



# Lambs Grange

## CONTENTS

---

[Basic information about the school](#)

[Part A - Summary of the report](#)

[Scope and purpose of the report](#)

[Information about the school](#)

[Main findings](#)

[How good the school is](#)

[What the school does well](#)

[What could be improved](#)

[Commentary](#)

[How high are standards?](#)

[How well are pupils or students taught?](#)

[How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?](#)

[How well does the school care for its pupils?](#)

[How well does the school work in partnership with parents?](#)

[How well is the school led and managed?](#)

[What should the school do to improve further?](#)

[School data and indicators](#)

[Survey of parents and carers](#)

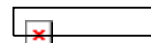
[Questionnaire return rate](#)

[Responses in each category](#)

[Summary of responses](#)

[Issues that concerned parents](#)

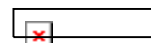
**Basic information about the school**



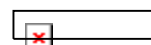
---

Name of school:	Lambs Grange
Type of school:	For pupils with autism
Status:	Independent
Age range of pupils:	14 - 19 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Fees:	Day: £32,367 - £50,515; Residential £41,957 - £143,801 (depending on duration of boarding and level of support required)
Address of school:	Forest Road, Cuddington, Cheshire, CW8 2EH
Telephone number:	01606 301514
Fax number:	01606 301516
Headteacher:	Mr Jonathan Wilkins
Proprietor:	Mrs Maureen Lee
Other schools in same ownership	Lambs House, Congleton
Chair of governing body:	-
DfES Number:	8756028
Reporting Inspector:	RG Dyke HMI
Date(s) of inspection:	5-7 February 2002

**Part A - Summary of the report**

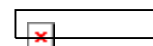


**Scope and purpose of the report**



1. This inspection was carried out at the request of the Secretary of State for Education and Skills who has asked for reporting inspections to be undertaken in non-approved schools that educate and care for pupils with special educational needs who are publicly funded. The purpose of the report was to advise the Secretary of State about the quality of the school's provision under the Education Act 1996. The report concentrates on those aspects of the school relevant to that purpose.

## Information about the school



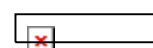
2. Lambs Grange was established in 1998 to provide a flexible range of boarding and day places for young people with autism aged 14-19 years. Boarding arrangements vary from weekly to 52 week provision. Most of the young people have severe learning difficulties in addition to their autism, and some exhibit challenging behaviour at times. Pupils are taught in three classes. Two of the three class teachers had been in post only a month at the time of the inspection.

3. The school is provisionally registered with the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) for the education of 15 young people, although building work is in progress to increase the number of places available. It is registered additionally with Cheshire Social Services Department as a children's home and has been subject to regular inspection by that department. Pupils are funded by their local education authorities, in some cases jointly with local social and health services. Lambs Grange operates in partnership with Lambs House, a school in Congleton under the same ownership for pupils with autism aged 5-16 years.

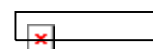
4. The school is situated in a Cheshire village, within reach of the towns of Northwich and Warrington. The residential accommodation consists of the main house which is a former country home, with further accommodation in two adjacent cedar chalets. The classrooms are in three cedar chalets. The school grounds extend to 10 acres of garden and woodland.

5. The school's mission statement is: 'to provide high quality education and care for young people with autism in a safe, supportive and structured environment'. In order to fulfil this aim, the school expresses its readiness to adopt any combination of a range of established teaching methods and therapeutic approaches for pupils with autism, according to individuals' changing needs. The school seeks to offer each pupil a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum which takes account of the National Curriculum. Classroom and residential staff aim to work together to provide a 'whole-centre 24 hour approach'. The school values its links with the local college of further education.

## Main findings



## How good the school is



6. Lambs Grange is a school with a number of significant strengths which promote the progress and welfare of its pupils. There are some weaknesses resulting from an earlier period of financial difficulties and from recent turnover of teaching staff. The attention of the directors and management team has necessarily had to focus upon weathering the financial difficulties of the past two years and upon the protection of the young people's interests during this time. Action on planned improvements has only very recently become possible as these difficulties have been resolved. The school has now begun a period of development and expansion.

7. The school is meeting its aim to provide a broad and balanced curriculum, but it has yet to establish a rationale for the curriculum and a framework to guide teachers' planning. As a result, recently appointed teachers are finding it difficult to plan appropriately to meet pupils' very specific needs, and the quality of teaching varies too widely between classes. The system for pupil

management is, in contrast, strongly established in all settings and procedures are well documented. Consequently, practice is consistent and effective between classroom and residential settings and amongst newly formed staff teams.

8. Staff in both classroom and care settings work effectively to advance pupils' social and communication skills and to help pupils overcome the difficulties resulting from their autism. As a result, pupils make good progress in these crucial areas. The school is moving towards the provision of a '24 hour curriculum' as links between residential and classroom work develop. It provides a safe, secure and pleasant working and living environment. The management of the care provision is good. Pupils' welfare is a high priority for the proprietor, senior managers and all staff.

### What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress in overcoming the difficulties associated with their autism.
- Social and communication skills are promoted effectively by all staff.
- Pupils' behaviour is managed well through the consistent use of agreed procedures.
- More able pupils have access to a range of accreditation.
- The quality of teaching and the match of activities to pupils' needs in the senior class are good.
- Residential provision is effectively organised and managed and pupils are well cared for.
- Pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development is promoted successfully.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are very good despite pupils' difficulties in interacting with others.
- Staff maintain a warm and professional approach in supporting young people who can exhibit challenging behaviour.

- The welfare of these vulnerable pupils is safeguarded very effectively.

### What could be improved

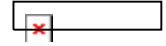
- The quality of teaching in classes taught by newly recruited teachers.
- The quality of the curriculum provided for pupils with more acute autism and more severe learning difficulties.
- Schemes of work to guide teachers' planning and practice.
- The accuracy and appropriateness of class timetables.
- The system for assessing and recording pupils' progress in education.
- The role of senior managers in designing and developing the curriculum.
- The school development plan, including education and care.
- Resources for learning.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the school's action plan.*

### Commentary

---

## How high are standards?



### *The school's results and achievements*

9. The range of ability of the pupils at Lambs Grange is wide. The majority have severe learning difficulties in addition to their autism, but a small number of more able pupils are able to attain close to average expectations in some areas of activity. The nature of pupils' difficulties means that progress is made in small steps and achieved only with great effort on the part of pupils and staff. Progress is uneven, and some pupils regress for periods of time. While staff make every effort to discover the reasons for regression, they are not always able to do so. At the time of the inspection, one pupil was beginning to regain his earlier level of proficiency in the use of his communication card system after losing ground despite the best efforts of all. Another had begun to show willingness to participate in leisure activities outside school after a period of withdrawal from these.

10. For the great majority of pupils, the first priority for the school is to help them overcome the barriers to learning presented by the behaviours associated with their autism. Pupils make good progress in this respect as classroom and residential staff take a joint approach, working to well-established guidelines and detailed individual plans. Pupils take increasing notice of the world around them and of the presence and personalities of other people. They become more able to make their preferences and needs known to the adults who support them. This reduces their anxiety and enables them to learn.

11. All the young people have some degree of difficulty with communication, and some are able to make little or no use of speech. Their progress in developing communication skills is generally slow and is rarely steady, but it is good in relation to their disabilities. The good progress reflects intensive and consistent support in all the school settings and also in activities out of school. Pupils' work on communication is closely bound up with the reduction in the effects of their autism, as their acquisition of communication skills supports their behavioural development. For example, in the residential setting, part of one pupil's routine on awakening is to work with a familiar member of the care staff to set out a sequence of symbol cards on his bedroom communication board. This represents the main self-care tasks he will need to undertake, and the choices he has made for breakfast. The sequencing of the cards provides a tangible basis for a discussion, in simplified language, of the forward plan for the next hour. The discussion reduces the pupil's anxiety while the planner builds his independence as he re-assures himself of the next steps in his routine.

12. Pupils make good progress in their learning in the senior class despite a lack of practical resources. They follow a curriculum which makes good use of the external environment. There is a good balance between developing pupils' learning skills in the classroom and applying the skills to real situations in school and outside. Pupils participate in discussions according to their capabilities. They either make verbal contributions or indicate choices and answer questions through the use of symbol cards or pictures. The most able can write independently; some dictate and copy-write, while less able pupils record through sequencing symbol cards or pictures. Formal number work at various levels supports progress, although much mathematics is based on activities associated with living skills. While most pupils are still learning the nominal values of coins and notes and are still coming to terms with their purchasing power, the most able are learning to calculate change. Progress in personal, social and health education is good as effective use is made of pictorial material and of the local environment. Increasing use of digital photography is linking classroom work with outside experiences and it is encouraging pupils to focus their interest on materials which feature places and people they recognise. Only the most able pupils make satisfactory progress in their use of information and control technology as the range of software suitable for less able pupils is limited.

13. Academic progress in the two younger classes is not satisfactory as the newly appointed

teachers lack the necessary experience, guidance and resources for this very specialised work. A lack of detailed information about pupils' prior attainments means that progression cannot be assured. There is no use of systems such as the 'P-scales' published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to set targets for less able pupils' attainment in subjects. Too much time is spent in occupational activities such as simple puzzles. As pupils are not sufficiently absorbed in lesson activities they make increased use of their time-out routines and their behaviour is more difficult to manage.

14. Pupils are being given access to an increasing range of accreditation. Most pupils currently undertake units of work associated with Accreditation for Life and Living Skills, which is an accreditation scheme for young people with severe learning difficulties. The more able pupils gain accreditation within the National Skills Profile scheme. In addition to recognising pupils' successes, the use of these schemes provides added structure and purpose to their work.

15. The school is developing links with the local college of further education. At present, four young people are undertaking courses there. The courses include information technology, life skills, catering, and a mini-enterprise scheme. Travel to and from the college and the use of college dining facilities are all planned and assessed elements of the placements. All the placements are successful; reports indicate that the young people are achieving well both academically and socially.

### ***Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development***

16. Despite their difficulties, pupils generally arrive in lessons willing to participate. They are encouraged and supported by a behaviour management system that is applied consistently by all staff. This helps to create a secure environment where pupils are respected and the contributions they make are valued.

17. With the exception of those with the most acute difficulties at any given time, pupils settle quickly to classroom work and in the best lessons are excited by their own progress. Many find co-operation with other pupils impossible but learn to work within a group without interfering with others. Teaching strategies to settle and engage the more challenging pupils are not well developed in two of the three classes. This can result in an uncertain start to lessons. Outbursts and off-task behaviour are managed well and pupils quickly re-engage with learning without disturbing others unduly.

18. Education staff build on the relationships fostered by care staff. The consistency of expectation that pupils experience from all adults in the school supports them in responding to the conventions and expectations of the Lambs Grange community.

19. Through the residential experience and formal classroom teaching the school develops pupils' attitudes and values and their awareness of others. Pupils are grouped in living accommodation that encourages them progressively to accept responsibility for aspects of their own lives. More able pupils plan and purchase their own meals, care for their rooms and select activities to participate in. Those with greater needs are helped to make choices and taught routines that give them as much independence as possible.

20. The degree of responsibility given to pupils in their learning varies from class to class. At best they organise their own work and carry out instructions with limited supervision. In some sessions teachers underestimate the social skills that pupils are able to use.

21. Through both the care process and formal teaching, pupils are enabled to understand and follow basic routines concerning personal health, hygiene and nutrition. Teaching assistants ensure that basic routines developed in care are maintained and reinforced during school time.

22. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally good. The most positive behaviour was seen where pupils were engaged quickly in learning that stimulated and challenged them. The pace of the best lessons and the variety of activity, particularly where there was a good range of resources, resulted in effective learning. In these lessons, pupils became involved for long periods of time and

management of their behaviour occupied less time and effort.

23. For pupils with more acute difficulties, opportunities for appropriate practical activity are limited and this leads to a higher incidence of off-task behaviour. This is well managed but diverts the attention of staff and pupils away from the learning tasks.

24. Behaviour in the residential provision is good, as pupils are well and consistently managed. They respond very well to the friendly style of staff who are well known to them. Pupils are offered choices and variety of activity, and there is a balance of structured activity and informal relaxation. In all settings, staff encourage pupils to express pleasure and enjoyment, as this is an aspect of both communication and personal development which is often lacking.

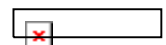
25. In residential provision and in classrooms, there is consistent and very effective use of a well-established system of 'traffic light' cards carried by all staff. These small cards are held up and used as tangible signals that activities are about to start (or stop), have starting, or have finished. They are complemented by 'go' cards which are used to signify an agreement between adult and pupil that the pupil needs some time out of the current activity to indulge for a short while in a preferred activity, or to leave the group for a short respite. The use of these systems is a strength.

26. There have been no exclusions in the last school year. The school maintains records of incidents and sanctions in an appropriate fashion.

### *Attendance*

27. Pupils' attendance is generally very good. A small number of pupils suffer from medical conditions which lead to periods of absence. One pupil in 52-week residential provision has difficulties in coping with school attendance, but there are strategies in place to improve his willingness to attend. Close liaison between staff and parents means that the reasons for absence are monitored effectively. Class attendance registers are marked appropriately and pupils' attendance at class and in residence is recorded separately. The school day begins promptly and pupils return to lessons from breaks on time.

### **How well are pupils or students taught?**



28. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or good in two-thirds of lessons seen in the inspection. The teaching in one in five lessons was good, and it was very good in one in ten. While an art lesson taught by a specialist teacher was very good, the best teaching was generally in the senior class taught by an experienced and relatively long serving member of staff. Planning in this class is confident and effective. The teacher is skilled in making use of published curriculum guidelines to prepare detailed medium- and short-term plans adapted to pupils' specific needs. Pupils' strengths and weaknesses are well known and the content and timing of lessons meets pupils needs well. Detailed guidance is provided for the roles of teaching assistants in each phase of the lesson.

29. The two younger classes were taught by teachers who were at the earliest stage of coming to terms with the exceptional demands of these pupils. Despite this, the application by the teachers of existing routines and readily understood written guidance, and the support of experienced and skilled teaching assistants, ensures that pupils' behaviour is well managed and that progress is maintained in developing basic communication skills.

30. However, in the absence of written or practical guidance and resources for the teaching of subjects, the teachers are struggling to meet pupils' learning needs by adapting subject content directly from sources such as the National Curriculum programmes of study, and by making their own teaching materials. Planning is complicated by a lack of information regarding pupils' previous

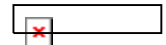


attainments and by the lack of individual short-term targets. In these circumstances it is difficult for the teachers to produce a sufficient range and quantity of activities to meet the needs of all the class, particularly for the long periods of time allocated to some lessons by the class timetables. The teachers are struggling to meet the needs of many of the pupils for a multi-sensory approach to much of their work. Where interesting tactile experiences were provided, for example, pupils were calmed and involved, and they concentrated for long periods of time.

31. In all classes, teaching assistants work very effectively in taking responsibility for periods of intensive teaching with individuals and small groups. Their support of pupils being taught in larger groups is sensitive to the need to promote pupils' independence in responding to the teacher, so that they do not answer for the pupils. Teaching assistants are particularly skilled in managing the temporary disengagement of pupils from group activities so as to minimise disruption to others.

32. In the residential setting, care staff, and particularly pupils' key workers, interpret their role as having a strong educational element. Incorporating joint targets agreed with teaching staff, individual development plans for pupils set out priorities for work in the residential setting on communication, social and self-care skills. Very detailed guidance for individual support ensures that a consistent approach is used by all staff. The guidance extends to such detail as setting out the form of words to be used in prompting a pupil, or the manner in which a prompt might be mimed for them. Good use is made of the symbol cards which support pupils' verbal communication.

#### **How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils or students?**



33. An appropriate breadth and balance of curriculum has been achieved for the majority of pupils in both Key Stage 4 and post-16. Curricular provision for severely autistic pupils has a weakness in its lack of provision for sensory experiences. There is insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) to enrich pupils' learning.

34. A lack of differentiation between Key Stage 4 and post-16 provision results in pupils following the same timetables. Within these timetables, the planning does not always take into account sufficiently the learning needs of the wide range of abilities in teaching groups.

35. The curriculum includes periods of time at the beginning and end of each day that focus specifically on what is called 'addressing the autism'. These times are used to help pupils settle. The morning sessions consist of registration followed by group games, physical activities or dance. The schedule for the session is outlined and pupils greet staff and each other. At the end of the day, teaching sessions are concluded with a period of sensory activity and relaxation to prepare pupils to transfer back to care staff. For the most part these activities are organised well and they support pupils' preparation for learning in class and for their return to residential care or travel to home.

36. The core curriculum includes mathematics, English, science, religious education and personal, social and health education. Pupils also have access to work within environmental studies, vocational skills, careers, citizenship, home management, physical education and design and technology. Pupils have both art lessons and art therapy, and music lessons and individual music therapy.

37. Lack of clear curriculum guidance and of detailed schemes of work results in a fragmented approach to learning in two of the three teaching groups. There is insufficient provision of a sensory approach to learning for the least able. Too often these pupils are given tasks which have little meaning for them. When this occurs they are not stimulated or engaged and there is little learning.

38. Continuity and progression within subjects are affected by the lack of curriculum documentation. Where published learning programmes are used, schemes of work have yet to be developed to

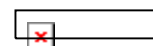
guide less experienced staff in adapting their use to the specific needs of the pupils. The school's intention to take account of the National Curriculum is reflected in timetables and in planning, although the timetables do not all indicate accurately what is taught.

39. Class timetables are planned in periods of up to 90 minutes. On occasion the longer timetabled periods are not well used so that pace and concentration are lost and lessons take on an occupational aspect. Even some of the 45-minute periods are too long in practice. Staff are aware that timetables need revising in the light of pupils' concentration spans.

40. Pupils' wider experiences are well planned with evening and weekend activities that include swimming, trips to places of interest, to the cinema, parks, bowling and shopping. In the care setting, pupils often experience the sequence of establishing a need for shopping, of planning their purchases, of going to the local shops and of making immediate use of the goods. Opportunities are also created within the formal curriculum for pupils to shop. This is enhancing their social skills as well as their sense of the value of money.

41. The curriculum successfully develops pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness. The use of relaxation time with music enables pupils to reflect on their experiences. The celebration of major world faith festivals introduces pupils to aspects of religious belief and practice. Pupils are introduced to a variety of cuisine from different traditions. The school's concern for people and the clear code of behaviour give pupils a framework within which they develop a sense of right and wrong. Their social development is equally well promoted in both the care and educational areas of the school. The sensitive encouragement of their participation in activities and interactions helps pupils to overcome the reticence and anxieties that are features of their autism.

#### **How well does the school care for its pupils?**



42. Adults show great concern for the welfare of the young people in their care. This is a significant strength of the school. There is a shared commitment from senior managers and teaching and care staff to meeting the diverse needs of these young people. Staff show sensitivity and patience in their relationships with pupils and in managing their occasional challenging behaviours. There is much good humour in the relationships; pupils and adults often laugh together.

43. The residential care arrangements are good. Daily routines run smoothly and care staff ensure that pupils are ready for school. Close attention is given to pupils' personal care and this is done sensitively to safeguard their dignity. Boarding arrangements are planned to help pupils to work towards more independent living as far as they are able. In the two groups housed in chalets, for example, senior pupils plan and cook many of their meals and are given a degree of autonomy under the supervision of the care worker. In the evening and at weekends, excursions to places of interest, local shops and leisure activities are much enjoyed by pupils. These activities promote their social development. Guidance as to the next steps in their care and education is available to all pupils and their parents. For those for whom it is appropriate, there is access to external qualifications and to the local college.

44. Arrangements to safeguard and promote pupils' safety, health and welfare are effective. Parents are kept informed of any problems and staff respond readily to parental enquiries. Procedures for hand-over between different staff teams are effective and the level of supervision is good. The organisation's director of care liaises with outside agencies and works collaboratively with the school's head of care to ensure that care staff are well briefed for their duties. The programme of in-service training includes knowledge of child protection procedures. The school nurse provides very good medical oversight for pupils. She also works as part of the team more widely in support of pupils and is providing health-related training for other staff.

45. A small team of local volunteers with appropriate backgrounds act as pupil advocates. They

have right of entry at any time to check the welfare of pupils. This arrangement provides additional outside scrutiny that could alert staff, managers or outside agencies to any concerns. Written reports are given to the school by the advocates and kept on file. No concerns have been recorded as yet.

46. At the time of the inspection, the school roll included one young man whose social and academic achievements were far in advance of the other pupils. While every effort was made to meet his needs on an individual basis in class and in the residential setting, he was not appropriately placed at Lambs Grange. The pupil was admitted in response to an urgent request from a referring authority unable to find a more suitable school. The school should review this placement and avoid similar placements in future unless additional provision is planned for more able pupils.

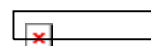
47. The school ensures that it has an overview of pupils' levels of social and academic functioning on admission by arranging for members of staff to visit pupils' homes and previous placements prior to admission, in addition to requesting copies of records. There is a review of progress after six weeks at Lambs Grange, and then a system of termly reports and annual reviews. The annual reviews are well detailed, with contributions from class teachers and key workers, the speech therapist, nurse and music therapist. Pupils' social and behavioural progress is well documented in the care setting.

48. Educational progress in the senior class has been recorded consistently over time through a variety of means, including annotated samples of work in pupils' personal files, checklists and task analysis sheets for some areas of work, and broad and specific targets set for other areas of work. Work prepared and annotated for accreditation further illustrates achievement and progress. The annotation of pieces of pupils' work and of photographs of activities is becoming increasingly effective in setting out the nature and significance of the progress or achievement illustrated. While some rationalisation of the recording system is needed and is planned, the existing records enable pupils' progress to be demonstrated.

49. Pupils' educational progress in the two younger classes cannot be traced over time in sufficient detail to inform planning and target setting. There is no established assessment and recording system other than some collections of work and the reports in pupils' central files. The establishment of a whole-school system for assessment, recording and target setting is a priority.

50. In the residential provision, extensive documentation is kept in relation to each resident; care plans are detailed and regular reviews are undertaken. Young people contribute to their reviews by recording information about themselves, with assistance from staff. In line with the school's aims, joint working between education and care staff is being refined. The process of setting joint targets for the care and education of each pupil is in place and is developing further as staff review its effectiveness in practice.

### **How well does the school work in partnership with parents?**



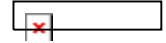
51. Just over half of those sent a parental questionnaire completed it. Parents and social workers paid tribute to the work of the school, the professionalism and dedication of staff and the progress made by pupils academically, socially, emotionally and behaviourally. Their views were corroborated by the findings of the most recent Cheshire Social Services inspection report on welfare and care which noted many features of good practice.

52. The school has effective links with referring authorities and with parents and carers. Parents can contact the school at any time. Regular reports are sent to parents giving details of social and educational progress. Key workers maintain contact with parents via telephone and letters. Residential pupils are encouraged to phone home and receive calls, and to remember family

birthdays and other important occasions.

53. Parents, carers and social workers are happy with the way that pupils' difficulties are managed. It was generally felt that pupils' attitudes had improved significantly as a result of their placement.

#### How well is the school led and managed?



54. The last two years have been a time of financial uncertainty. The proprietor and senior managers have necessarily focused much of their attention on securing the future of the school financially. It is a credit to all concerned that the quality of care for the pupils has not been diminished during this period. There has, however, been an undesirable degree of turnover in teaching staff which has obstructed the achievement of the school's plans for the development of educational provision.

55. With the future of the school now settled, a new management structure has been established with a head of care and head of education within Lambs Grange who are responsible to a director of care and a director of education with oversight of both Lambs Grange and Lambs House. This is a sensible arrangement with the potential for sharing practice across the organisation while maintaining the distinctive ethos of a school for young people aged from 14 years to 19-plus. While the new management team is rightly concerned to establish robust and effective structures to improve classroom practice in the long-term, the team should ensure that the immediate needs of newly recruited teachers for support and advice are met without delay.

56. The school's mission statement is straightforward and appropriate. It reflects the shared vision and commitment of the proprietor and senior managers for the school's future development. A rota of weekly meetings provides senior managers with the opportunity to plan together. It would be useful to circulate the agenda and minutes of these meetings so that all staff are kept fully aware of developments. Regular staff meetings and informal discussions enable day-to-day information to be shared effectively. As a consequence of the recent difficulties, the documentation of the policies and procedures to achieve fully effective joint working across the school has yet to be finalised. When this process is completed, a fuller version of the present handbook for staff would be useful for disseminating policies and practices.

57. The school secretary provides very good administrative support. Records are meticulously filed. ICT is well used within administration.

58. The residential provision is well led and managed, with clear lines of responsibility for the care of pupils. The systems for monitoring pupils' behaviour and recording their social progress are already good and are being further refined. Developments within the education facility have been less consistent. The high turnover of teaching staff has shown up weaknesses in induction, monitoring and curriculum planning. The monitoring of teaching and learning needs to be a greater priority for the head of education together with a fuller induction programme for new staff. A senior teaching post was created to help with leadership of the curriculum. However, the post-holder has a full-time teaching commitment and the demanding job description cannot be fulfilled at present.

59. The school development plan is out of date. In moving forward with the many initiatives in prospect, a new plan will be required to include both care and education targets. Priorities for the short, medium and long term should be identified, with responsibilities, costings, deadlines and success criteria defined.

60. Classroom and residential staff are sufficient in number and a good proportion are appropriately qualified. However, the newly recruited teachers do not have specialist training nor sufficient experience related to teaching pupils with autism. The school's records of in-service training

demonstrate a commitment to staff development, but further attention needs to be given to the need to develop classroom practice, as most of the training has been related to the care of pupils. Two teaching assistants are training to become teachers and have undertaken some successful project work with pupils as part of their training.

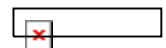
61. Resources for teaching and learning of all kinds in the class bases are insufficient. This restricts the quality of learning and teaching. The art room is well stocked and there are some good quality percussion instruments for music. Computer software is limited in range and suitability for all but the most able pupils. The book stock in the library would benefit from the addition of further attractive and age-appropriate books. The senior management team has been aware of the shortfall in resources since the establishment of the school, but the necessary funding has only recently been made available following the resolution of the school's financial crisis.

62. Residential accommodation is provided in the main house and in two adjacent cedar chalets. The chalets each provide three bedrooms for pupils and one for sleeping-in staff. They are attractively furnished and homely. Bedrooms in the main house are personalised and social areas are comfortable. The dining room in the main house has been subject to some recent refurbishment. It is small, but the arrangement of two sittings for lunch avoids overcrowding. A corridor area with alcove shelving is used as a library. This has the advantage of being accessible in both school and residential hours, but the area requires upgrading. There is a medical room which is also the nurse's office. There is no provision for a sick bay with a bed as all residential pupils have individual bedrooms and, through the nature of their condition, would be distressed by being moved to an unfamiliar bedroom. There is a strategy to provide a segregated bathroom for a sick pupil in case of need. All the accommodation is well cleaned and effectively heated.

63. Each of the three class bases occupies its own cedar chalet close to the main house. The chalets provide a main classroom, with smaller additional rooms off. This arrangement gives a useful degree of flexibility, particularly where young people find it difficult to tolerate each other or need time out from the main group. One of the chalets includes a kitchen used for food technology with small groups. An older wooden building, in need of refurbishment, houses an art/music room and a small music therapy base.

64. At the time of the inspection, a former stable block was being converted to provide an additional class base, a specialist subject teaching room, a games room and a sensory room. Plans had been drafted for extensions to the residential accommodation in the main building and for a new purpose-built teaching block housing class bases and specialist subject rooms. Plans were also in hand to convert a brick-built lodge some distance away from the main buildings into an independent living unit to accommodate two older pupils as part of the programme for transition from school.

### **What should the school do to improve further?**

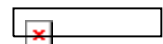


65. The school should:

- improve the effectiveness of the senior managers responsible for education in monitoring and supporting the less experienced teachers in their organisation and management of learning;
- allocate sufficient time to enable the senior teacher to fulfil her role in disseminating established good practice in planning and teaching;

- develop schemes of work which present sufficient detail of teaching methods and the use of resources so as to guide teachers' medium and short term planning effectively;
- re-draft timetables to reflect what is taught and to provide shorter lesson periods which accommodate pupils' concentration spans and their need for variety in activities;
- design a whole-school scheme for the assessment and recording of progress that provides a clear overview of the pupils' rates of progress both academically and socially and enables measurable targets to be set for pupils' attainment;
- revise the school development plan so as to cost and prioritise the many initiatives which are envisaged and to assign responsibilities and deadlines for their achievement;
- carry through the planned acquisition of additional resources for teaching and learning for which funds have now been committed and keep the adequacy of resources under review as the curriculum develops further.

### School data and indicators



### *Summary of inspection evidence*

Number of lessons and sessions observed	21
Total number of hours	13
Number of discussions with staff, other adults and pupils	25

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	9	19	36	36	0	0

*The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
11	2	0	2
12	4	0	4
13	2	1	3
14	3	2	5
15	1	0	1

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils eligible for free school meals
0	15	N/A

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

### *Attendance*

	Years 11 - 15
Authorised absence	8.7%
Unauthorised absence	0

*Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

Ethnic background of pupils		Exclusions in the last school year		
	No of pupils		Fixed period	Permanent
Black - Caribbean heritage	0	Black - Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black - African heritage	1	Black - African heritage	0	0
Black - other	0	Black - other	0	0
Indian	0	Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	Chinese	0	0
White	14	White	0	0
Other minority ethnic group	0	Other minority ethnic group	0	0
		<i>This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.</i>		

### *Teachers and classes Y11 - Y15*

Number of full-time class teachers	3
------------------------------------	---

Number of part-time teachers	1
Number of full-time class teachers with Qualified Teacher Status	3
Number of part-time teachers with Qualified Teacher Status	1
Number of pupils per teacher	5
Average class size	5

### *Deployment of teachers*

Percentage of time teachers spend in contact with classes	Not available
---	---------------

*(As staffing deployment was subject to review at the time of inspection, no firm data was available)*

### *Average teaching group size*

Nursery	
Key Stage 1	
Key Stage 2	
Key Stage 3	
Key Stage 4	5
Sixth Form	5

### *Teaching assistants Y11 - Y 15*

Total number of teaching assistants	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	337.5

### *Care staff Y11 - Y 15*

Total number of care staff	27
Total aggregate hours worked per week	1012.5

### *Placing arrangements*

<b>Private/LEA/SSD</b>	<b>No of pupils</b>
<b>Private</b>	<b>None</b>
Cheshire LEA	1
Doncaster LEA/SSD/Health Authority	1
Lancashire LEA/SSD	1
Leeds LEA/SSD	1
Oldham LEA	1
Rochdale LEA/SSD	1
Rotherham LEA	1
Salford LEA/SSD	1
Sefton LEA/SSD/Health Authority	1



Sheffield LEA	1
Southwark LEA/SSD	1
Tameside LEA	1
Trafford LEA	3

### *Financial Data*

<b>Income</b>	<b>Last financial year</b>	<b>Forecast this financial year</b>
Basic budget	£1,123,091	£1,206,081
Grants		
Income from facilities and services		
Donations/private funds		
Other income		
Total income	£1,123,091	£1,206,081
Income per pupil	£74,873	£80,405

### *Fees:*

Day: £32,367 - £50,515; Residential £41,957 - £143,801 (depending on duration of boarding and level of support required).

### Survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

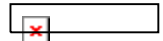
Number of questionnaires sent out	16
Number of questionnaires returned	9

### Responses in each category

	<b>agree</b>	<b>disagree</b>
I am happy with the school my child attends.	9	
I think this school meets my child's special educational needs.	8	
I believe that the school helps me to understand what my child is taught.	8	1
I think that the school keeps me well informed about my child's progress.	8	1
I am happy with the standards of behaviour at this school.	8	

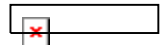
I believe that this school helps my child have positive attitudes to school work.	9	
I believe that this school helps my child to mix well with other children.	6	1
I believe that this school promotes the personal and social development of my child.	8	
I think that this school prepares my child for the next stage of education and training.	9	
I feel supported by the school.	8	1
I feel that my child is safe at this school.	9	
I believe my child likes this school.	9	

### Summary of responses



Most views of the work of the school were very positive. Parents generally felt that the school communicated well with them about their children's work and behaviour. Links with the careers service and local FE colleges were welcomed.

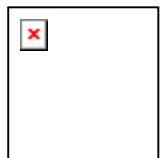
### Issues that concerned parents



A small number of parents pointed out that children at Lambs Grange were isolated from children without special needs who might have provided good role models. One parent felt that the school did not communicate effectively with home.

---

© CROWN COPYRIGHT 2002. This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.



School inspection reports are available on the OFSTED website ([www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)).