statutory duties such as reviewing policies and procedures concerning safeguarding. They ensure that leaders and managers at all levels provide for all pupils to be included and that none are discriminated against.

The school engages well with most parents and carers. Regular contact is maintained to inform them of their children's progress and of events such as evenings for parents and carers. Many live a considerable distance from the school but are regularly consulted by letter and telephone. The good partnerships maintained by Chaigeley include those with local schools who provide facilities for physical education. The school successfully manages the huge task of maintaining good contacts with the agencies of all providing local authorities. Other valuable partnerships support the school's work in the Duke of

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Edinburgh Award Scheme and placements for work experience. The school is a cohesive society with satisfactory promotion of community cohesion through, for example, the views of students being constantly sought. Through effective direction of staff and appropriate deployment of resources in both education and boarding the school represents good value for money as is evidenced by the good outcomes for boarders and pupils.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	2
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	2
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	3
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	2

Boarding provision

The overall effectiveness of the boarding provision is good. The school meets the vast majority of the national minimum standards, although there are areas of weakness in care planning, volunteers' safeguarding training and monitoring the quality of provision. Despite these shortfalls, the headteacher and head of care remain ambitious to secure improvement.

The school's residential success emanates from the top. The headteacher and head of care share a very clear vision for the residential facility. They act with integrity and determination to ensure pupils are afforded every opportunity possible to thrive and benefit from the 24-hour curriculum. Pupils experience a genuine, caring, consistent and secure relationship with care staff, who are committed, trained, experienced and are themselves supported. There is not a day that goes by that pupils do not have an opportunity to undertake a wide range of activities that strengthen their skills, interests and knowledge and enhance their physical well-being. This extends to having marvellous opportunities for participating in varied activities.

Pupils are treated with dignity and respect at all times. They are empowered to make a positive contribution towards their school life. Their safety and well-being is of paramount importance to the school. Bullying and other instances of poor behaviour are extremely

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well managed within the residential provision. This reflects the views of residential pupils, who report feeling safe and judge the quality of care they receive to be 'the best'.

There is excellent inter-agency working taking place which means the holistic needs of pupils are fully recognised and comprehensively met. Clear procedures are followed for the management, secure storage and administration of medication and this ensures pupils receive correct medication important to their health. Care staff work alongside pupils to help them increase their knowledge of basic nutrition and to receive a balanced diet. All pupils have access to effective healthcare, assessment, treatment and support.

Every day pupils are supported in having a clear and positive understanding of their culture and identity and every opportunity to celebrate them. Pupils receive substantial guidance and support on sustaining law-abiding and positive behaviour both in and out of school. This positive input enables pupils to make better life choices that significantly improve outcomes for their future. Care staff provide clear direction about acceptable behaviour and only use physical intervention as a last resort. When used, it takes into account the pupil's age and the seriousness of the situation. The school has established procedures for ensuring that significant events are notified to the required authority.

The recruitment of care staff is meticulous. Care staff are trained in all aspects of safeguarding pupils; they are alert to their vulnerabilities and risk of harm, and knowledgeable about how to implement child protection procedures. Nevertheless, this level of training is not commonly shared with volunteers, who play an active role within the school. The school provides pupils with a safe and nurturing environment. This includes being protected from fire, water and electrical hazards, and from going missing from care.

Care staff ensure that every residential pupil receives individualised support and care to meet their needs and personal circumstances. However, some aspects of care planning are not kept up to date. This particularly hinders pupils' progress being easily monitored so that all their achievements are formally validated. Pupils are able to complain about the standards of care they receive without fear of repercussion. Care staff respect pupils' personal dignity and their rights. They handle information about pupils confidentially and securely.

Pupils have an excellent rapport with care staff, who recognise the importance of building up trust and respecting pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to talk to staff about personal difficulties. This helps them feel reassured and valued. Parents say they have positive experience of their children making 'fantastic' progress since starting at the school.

The governing body plays an outstanding role in promoting the care of pupils and governors undertake regular visits to the residential provision. Time is always given to securing the views and opinions of pupils. However, reports that follow these visits fail to comment on attendance, complaints and behaviour management. This hinders their role as critical friends helping the school to identify any potential shortfalls in the quality of care. Furthermore, although the regular monitoring and signing of records are carried out by a senior member of staff at required intervals, there is no additional record made to validate how trends and patterns are identified and what action is taken.

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National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care

- ensure standard 33 reports include checks on the school's records of attendance, complaints, sanctions and the use of physical interventions (NMS 33.3)
- ensure the designated senior member of staff, who is monitoring and signing required records, also evidences how they identify any patterns or issues requiring action and records what consequential action has been taken (NMS 32.2)
- ensure the written placement plan shows the monitoring of progress is taking place and is updated as necessary (NMS 17.1)
- ensure volunteers are given training in the prevention and recognition of abuse, dealing with disclosures or suspicions of abuse. (NMS 5.8)

These are the grades for the boarding provision

The effectiveness of the boarding provision	2
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Views of parents and carers

By the end of the on-site inspection 19 parents and carers had returned their questionnaires. This is a high return for a school of this size and nature. Parents and carers are supportive and a typical comment was, 'I am very pleased with the school. We need more like this!' Where they were not entirely positive, parents and carers sometimes gave explanations; for example, one wrote, 'I feel that my child is not making enough progress but it is due mainly to his attitude, not the teachers' capabilities'.

The very large majority indicated that the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour. One parent or carer new to the school wrote, 'I have found the teachers more than helpful and ready to listen. They offer help and suggestions on how to improve my child's behaviour. I already see a massive improvement'.

Most parents and carers indicated support for the leaders and managers of the school. These comments are in line with the findings of both the care and education aspects of the inspection.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Chaigeley 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 inspector received 19 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 47 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	2	11	13	68	4	21	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	9	47	9	47	1	5	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	63	7	37	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	9	47	6	32	3	16	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	12	63	6	32	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	8	42	7	37	2	11	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	8	42	8	42	1	5	0	0
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)	10	53	8	42	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	9	47	7	37	1	5	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	10	53	7	37	1	5	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	11	58	7	37	1	5	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	12	63	7	37	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	11	58	4	21	2	11	0	0

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

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	46	48	6	0
Primary schools	6	47	40	7
Secondary schools	12	39	38	11
Sixth forms	13	42	41	3
Special schools	28	49	19	4
Pupil referral units	14	45	31	10
All schools	10	46	37	7

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 are for the period 1 September 2010 to 31 December 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 2010/11 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



8 July 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Chaigeley School, Warrington, WA4 2TE

Thank you for making the inspectors so welcome when we visited your school recently. We were very impressed with your good manners and the generally good relationships you have with staff and with each other both in school and in boarding.

You reported to us that you mainly enjoy school and appreciate the boarding facility. Chaigeley is a good school because most of you feel safe, make good progress and achieve well. You begin to understand about adopting healthy lifestyles and most gain qualifications and accreditations that will be helpful when you move on to the next stages of your lives. Those of you who attend learn to manage your behaviour and this allows you to join in with the activities that are provided. The adults work hard to look after you so that teaching is good, as are the care, guidance and support. Those of you who are boarders recognise that this good facility successfully encourages you to take part in education. Leaders and managers are effective and you have an outstanding governing body which successfully undertakes a very wide range of duties.

Nevertheless, too many of you are too often absent. This means that you cannot take advantage of the good opportunities that are available to you to gain an education and make the most of your chances in life. Furthermore, the school does not always gather and utilise assessment information quickly and efficiently. Therefore, teachers do not have the best and latest information available when they are planning lessons. Sometimes, activities are not closely matched to your ability, and this means you do not always have your own targets for improvement in lessons.

We have asked the leaders and managers to make some improvements to the school and it must meet all of the national minimum standards for boarding. We would like Chaigeley to continue to work hard with the local authorities and other agencies to try to persuade more of you to attend regularly. The senior leaders are going to continue to develop and refine the systems for collecting your attainments. This will help them to understand better about the progress that you make. When this information is made available to teachers they will be able to set better individual learning targets for you during lessons.

Once again, thank you for your interest in the inspection and Michelle Moss and I wish you all well for the future.

Yours sincerely

Terry McKenzie

Lead Inspector

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