

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **CHAIGELEY SCHOOL**

Thelwall, Warrington

Non-Maintained School

Unique reference number: 111498

Headteacher: Mr. D. Crawshaw

Reporting inspector: Mr. Alastair Younger  
23587

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 249346

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Special  
School category: Non-Maintained  
Age range of pupils: 7 – 16 years  
Gender of pupils: Boys

School address: Lymm Road  
Thelwall  
Warrington

Postcode: WA4 2TE  
Telephone number: 01925 752357  
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs J Luckey

Date of previous inspection: May 2000

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23587	A. Younger	Registered inspector		What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19693	S. Hall	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1224	G. Todd	Team inspector	Art Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities for learning?
20466	A. Tattersall	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology	Pupils' welfare, health and safety
14691	J. Hall		Science French Religious education Citizenship	
10688	D. Walker	Team inspector	Geography Music	
19171	D. R. Lee	Team inspector	English history	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a non-maintained school owned by the Chaigeley Educational Foundation. There are 57 boys on roll. Seventeen board throughout the week, the rest are day pupils. Their ages range from eight to 16. There are currently six pupils under the age of 11. Each pupil has a statement of special educational need reflecting a high degree of emotional and behavioural difficulty. There is a wide range of attainment on entry but it is often low. Most pupils are from the north west of England but a few are from much further afield. Sixteen different local education authorities currently have pupils attending. Very few boys are of ethnic minority background and all speak English as their main language. Pupils in Year 7 are included in the primary department. This reflects their educational and emotional need.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Chaigeley is a satisfactory school. Pupils in the primary department make particularly good progress. Pupils are helped to learn and improve their attitudes and behaviour. They achieve what is expected of them, often more than is predicted on their entry. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It leads to pupils learning at a suitable level and enables many older pupils to gain success in exams before they leave. The good headteacher is well supported by the governing body. The school gives satisfactory value for money

#### **What the school does well**

- The primary department shines; teaching, learning and achievement are very good.
- It has a good headteacher, well supported by a good governing body.
- Pupils in Years 10 and 11 are prepared well for starting work or going to college.
- The school enjoys productive relationships with the local community.
- There is good provision for pupils' personal development.

#### **What could be improved**

- Not enough time is dedicated to English in Years 8 and 9 and pupils' achievement slows.
- Pupils do not make enough progress in information and communication technology and history
- The behaviour of pupils in Years 8 and 9 and teachers' skills to manage it.
- Accommodation, particularly for physical education and design and technology, where it has a limiting factor in learning.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the action plan prepared by the appropriate authority.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has improved sufficiently since its last Section 10 inspection in May 2000. It has taken good heed of subsequent monitoring visits. The governing body is much improved and pupils' attitudes and behaviour are also better. Mathematics is now a stronger area of the curriculum. However, there has been a deterioration in information and communication technology and improvement in design and technology has not been quick enough. Job descriptions are still not good enough and lead to a few staff not fully understanding the full extent of the school's expectations.

## STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets.

Progress in:	The primary department	In years 8 and 9	In years 10 and 11	Key
speaking and listening	B	B	B	very good A
reading	A	C	B	good B
writing	A	C	B	satisfactory C
mathematics	A	B	B	unsatisfactory D
personal, social and health education (PHSE)	B	B	B	poor E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	A	C	C	

\*IEPs are individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs

Overall achievement is satisfactory but there is a marked difference in the achievement of pupils of different ages. The six pupils in the primary department achieve very well because teaching and organisation is strong. A much larger number of pupils achieve less well in Years 8 and 9, where a large number of new pupils with ingrained negative attitudes and behaviour are admitted. Achievement picks up again in Years 10 and 11 when pupils who have been attending longer realise that they have a very good chance of leaving school with qualifications and a realistic chance of finding work. Overall, pupils achieve well in art, food technology and music. In religious education they achieve very well in the primary department and well elsewhere. Achievement in science, geography, physical education, PHSE and French is satisfactory overall. History, information and communication technology and the resistant materials element of design and technology are weaker areas, where pupils are not achieving enough. The persistence of teachers in promoting literacy whenever possible has had a good impact on pupils' achievements in English, and has been its saving grace in Years 8 and 9. Numeracy is less well promoted across other subjects.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils appreciate the help staff are giving them and are grateful to be attending. They are fully aware of why they need to attend and want to make the best of their time at Chaigeley.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. The behaviour of pupils in the primary department is very good but that of pupils in Years 8 and 9 is often bad enough to limit their learning. Several recently admitted pupils behave unacceptably in lessons. Year 10 and 11 pupils, having benefited from more time in the school, have improved their behaviour and present a good image of the school to the community. In the residences, pupils behave very well.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils overcome their difficulties in forming relationships and come to realise that adults are not always enemies. With time, pupils learn the benefits of working co-operatively with adults and one-another. Work in the residences greatly helps boarders' personal development.
Attendance	Satisfactory. It does not meet national expectations for all schools but it is very much in line with other schools of its type. Many pupils improve their attendance in comparison with their previous history.



## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Primary department	Years 8 and 9	Years 10 and 11
Quality of teaching	Very good	Satisfactory	Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Teaching is satisfactory overall. The majority is good or very good but there are still a few instances of unsatisfactory teaching. There are too many lessons in Years 8 and 9 where pupils do not learn enough. Most of the best teaching is seen in the primary department. As a result, pupils are learning particularly well, especially in English, mathematics and science. Weaker teaching in Years 8 and 9 is often the result of teachers failing to manage the extreme behaviour of a few pupils. In lessons that stimulate and excite these pupils they learn well, proof that they are far from un-teachable. In Years 10 and 11, teachers and pupils have formed good relationships and a good degree of mutual trust. Many pupils show a great willingness to learn.

Most teachers plan lessons carefully but occasionally teachers are unclear as to what they expect pupils to learn. Teachers are not using computers enough to help pupils to learn. A strength of teaching is the length teachers go to create links with other subjects, particularly English.

Teaching is good in mathematics, art, food technology, music, religious education and the food element of design and technology. It is satisfactory in English, science, physical education, French, citizenship geography and PHSE but in history, information and communication technology and the resistant materials element of design and technology it is unsatisfactory because it is not leading to sustained learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall; good in the primary department. Not enough time is dedicated to the teaching of English, particularly in Years 8 and 9. The National Curriculum is fully addressed in most subjects but pupils get insufficient opportunities to work with wood, metal and plastics in design and technology. Older pupils greatly benefit from opportunities to prepare for life after school. Pupils in residence benefit from many opportunities which extend their interests and learning. The school has fostered good relationships with the local community. Careers education is good and pupils are well prepared for leaving school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Opportunities for spiritual development are satisfactory and those for moral, social and cultural development are good. In school, PSHE lessons contribute well. In the residence, pupils are given sensitive support by staff. They gain a good sense of responsibility and learn that the more acceptable their behaviour, and the better their social skills, the more opportunities they have to enjoy themselves.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Good procedures ensure pupils' welfare, health and safety. First aid and medical care are very good. There are satisfactory arrangements for checking pupils' achievements and for monitoring and

	improving their behaviour and attendance.
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There are satisfactory links with parents. They receive useful information and respond to it in their attendance at reviews of their children's progress. Parents are very supportive through their attendance at school functions and ensuring that their children complete homework.

#### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher is admired by staff, governors and representatives from referring authorities. He has brought about many improvements since he arrived two years ago. The primary department is very well managed. Management of Years 8 and 9 is weaker. Subject co-ordination is very variable; it is best when a single teacher bears responsibility across all age groups and weakest when responsibility is shared by several teachers.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. After criticism in previous inspections there is now a single governing body with power and authority to make decisions. Governors have taken to this task with relish and have involved themselves much more than previously. Many have assumed specific roles, for instance in the promotion of numeracy and literacy.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Senior staff frequently observe teaching. There is an increasing awareness of the need to monitor performance more closely and this is well conveyed through the school improvement plan.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Money is carefully spent, best value sought and a close rein is kept on spending. There is a very large surplus in the budget. It is earmarked for improvements to the accommodation, recommended in the inspection of two years ago. These improvements are currently being considered by planners and the government. There are still areas, such as history and design and technology, where better resourcing would improve learning opportunities.

There is suitable staffing. Most teachers combine subject expertise with experience of working with pupils with special needs. Care staff show a high degree of expertise. Importantly, everyone employed by the school is encouraged to recognise the contribution they can make to improving pupils' lives. This extends to catering, domestic, administrative and maintenance staff and is a strong feature of the school. Accommodation, especially for physical education and design and technology is not good enough.

#### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Very few parents took the opportunity to express their views but those that did were very positive in their support of the school. The inspection team can reassure them that their views are well placed.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

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

1. Achievement has improved since the previous inspection. This is particularly so for pupils in the primary department and in Years 10 and 11. It is a feature of the school to have a high turnover of pupils and many of these are admitted in Years 8 and 9. The benefits of attending Chaigeley have yet to be fully developed in these pupils and many are still reluctant learners, leading to them achieving less than pupils who have been attending for longer. Younger pupils are more settled in classrooms and as a result there are fewer interruptions to lessons; all pupils are achieving very well. This is very noticeable in the way pupils improve their reading, often from a very low initial level. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 show growing maturity. They have seen older pupils in previous years leaving school with qualifications, including GCSE, in a good range of subjects. They know that this has helped them to find work and this helps to motivate them. As a result, they work hard in class and achieve well in most subjects.
2. Bad behaviour has often prevented pupils from learning in previous schools. As a result, their attainment on entry is often much lower than would be expected for pupils who, by and large, have few other associated learning difficulties. Many of the pupils admitted in Years 8 and 9 have had problems in attending previous schools and this has further limited their achievement. A small number of pupils fail to improve much on their attendance but most pupils commit themselves sufficiently to enable them to make up for lost time and take advantage of the learning opportunities provided at Chaigeley.
3. The school sets and meets realistic targets. Individual targets for pupils often relate more to their personal development than their academic achievement but in most cases these targets are being sufficiently met; in the primary department with a great deal of success.
4. Pupils' reading and writing rapidly improves in the primary department where teaching is particularly good and close attention is paid to implementing the national strategy for improving literacy. Many pupils also receive regular additional support on a one-to-one basis. This helps those few with specific difficulties to address them. Achievement in reading and writing slows in Years 8 and 9. Teaching is less effective and only about half as much time is made available as in other such schools. This is significantly reducing opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills and also results in them having insufficient opportunities to practise reading or, for instance, visit the library on a frequent basis. Achievement picks up again in Years 10 and 11 when pupils become better motivated by the realisation that the ability to read and write is going to help them get a better job and achieve success in examinations. Again, however, not enough time is being devoted to the subject. Pupils of all ages achieve well in speaking and listening. This is particularly important because it is likely to be the most used of their English skills when they leave school.

5. Achievement is more even in mathematics. Teaching and planning have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils often enter the school with few mathematical skills but many leave with Entry Level and GCSE qualifications. Insufficient attention to promoting numeracy skills in other subjects slightly lowers achievement.
6. Pupils achieve more in science than at the time of the previous inspection. Better teaching and access to a laboratory have greatly helped raise standards. Pupils in the primary department achieve best. This is because teaching is better and individual needs are particularly well addressed.

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

7. There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils show a high regard for staff and appreciate their support and encouragement. They recognise that their progress in previous schools has been unsuccessful and are grateful for the fresh opportunity that Chaigeley has given them. Pupils appreciate that there is always an adult available to listen to them and to help them with their problems. This attitude is reflected in a 'satisfaction survey' held to establish pupil preferences. Most pupils say they would recommend the school to their friends as a 'good place'.
8. Pupils in the primary department have a positive and enthusiastic approach to their work. The cup for 'worker of the week' is highly valued and takes pride of place on the recipient's desk. Pupils in Years 8 and 9, despite their difficulties in terms of behaviour are together in expressing their liking of the school. In Years 10 and 11, pupils respond well to the privilege and status that comes from having seniority. All pupils greatly appreciate the security of the residential provision and the opportunity it gives them to participate in a range of activities they would probably not experience at home.
9. In the primary department behaviour is very good. In class they are responsive, respectful and motivated to succeed. In years 8 and 9 pupils often display contrasting behaviour. It is frequently the limiting factor in their learning. They are very intolerant of weaker teaching. These pupils frequently use inappropriate language and refuse to comply with teachers' instructions. Smoking is a problem and too many pupils flout sensible school rules aimed at controlling it. The behaviour of older pupils is better. It is sensible and responsible. This suggests that difficult pupils in earlier age groups eventually settle as they become established in the routines and expectations of the school. A particularly impressive piece of reflective behaviour was noted in a Year 10 class. Pupils listened closely to Elgar's 'Nimrod' and observed their own two-minute silence during an English lesson considering the importance of Remembrance Day. Most pupils behave well in the residences and participate wholeheartedly in activities. This is where the better side of their nature is often seen. There have been 36 exclusions over the past year, involving 19 different pupils. Three of these were permanent exclusions. This figure is high.
10. Good relationships between staff and pupils are evident and there are many examples of pupils showing consideration and respect for others. Younger pupils appreciate help and guidance from staff and learn how to interact appropriately. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 display more independence but tend to be more aware of their rights than their responsibilities and there are too many incidences of intimidation with this group. Nevertheless, in lessons where there is well-planned work and consistent behaviour management these same pupils work collaboratively and show self-control and respect. In Years 10 and 11, pupils take responsibility for their learning in class and in

social situations. As a result, staff have little hesitation in taking them on visits, being confident that their responses will be mature and sensible. These pupils are capable of lively discussion, listening carefully, and showing respect for the views of others.

11. The attendance rate of almost 80 per cent over the past year is similar to that found in other schools of this type. A calculation of the unauthorised absence on one day during the inspection indicated a rate of about 7 per cent; again in line with that found in similar schools. Registers show that many pupils who came to school with poor and sporadic attendance records have greatly improved their attendance. The majority of pupils arrive at school on time; any lateness is usually due transport problems.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

12. Teaching is very variable. It is nearly always very good in the primary department and usually good in Years 10 and 11, where there has been a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is weaker in Years 8 and 9 where lessons are less interesting and pupils learn less. This is often because teachers are often preoccupied with managing pupils' behaviour. Failure to do so is the main reason why teaching in any lesson is unsatisfactory.
13. In the primary department teachers plan particularly well, not just for individual pupils, but also with each other, to ensure that whatever they teach is also fitting in well with what is being taught elsewhere. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning, particularly in numeracy and literacy. Classroom walls are covered with good work and pupils know that if they try hard enough their work will be displayed. Lessons are interesting because there is invariably a good range of activities very well suited to individual needs. A lot of individual support is directed towards pupils with specific difficulties, often through the skilled work of classroom assistants. Work is marked promptly and well, giving pupils instant feedback about how well they are learning. Bad behaviour rarely surfaces because pupils are interested in their work and working hard.
14. Nearly all teachers demonstrate their good subject knowledge but a minority demonstrate insufficient skills to manage the most difficult and demanding behaviour of pupils in Years 8 and 9. The fact that teaching of this group of pupils is occasionally good demonstrates that they are not un-teachable, only unpredictable and unforgiving of any but the best teaching. It is not only behaviour that limits learning for these pupils. The appearance of a few classrooms and lesson planning that lacks clear learning objectives is evidence that expectations are lower than for younger pupils. Several lessons lack the excitement found lower down the school as teachers restrict the variety of methods they use, ostensibly to limit movement and prevent pupils from misbehaving. Classroom assistants find themselves spending more time managing behaviour than helping individual pupils to learn.
15. By Year 10, teachers and pupils have often formed a much better understanding of each other. By this age, many pupils have been in the school for over a year and throughout this and the next year they develop much better relationships with teachers recognising that teachers want the best for them. Increasingly, the high expectations of teachers are seen by pupils as a positive point and pupils put more and more effort into their work as they realise they are achieving success.
16. Lesson planning is satisfactory overall in that it gives teachers a clear lead as to how they intend to teach. A weakness is that often it does not clearly state what each pupil

is expected to have learned by the end of each lesson. As a result, teachers are more aware of what they have taught than what pupils have learned. Where this is most pronounced it is contributing to unsatisfactory learning over longer periods of time, for example, in history.

17. Teachers do not sufficiently encourage the use of computers in classrooms. There are examples of work being word processed to improve its appearance for display but beyond this, other than in art, there is little evidence of pupils using computers for research or individual study. A few teachers say they do not use them because it causes jealousy in those pupils not using them. This points to the fact that pupils would like more opportunities but are not reassured that they will each receive regular and fair access. At present, this is a lost opportunity to promote learning through a medium that fascinates pupils.
18. Teachers often help pupils to learn valuable skills that will help them in other lessons. This is most noticeable in the opportunities pupils have to write for different purposes, especially in the primary department. This makes a significant contribution to their progress in English and helps to compensate for the little time dedicated to its teaching. Good examples are seen in science, where pupils write factually and descriptively about their experiments. Not enough teachers are exploring opportunities for promoting numeracy in their lessons.

#### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

19. There has been satisfactory improvement in the curriculum since the last inspection. There are now policies and schemes of work in all subjects, including religious education. The school makes satisfactory provision to teach sex education, drugs education, PSHE and citizenship. Statutory requirements in relation to the curriculum are fully met.
20. The curriculum has been planned to ensure that most pupils' educational needs are satisfactorily met. However, insufficient thought has been given to using information and communication technology in different subjects of the curriculum. There are exceptions to this; for example, art where it is used effectively for research and to record pupils' achievements. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are satisfactory overall, and good for pupils in the primary department. The time spent teaching English is too low for pupils in Years 8 and 9. Other examples of an imbalance in curriculum time are: physical education for pupils in the primary department, where it is too high, and in geography for pupils in Year 7 where it is too low. In several classes, the time allocated for teaching PSHE is not used effectively enough.
21. Extra-curricular activities are good. There are regular football matches with other schools and, as part of the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, pupils have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities such as rock climbing, canoeing and sailing. Residential provision makes a good contribution to broadening the experiences of pupils. Many classroom assistants also work in the residence and as a result, know the pupils well and are familiar with their learning and behavioural targets. In the residence they make a good contribution to pupils' learning, supporting pupils' homework and hearing pupils read after school. The Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme is well organised by a member of the care staff.

22. Since the last inspection, accreditation has improved significantly. Pupils are entered for a good range of external courses in English, mathematics, science, art, food technology and physical education. There is a good link with a local college, where pupils in Years 10 and 11 participate in courses such as brickwork, plumbing and motor vehicles. The school works closely with Connexions - a careers service - who provide weekly personal support and guidance for pupils in Years 9 to 11. The work of the Connexions adviser is linked very effectively to PSHE and is effective in preparing pupils for life after school and the world of work. Since the last inspection, work experience has been extended and all pupils now have good opportunities to work outside school for part of each week.
23. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection. Pupils' spiritual development is promoted through twice-weekly celebration assemblies, religious education lessons and planned and spontaneous religious elements within lessons. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon their experiences in lessons. In a music lesson, for example, pupils were introduced to a variety of multi-cultural instruments and were encouraged to 'be still' while listening to 'Bright Eyes' played on the Pan Pipes.
24. The school's positive reward system for good behaviour, hard work and response to individual targets helps to promote positive moral values. Staff encourage pupils to be honest and respect the truth. An awareness of moral development is occasionally displayed during daily routines. For instance, a pupil referred to the death of Bob Marley and how it illustrated the bad effects of drug and alcohol abuse and this led to lively, constructive discussion.
25. Success is praised and acknowledged twice weekly in celebration assemblies. Personal, social and health education lessons make a valuable contribution to social development. End-of-day sessions enable pupils to discuss the successes and disappointments of the day and to receive advice that may help them avoid problems in the future. Many opportunities are created to encourage pupils to work co-operatively, such as in physical education and music. Mealtimes are very pleasant. Pupils sit with staff and receive very good guidance on how to behave and this promotes their social development. These occasions provide good opportunities for pupils to receive guidance.
26. Pupils have many opportunities to learn about different cultures. English, history and geography lessons often give pupils a good awareness of the history and culture of Britain, whilst French, art and religious education help pupils to understand the cultures of other countries. Religious education is planned to cover many of the festivals throughout the year, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year as well as Christian festivals. Pupils frequently visit theatres, museums and galleries. They listen to music and handle artifacts from different cultures and traditions. The catering staff are particularly enthusiastic and prepare dishes which enable the pupils to taste food from around the world.
27. Good links with the community have a positive impact on the pupils' learning and personal development. Strong links with local employers enable pupils to benefit from work experience and work related learning. Visitors such as the mayor and the police deepen pupils' knowledge of aspects of citizenship. A war veteran and a survivor from a concentration camp have enriched pupils' understanding of the realities of war. The physical education programme is enhanced by the use of local facilities for water sports, wall climbing and swimming.

28. Many local organisations use the grounds for recreation, outdoor activities and fundraising events. There is a good working relationship with the parish council and the local residents. This has ensured their support in proposals for improved accommodation. Pupils work on various community projects including maintaining the local park and entertaining senior citizens.
29. Pupils benefit from attending a local college and pursue a wide variety of work related courses to broaden their interests. Links with other schools have resulted in many sporting fixtures for pupils and joint training opportunities for staff.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

30. Child protection procedures are carried out effectively. Staff have a good understanding of procedures and undertake regular training. The school has tried, but failed, to guarantee safe access to the internet and as a result pupils are not allowed to use e-mail or the world wide web until further security precautions are taken. There are appropriate arrangements for pupils in public care. There is comprehensive and regular risk assessment. Regular fire drills in the school and the residence ensure that pupils are clear about how to evacuate the buildings in an emergency. A few minor health and safety concerns were brought to the attention of the school during the inspection. The medical co-ordinator is available before and during the school day. Very good records of all medication, accidents and illnesses are kept. Many staff are qualified in first aid. Arrangements for the storage of medication are secure. All pupils share equal opportunities to learn and make progress. Satisfactory procedures are in place to deal with any racism that occurs. The progress of individual pupils is carefully monitored through annual reviews and the monitoring of pupils' individual education plans.
31. As at the time of the last inspection, arrangements for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. All pupils are accounted for at the start of the day, and any unexplained absences are quickly followed up. Tutors take class registers at the start of lessons, but not all staff are following school procedures by calling a register at the end of the day. There are inconsistencies in the use of reasons for absences; many teachers are not aware that only they can authorise absence. The planned programme of college courses, work placements and the promise of passing examinations encourages older pupils to keep attending.
32. Procedures to keep a check on pupils' behaviour are satisfactory overall but have not fully eliminated bullying. Handover sessions between residence and school effectively convey any problems and celebrate success. During the inspection residential staff were alerted to the bad behaviour of one pupil and this enabled them to prepare well for the evening activities. Pupils can visit a *duty room* at any time if they feel that they want to cool down and avoid trouble. They may also be sent to the room if they are disruptive in class. Here they receive good support from the duty team and this often allows them to return to class.
33. Teachers complete an evaluation sheet of pupils' behaviour and effort at the end of each lesson. This provides a useful record for most lessons but there is inconsistency in the way that pupils receive scores from different teachers and this devalues the system. The system works best when there is good and accurate evaluation of behaviour between the pupil and staff which recognises individual targets. Pupils have a high regard for staff and feel confident to approach them with concerns. The reward system helps to cement the corporate approach to promoting pupils' behaviour. The involvement of residential staff in classrooms ensures a continuity of approach to



managing pupils' behaviour. Pupils are aware that there may be bullying but are confident that staff will deal with incidents.

34. Building upon an initial assessment, pupils' progress in English and mathematics is checked through the results of regular tests. These result in targets being set which are well understood by pupils. This helps to motivate them to overcome difficulties. Teachers are beginning to make use of commercial testing systems to indicate National Curriculum Levels that pupils should be able to achieve in the future. This is not yet sufficiently refined to produce reliable predictions. These arrangements are soon to be extended to science and PSHE.
35. Procedures for assessing progress in other subjects are very variable. In art and design and technology they are good. Here, there is a system for recording the attainment of pupils against National Curriculum expectations. Overall, however, there is insufficient information to support future curriculum planning. Targets in individual education plans are generally good, being clear, measurable and understood by the pupils.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS (including carers)?**

36. Parents who took the opportunity to express opinions shared positive views about the school. They were pleased about nearly all the aspects of school life. As at the time of the last inspection, the school's links with parents are satisfactory. The school keeps in regular contact with parents; telephoning them about the pupils' problems and successes. Care workers and the medical co-ordinator have established valuable relationships with parents who contact them to talk through concerns. Link books for the younger pupils provide a useful means of communication between home and school. Parents are able to telephone their children in the residence, knowing they receive the calls in surroundings with an appropriate degree of privacy.
37. Parents of new pupils are given useful information about the school. The prospectus, and governors' annual report to parents, contain most of the information required by law but do not sufficiently celebrate the school's successes. Opportunities for the school to celebrate academic and personal achievements with parents are being missed. Before each pupil's annual review, the school gives parents adequate information about their children's personal development and parents are given plenty of opportunity to respond before and during the review meeting. However, the quality of information about how well the pupils are learning in each subject is unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Teachers are not giving parents enough information about what their children have learned. Statements such as '*often enthusiastic*' do not inform parents about how what their pupils are achieving and '*continue to work hard*' does not clearly explain how they can improve their work.
38. The impact of the parents' involvement in the work of the school is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection. Many families live a long way from the school; others have difficulties with transport. Nevertheless, many parents are very supportive and enjoy coming to concerts, presentations and productions. About a half of parents attend annual reviews and the staff report that most parents support their pupils when they have been set homework.

#### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

39. There has been an overall improvement in the leadership and management of the school. There is a good headmaster. He leads by example, setting the highest possible standard for other teachers to try to emulate. Because he regularly proves his ability in the classroom, other staff recognise that when he gives advice, it is well worth listening to. Pupils like and respect him and this means that in their eyes he carries authority. Representatives of local authorities, who are responsible for referring pupils, hold the head in high esteem and recognise that he is steadily raising standards throughout the school. When he says something will happen it nearly always does. He has the full support of the senior management team, each of whom have specific responsibilities that are conscientiously carried out. For example, the primary co-ordinator. She has ensured that in this part of the school in particular, teaching and learning are very good. Management of Years 8 and 9 is weaker. The co-ordinator is less experienced and there has been less focus on improving teaching and learning. The co-ordination of different subjects is very variable. In mathematics, for instance, a single person carries a good overview of the school's approach to promoting the subject. In English, however, the three co-ordinators do not sufficiently succeed in maintaining similar standards throughout the school.
40. There are many good governors. They bring a good range of experience and expertise that is being well harnessed to support the school. In previous inspections criticism has been levelled at the governance of the school because trustees of the Chaigeley Foundation were not working sufficiently closely with the Governing Body, especially relating to finance. This situation has been greatly improved through the formation of a single governing body with full responsibility for managing the total budget. Individual governors have also taken on responsibility for overseeing areas of the curriculum such as numeracy and literacy. The biggest improvement in the Governing Body is that it is now much more involved with the school. It has a much better understanding of how it operates, where its strengths are and where problems lie.
41. Senior staff frequently observe teaching. These observations are successfully used to improve practice. Over the past couple of years this monitoring has gradually improved as the system becomes more refined. To start with it tended to give teachers an overview rather than focussing on specific issues relating to the school improvement plan. Observations are now much better focussed and therefore more helpful. As a result of this improved monitoring the management have a very good understanding of the relative strengths and weaknesses of each teacher and none of the inspection findings surprised them. A weakness of the system is that with the headmaster sitting at the back of the class he gets a distorted image of teachers' management of behaviour because pupils behave better in his presence. This could be remedied by teachers pairing up to observe each other more frequently. A further weakness in monitoring is that it has not sufficiently highlighted and remedied imbalances in the curriculum, especially in the amount of time dedicated to English.
42. Finance is carefully managed. There is a particularly strong finance team incorporating the headmaster, governors and administration staff. They complement each other well, each knowing exactly where their responsibilities lie. In the past, too tight a reign was kept on spending by trustees of the charitable foundation and this has led to a large surplus in the budget. Almost 30% of this is to fulfil the requirements of the charitable commissioner; the bulk of the remainder has now been earmarked for much needed improvements in the accommodation.
43. The school is suitably staffed. Most teachers are subject specialists and pupils receive good additional support from care workers and classroom assistants. The school very effectively pursues the involvement of all other staff be they administrative,

catering, cleaning or caretaking in pupils learning, personal development and care. There is a higher than desirable turnover in staff but this is partly mitigated by the good arrangements to induct new recruits. Job descriptions are not sufficiently detailed to ensure that subject co-ordinators are clear of their roles and responsibilities.

44. There is an effective commitment to staff development. A noteworthy feature is the staff residential team-building course. This is open to all staff and has shown positive benefits in a well-developing corporate approach to supporting pupils. This is evident for instance, in the high level of commitment of the kitchen staff to contribute to pupils' well being by providing excellent meals and a warm atmosphere in the dining room. Performance management is contributing to good plans for training in important areas. Behaviour management and use of ICT in lessons have been rightly identified as areas of weakness and staff recognise this and want to improve. Good opportunities are given to staff who want to study.
45. Accommodation is unsatisfactory. There is a lack of indoor facilities for physical education or suitable workshop facilities for design and technology. In physical education this limits the range of activities pupils can participate in, particularly gymnastics, and it also leads to precious time being spent travelling to other facilities. In design and technology, the lack of a workshop is leading to unsatisfactory achievement in the study of resistant materials. There are well-advanced plans to remedy this situation. Development is planned to take place over several years but improvement is needed now. Residential accommodation requires much maintenance but there is a rolling programme of refurbishment and it is homely and valued by pupils. Resources for learning are unsatisfactory. They are good for art but unsatisfactory for physical education and information communication technology.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

46. To improve further, senior staff and governors should now ensure that:

- Provision for English is improved by dedicating more time to teaching it, particularly in Years 8 and 9, and improving co-ordination across the school to ensure more even achievement. (paragraphs 4,18,20,39,41,50,53)
- Provision for ICT and history is improved, so that pupils can make more progress. (paragraphs 16,17,44,45,75,77,79,80,81,82)
- The behaviour of pupils in Years 8 and 9 is improved, especially by ensuring that teachers develop the skills to manage it. (paragraphs 1,9,10,12,14,33,52)
- Accommodation is improved, particularly for physical education and design and technology, where it is the limiting factor in learning. (paragraphs 45,70,90)

Minor weaknesses the school may wish to include in its action plan:

- reports to parents contain insufficient detail about which their children are achieving in class. (paragraph 37)
- there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to work with resistant materials in design and technology. (paragraphs 70,72)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	11	15	17	2	0	0
Percentage	5	23	32	35	5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	57
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

Authorised absence

%
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Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	18
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School data	2
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

<b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>	<b>No of pupils on roll</b>	<b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b>	<b>Number of permanent exclusions</b>
White – British	55	36	3
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

### ***Financial information***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y11**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	4
Average class size	5.5

#### **Education support staff: Y4 – Y11**

Total number of education support staff	12*
Total aggregate hours worked per week	429

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

\* many care staff also work in classrooms

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	1438113
Total expenditure	1376348
Expenditure per pupil	25025
Balance brought forward from previous year	349351
Balance carried forward to next year	411116*

\* includes £111,000 reserve to fulfil the requirements of the charity commission

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
<hr/>	
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

#### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	55
Number of questionnaires returned	8

#### **Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

Parents feel the school is doing a good job. They are happy with the progress their children are making and the contact they have with the school. The inspection team feels these views are justified

## PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

### ENGLISH

47. There has been satisfactory improvement over the past two years. Pupils in the primary department and in Years 10 and 11 are achieving best. In Years 8 and 9 pupils make less progress because their attitudes and behaviour, the quality of the curriculum and the standard of teaching are not as good as in other class groups.
48. All pupils make good progress in developing speaking and listening skills. They become increasingly self-assured when talking to adults and begin to appreciate the benefits of turn taking. Even in lessons where behaviour slips, pupils recognise the necessity of listening to others and show respect for the contributions made by their peers. All pupils listen intently to stories, ask appropriate questions about what they hear and confidently answer those posed by their teachers. Many pupils spoke openly with the inspectors during the inspection and reflected sensitively on their own experiences. The oldest pupils speak with great confidence and show an ability to explore and communicate ideas. For example, the pupils working towards their *Entry Level Award* in English demonstrate a good understanding of how words can be used and interchanged in order to express different emotions. Having listened to Wilfred Owen's *Dulce Et Decorum Est*, they produced their own free verse to a very high standard. Pupils do not achieve enough in drama, as at the time of the previous inspection, because it is not being sufficiently planned for.
49. In the primary department, pupils are often withdrawn for individual reading sessions. This is particularly effective in raising standards for those with particular difficulties. Additional literacy sessions during lunch break help these same pupils to further improve their reading. Many pupils are admitted with only the most rudimentary reading skills. Younger pupils learn particularly quickly and by the end of Year 7, most follow a text and read with fluency and expression to the best of their ability. Urgency and excitement for literacy is promoted by surrounding the younger pupils with exciting images and posting 'key words' where they are immediately available,
50. Reading progress is less marked in Years 8 and 9 because there is insufficient time to promote specific individual skills. A large proportion of the pupils in the school join within this age group and many are poor readers when they arrive. Insufficient attention is paid to punctuation when pupils read aloud and this tends to make their reading less interesting to others and harder to understand. Reading, spelling and chronological ages are thoroughly assessed but often the results are not sufficiently followed up with specific programmes to address weaknesses. Not enough excitement is created for this age group; classroom displays are unstimulating and there is not enough suitable reading material to motivate pupils. In Years 10 and 11 most pupils are reading from works well suited to their interest and ability. In a topic on *Voices from the Great War*, pupils read familiar poems by Wilfred Owen and also less recognised writers, such as Helen Hamilton and Liz Lochhead. The library received commendation in the previous report. It remains a valuable resource, but is currently under-used, partly because of shortage of time in Years 8 and 9.
51. Writing improves rapidly in the primary department, levels off over the next two years, and picks up again in Years 10 and 11. Many of the youngest pupils are at the earliest stages of writing. They quickly learn how to form letters and write with increasing care and legibility. By the end of Year 7 they have produce their own newssheets, with headlines and by-lines. They understand that newspaper articles are often written to



project different views. When reading *Fantastic Mr Fox* by Roald Dahl, pupils consider whether they should report the story of the loss of the tail from the fox's or the farmer's point of view. In Years 8 and 9, pupils continue to develop their ability to write for different purposes. When studying a horror story they quickly identify the style it is written in, predict the likely outcome and assess whether it is plausible. However opportunities for more extended creative writing are limited and the use of computers for redrafting and improving work within this age group is under-developed. In years 10 and 11, progress in writing is often good. All pupils have developed a cursive style of handwriting.

52. In the primary department and in Years 10 and 11 pupils are taught very well. Teaching of other pupils is satisfactory. For the younger pupils, teaching is characterised by high expectations and well-prepared, clearly structured lessons. Careful choice of activities keeps pupils interested and tasks are varied to meet individual needs. These are always broken down into achievable, small steps and the pupils are clear how current work fits into a carefully planned sequence of work. Pupils in Years 8 and 9 are more challenging in their behaviour and many have negative attitudes towards learning. This is not always successfully overcome and several pupils show little interest in lessons. Occasionally the situation is compounded by tasks that are too difficult or not planned in enough depth to develop individual skills and marking is not providing pupils with encouragement or guidance. The teaching of pupils in Years 10 and 11 is very good. The lively teaching style and high expectations, combined with very carefully planned work, have produced some very good results. Many teachers of other subjects reinforce pupils' learning of English. They help to expand pupils' vocabulary and pay good attention to literacy targets in individual education plans. These are all routinely addressed as part of their normal teaching programmes.
53. The leadership and management of this subject is satisfactory overall but the three main age groupings work without sufficient overall coordination. Teachers of the youngest pupils work closely and have drawn up extensive planning and review documents. This approach is lively and enthusiastic. Teachers of pupils in Years 8 and 9 work independently and without sufficient coordination. For pupils in Years 10 and 11, there is detailed planning and a precise and realistic assessment of pupils' potential and achievement. For this group of pupils, assessment is used rigorously to inform teaching objectives and this is greatly helping pupils to achieve success.

## **MATHEMATICS**

54. Pupils' achievements in mathematics are good. In the primary department they are very good. Effective steps have been taken to ensure improvement since the last inspection. Teaching has improved as has subject co-ordination, with better planning to ensure that there is continuity of what pupils learn as they move through the school.
55. Pupils who start school in the primary department often have little mathematical knowledge and lack confidence in their ability. However, skilful teaching ensures that they learn very well and gain in confidence and enjoyment of numeracy. A strong factor in their learning is effective guidance in helping them to behave well and concentrate on their work. This has led to pupils developing very good attitudes to work.
56. The exemplary application of the National Numeracy Strategy in the primary department has greatly helped pupils to understand their tasks and explain how they solve mathematical problems. In a lesson for pupils in Years 4 and 5, for instance,

higher attaining pupils investigated techniques to add numbers up to a hundred and learnt how to tackle similar problems in the future. Lower attaining pupils received effective support from learning support assistants to add numbers up to twenty.

57. Teachers carefully plan for each pupil to receive the required support. In a Year 7 lesson, this ensured that pupils made very good progress towards individual targets to improve numeracy skills through a growing understanding of how to undertake surveys and obtain information from graphs. Because teachers across the school work closely with the subject co-ordinator, pupils are invariably well prepared for transfer to the secondary department.
58. Pupils in Year 8 and 9 make satisfactory progress. They are interested in learning because tasks are achievable. There is satisfactory assessment of pupils' attainment, but a weakness in assessment to determine pupils' previous mathematical experiences. For instance, in a lesson for pupils in Year 8, it was evident that pupils were being asked to repeat work, such as estimation. Effective action has been taken to reduce the number of teachers teaching mathematics in Years 8 and 9 and this has improved pupils' achievement because there is now more consistency and greater coordination and monitoring. There are well advanced plans to extend the school's own numeracy strategy to more closely resemble the national one.
59. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 apply themselves well in lessons. They are well motivated by tasks that lead to good success in accreditation in the Certificate of Achievement and GCSE. Pupils are developing good skills to work with increasing independence and this is helping them to make good progress in their investigative coursework. They choose challenging but realistic mathematical subjects to investigate. For instance, a higher attaining pupil is absorbed in investigating the most efficient shape to fence the maximum area of ground. The school has high expectations for pupils to achieve more and is introducing further accreditation through GCSE statistics.
60. Although there is an expectation for teachers to plan to promote pupils' numeracy skills in lessons other than mathematics it is inconsistently done. In a year 11 science lesson, for instance, the opportunity to emphasise mathematics skills in a comparison of the surface area of animals' skins was missed. There are some good examples of planning for pupils to use computers to promote numeracy, particularly for pupils up to Year 7. However, beyond this there is not enough planning to take advantage of computers to support pupils' learning and promote skills.

## **SCIENCE**

61. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in the primary department achieve very well and achievement is satisfactory for older pupils. These pupils now have access to a laboratory, enabling them to participate in more practical activities and complete course work for GCSE entry. Last year three pupils in Year 11 achieved GCSE single science grades at the lower end of the scale.
62. Pupils in the primary department achieve very well because they are very well taught. They develop a very good understanding of electricity and magnetism because planning and teaching are very well matched to their individual learning needs. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning science, and they enjoy the wide range of activities presented. As a result, they are very well behaved. A visit to a local science museum was very effective in engaging pupils' interest in the topic of electricity. Pupils and teachers relate very well to each other and this gives rise to pupils developing the

confidence to use equipment independently, and to ask and answer questions. Higher attaining pupils express their understanding with great fluency. They write very good explanations independently and have lucidly described how the size of a battery in a series circuit determines the brightness of the bulb. Lower attaining pupils, who are not yet writing independently, have investigated magnetism and written about it with well targeted support from their teachers and learning assistants. Pupils learn to predict, then use the results of experiments to decide if their predictions are correct. In this way they discover, for example, that not all metals are magnetic. Speaking, writing and reading skills and personal development are promoted very well in primary science lessons.

63. Teaching in the secondary department is satisfactory overall. Pupils are successfully encouraged to develop their scientific vocabulary and investigative skills. Year 8 pupils are carefully handling chemicals and glassware when they investigate the effectiveness of different indigestion tablets and Year 9 pupils explain respiration, using word equations. These are good examples of teachers making scientific learning relevant to them. In Years 10 and 11, pupils who opt for science follow a GCSE single science syllabus and also achieve success in Entry Level tests leading to certification. By Year 11 they are experimenting to find out, for example, the melting point of substances and plotting their results on a line graph. This has the added benefit of supporting the development of their numeracy skills. Pupils are investigating how new substances are made when acid is added to metals. Both faster and slower learners find writing explanations of their experiments difficult and struggle to evaluate the methods they use. In these two areas, teaching plans do not yet take sufficient account of these weaknesses. When the content of a lesson is theoretical pupils cope well when listening for extended periods of time. The behaviour of a minority of Year 8 and 9 pupils limits the progress they make, even though it is managed effectively by the staff.
64. In Year 11 pupils receive only two lessons a week, compared with three in Year 10. This limits the depth of their science studies and is slowing progress. A further complication is caused by one of the Year 10 classes having all three science lessons on a single day. The weekly gap between lessons makes it difficult for pupils to recall prior learning from week to week and is also slowing progress. Across the whole school, computers are not being used enough for recording or research. This is an opportunity missed. A *Ground Force* club has been set up and pupils have made a good start in developing an area of the school grounds. This has helped them to apply scientific knowledge to practical purpose.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

65. There is a well-planned curriculum in place, which fully meets National Curriculum requirements and leads to accreditation for pupils in Years 10 and 11. All pupils achieve well and by Year 11 many attain a standard similar to that found in mainstream schools. An example being the 'pop art' paintings in the style of Roy Lichtenstein, painted by pupils studying for GCSE.
66. The youngest pupils are learning about batik. They watch attentively as the teacher gives a very good demonstration, using a tainting, to pour wax on fabric and form a fruit shape. This is effective in helping them to develop their skills and work safely and accurately and demonstrates a high level of skill by the teacher. Sketchbooks are being well used to develop design ideas. Older pupils' sketchbooks show how they are working independently and increasing their knowledge about the ideas of M C Escher, a mathematician more famous for his art. Good, well informed teaching, develops this

understanding of his work. Teaching and learning is good overall although it is slightly weaker for pupils in Years 8 and 9 where the behaviour of a few pupils causes time to be lost and is the limiting factor in learning.

67. Assessment is good and it is used effectively to plan individual work and track pupils' progress. Pupils' self-assessment has been developed well since the previous inspection where it was identified as a weakness. The subject is very well managed. A good range of reference books are well used to encourage individual research. Information and communication technology is used well for research purposes and digital images are effectively used to record pupils' achievements. The co-ordinator successfully identifies links with other subjects to give added value to lessons. For example, the symmetrical patterns in the style of William Morris, which link to work in mathematics. Some excellent work is displayed in the in the main entrance to the school. This demonstrates how art is being actively used to promote cultural development. It includes African textiles, weaving, batik, embroidery and flower paintings in the style of Georgia O'Keefe. New skylights and furnishings in the delightful art room have helped to produce a good quality environment in which pupils want to learn. There has been good improvement in the quality of teaching and pupils' work since the last inspection.

## **CITIZENSHIP**

68. There is insufficient evidence at this early stage to make secure judgements about pupils' achievements and the quality of teaching. Nevertheless, citizenship is being successfully taught to pupils up to Year 9. Citizenship for pupils in Years 10 and 11 is still at the planning stage and not yet taught. There are plans for pupils in Years 7 to 9 to learn about crime and the law, and about human rights. A good start has been made in converting planning into practice.

69. In the primary department, citizenship is linked very effectively to PSHE. Year 6 pupils have learned very well that people may have very different views about what is offensive and that teasing other pupils is often offensive and hurtful. A higher attaining boy explained fluently why racism is offensive. Pupils use dictionaries well when they are finding the meaning of the new vocabulary they encounter in lessons. This is supporting the development of their literacy skills and also their emotional vocabulary. Teaching is very well matched to individual learning needs and pupils are achieving very well. Older pupils have learned about people's rights and how they relate to responsibility. They have developed an understanding of the need for rules and regulations in society. Pupils behave well and have a positive attitude to the tasks given to them.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

70. Overall, pupils do not achieve well enough in design and technology. However, good achievement in food technology leads to pupils in Years 10 and 11 successfully following courses that lead to external accreditation. Since the last inspection, improvement has been satisfactory and standards maintained. However, a lack of facilities for wood, metal, plastics and electronics are continuing to restrict the opportunities for pupils to experience working with resistant materials. Improvement in this aspect of the school's work has been unsatisfactory. There are plans for a new facility for resistant materials, but the school has not yet given sufficient thought to equipping this. For example, the different types of machinery needed, including computer aided design and computer aided manufacture.

71. Teaching is good. Routines are well established and pupils are successfully helped to understand the rules of hygiene. They wash their hands and put on aprons when entering the room. Year 7 pupils have made commendable Christmas cakes. In the lesson, they watched intently, as the teacher demonstrated the folding and cutting of greaseproof paper, to line a cake tin. Higher attainers copied this with a good degree of independence and lower attainers were able to replicate it with help from the teacher and special support assistants. Good planning had ensured that the pupils had step-by-step instructions about the different utensils, ingredients and quantities required. In another class, effective planning enabled Year 11 pupils to complete their task sheets before going on to work independently and make toffee apples. Occasionally, time is lost in lessons because pupils chatter too much and do not listen carefully enough, and instructions have to be repeated.
72. The management of food technology is good and the curriculum is well planned with lessons taking account of pupils' individual learning and behavioural targets. Assessment is good and pupils evaluate their work. However, the design aspect of the work is not sufficiently emphasised. There is a little use of information and communication technology, but insufficient thought has been given to the use of digital photography to record pupils' achievement. Good opportunities are available for pupils in Years 10 and 11 to attend courses at St Helen's College such as plumbing, brickwork, carpentry and joinery, and fabrication and welding. This is greatly helping to compensate for the lack of opportunities for pupils to work with resistant materials in school and adding relevance to their learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

73. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. There is good progress in the primary department where pupils in Year 6 show a good understanding of how the weather affects people. They accurately describe the clothes worn in different weather and the games they play. Pupils correctly state the main differences between polar and desert regions. By Year 9 pupils have made satisfactory progress and have developed a greater awareness of other peoples' lives in different parts of the world. They describe the differences between a developed country and an undeveloped one, taking into account indicators such as life expectancy, educational opportunities and employment expectations. This helps them to understand why people choose to migrate from one area to another.
74. Teaching and learning ranges from satisfactory to very good. It is best in the primary department where carefully planned, well-structured lessons and varied methods strongly reinforce learning. Tasks here are highly relevant to pupils and take very good account of individual interests and abilities. In an introduction to a module on the weather pupils were reminded of the ways the different television channels present their forecasts before learning to recognise the various symbols; pupils could relate to this because they had all seen the programmes. Learning is supported by prompts, worksheets, and the well-directed activities of support assistants, which allow all pupils to succeed. In Years 8 and 9 teaching is less effective because teachers tend to talk too much without getting responses from pupils. As a result, pupils' concentration wanes and their behaviour deteriorates and limits learning. In contrast, younger pupils listen carefully, settle quickly to the tasks set and try hard to produce a good standard of work. Although teachers often make good use of worksheets there is an over-reliance on them for older, higher achieving pupils. As a result, these pupils are not given sufficient opportunity to produce extended, independently written work.

## **HISTORY**

75. Achievement in history is not high enough. It is very good for primary pupils but this is not sustained in later years. This reflects the findings of the last inspection report. Weaknesses identified then, particularly the lack of effective co-ordination, assessment and recording of pupil progress, have still not been addressed and this is not good enough.
76. Pupils in the primary department have visited Dunham Massey Hall to support their studies of Victorian childhood. They took on roles as child employees of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Pupils have examined children's toys of the period and, in a good link with design and technology, have made detailed assessments of materials the toys are made of, comparing them with materials commonly used today. Pupils recognise the big divide between poor and rich children in Victorian times, describing how a kaleidoscope was a difficult and expensive toy to make, whereas even the poorest families would be able to carve a spinning top. The fastest learners understand how attitudes towards children have changed and are aware that the Mines Act of 1842, preventing children from working in the mines, was an important step in this process. Year 7 pupils are currently completing a lively topic on Anglo-Saxon life before the Norman Conquest. They demonstrate a good understanding of the conditions under which the inhabitants of Britain at the time lived and the countries they had originated from.
77. The contrast between the achievements of the younger pupils and those in Years 8 and 9 is significant. Poor pupil attitudes and behaviour, combined with a lack of a consistent curriculum, mean that achievement is significantly diminished. There is little evidence of pupils building up a significant body of work and pupils hold the subject in low regard.
78. Younger pupils benefit from the strongest teaching. Close attention is paid to making the subject interesting and work is well adapted to meet individual needs. Teachers ensure that classroom support assistants are engaged with pupils who need additional help. Teachers have very high expectations and use attractive and colourful wall displays to enliven the subject and support learning. Work is carefully marked and assessed and pupils make an honest evaluation of what they have learned at the end of a topic. This involves them well and encourages them to try harder. Other teaching is more variable. The behaviour of pupils in Years 8 and 9 is often provocative and teachers occasionally struggle to cope with it. They attempt to maintain a balance between praise and criticism, but unacceptable behaviour is not always appropriately challenged. However, the relationship between the pupils and their teachers does permit occasional examples of good interaction and short bursts of interest and enthusiasm.
79. The co-ordination of history is unsatisfactory overall. The curriculum for the pupils in the primary department has been carefully considered and provides an interesting and stimulating course of study. In contrast the scheme of work for pupils in Years 8 and 9 is not being adhered to. There is no monitoring of teaching by the subject co-ordinator. Resources used by teachers in the primary department make an important contribution to the delivery of the subject. They are plentiful and varied, making the subject come alive in the minds of the pupils. The resources available to the teachers of Year 8 and 9 pupils are inadequate. There are few books and no artefacts to enhance teaching.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

80. There has been a deterioration in this subject since the last inspection. Teachers are not capitalising on pupils' interest in computers and are missing opportunities to promote learning. Nevertheless, pupils are achieving satisfactorily in the primary department and in an exemplary lesson, pupils in Year 6 made excellent progress in the computer suite. Excellent teaching here generated enthusiasm and pupils worked hard, typing sentences and creating pictures to record their visit to a local science museum. This lesson actively promoted numeracy skills, requiring pupils to work out that they required six pictures to cover the faces of a cube. Pupils have also use computers to make a storybook similar to their class reading book.
81. Older pupils are not achieving enough. This was evident when pupils in Years 9 and 11, in different lessons, were completing the same assignment in word processing for the Certificate of Achievement accreditation. The pupils in both years required help to input their text and change its presentation, for instance by altering the spacing and underlining. In other lessons they have created databases and spreadsheets. There is little variation between lessons and missed opportunities for pupils to collect and use their own data. Overall, there is inconsistent planning for pupils to study all elements of the subject, particularly for control or data logging.
82. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. It fails to determine pupils' progress and guide the planning sufficiently for what pupils should learn. There is insufficient guidance or checking of teachers' planning to promote learning in ICT in other subject lessons. This is compounded by a lack of planning, of sufficient equipment for classrooms or access to the computer suite. Pupils use computers frequently in art to create and record work and there are excellent examples where teachers use computers in several subjects in the primary department. However, there are few occasions after Year 7 when pupils use computers in lessons. There are developing systems to record what pupils have learnt up to Year 7 but the provision of assessment to determine and record what pupils have learnt and to use this information in planning is unsatisfactory.

## **MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES**

### **French**

83. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Pupils learn simple vocabulary. It includes numbers, both spoken and written. They learn the days of the week and the vocabulary for a range of sports and hobbies. Year 7 pupils are anxious to do well and can become frustrated because listening to tapes and responding in French is quite challenging for them. Their confidence to speak in French noticeably improves as each lesson progresses. By Year 9 pupils are writing negative forms of statements, for example, 'Je n'aime pas...'. They demonstrate an understanding of different endings of male, female and plural vocabulary. Pupils apply their knowledge of French vocabulary to play various games including *Bingo*. These games are devised well by their teacher to promote their listening and responding skills.
84. Satisfactory teaching results in pupils growing in confidence. Relationships between staff and pupils are good but progress is held back because there is no specialist teaching in this subject. This results in too much lesson time being conducted in English. Interesting activities are devised but can require too much instruction in English to implement them. Pupils have good access to published materials and work sheets, but they are rarely given access to computers to support their learning of

French. The clarity with which the learning objectives for a lesson are planned and presented to pupils is improving.

85. The introduction of a French day in the summer term is a valuable addition to pupils' cultural development. For the rest of the year, however, not enough is done to promote pupils' understanding of French culture. Not enough use is made of wall displays, French paintings and artefacts, French festivals and music.

## **MUSIC**

86. Pupils' achievements are good. This is largely due to high quality, specialist teaching. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.
87. In the primary department, pupils listen carefully. They enjoy performance, both instrumental and vocal, in groups. They recognise and name several instruments by sight and sound and place them correctly in the orchestra. In Years 8 and 9, pupils continue to develop their appreciation of music through listening and performance. They recognise the stave and different clefs that inform the musician of the notes to be played and understand the layout of an electronic keyboard. Year 8 pupils have identified the differences between the different rhythms of reggae and calypso when learning about Caribbean music. A higher attaining pupil has successfully used a computer programme to compose a simple melody.
88. Teaching and learning is never less than good and often very good. Good preparation, planning and pupil management routines and skills ensure that lessons make a brisk start and continue uninterrupted. The teacher's energy and enthusiasm infects the pupils, with the result that a good amount of work is covered in all lessons. Pupils are inspired to work hard and they react pleasurably to the variety of musical experiences. This teaching ensures that all the pupils have opportunities to improve their skills of listening, playing, turn taking, and expressing preferences and feelings. As a result, pupils maintain a good level of interest and concentration. They respond well to these opportunities and expectations, generally showing good behaviour and attention. When pupils create their own music they are encouraged to talk about their performance. Pupils' efforts are praised and sensitive questions are asked to extend learning. Classroom assistants are enthusiastically involved in each activity and pupils clearly appreciated this. This was seen to particularly good effect in a Year 6 group rendition of *Twinkle, twinkle, little star* using *Boom Wackers*. There are high expectations of what pupils can achieve and staff are rarely disappointed. Assessment, including self-evaluation, is part of each module of learning and good use is made of time and resources.
89. Opportunities for public performance enhance the curriculum. The employment of a specialist teacher ensures that the quality of subject knowledge is very high. Assessment is satisfactory and used effectively to build on pupils' experiences and earlier learning. The teacher successfully encourages enjoyment, participation and learning. There is a good selection of multi-cultural instruments, which are often made available for the pupils to use. From time to time visiting musicians give pupils an opportunity to participate in a music workshop, most recently for drums.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

90. This has been an improvement since the previous inspection. By year 11 several pupils attain standards that are high for their age. They display good athleticism; for example, in cross-country running. Since the last inspection a wider range of activities



has been introduced; they include rugby, athletics and cross-country. The Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme offers pupils good opportunities to participate in activities such as rock climbing, sailing, orienteering and horse riding. Curriculum time is eroded by the need to use gymnasium facilities at another school. However, plans have recently been passed for the building of a new sports hall. This is expected to be ready for use by the start of the next academic year. In the meantime pupils are not making enough progress in gymnastics because the teacher does not have access to sufficient equipment.

91. Teaching is satisfactory overall. At its best it is good, as in a Year 9 lesson where pupils warmed-up well, stretching various muscles. When the teacher questioned them about different exercises, higher attaining pupils explained which one to use for exercising the hamstring. Pupils are often used effectively for demonstration purposes. In a Year 11 rugby lesson, they learned from watching a pupil demonstrating how to tackle correctly, hitting the tackle bag at pace when tackling from the front and the side. In swimming pupils are entered for the *Amateur Swimming Association Frostie's Awards*. Last year, all pupils in Year 6 could swim 25 metres.
92. Most pupils enjoy physical education, but a few do not dress appropriately or shower after lessons. This is unsatisfactory and unhygienic and was an issue at the time of the last inspection. In this respect there has not been enough improvement.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

93. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. Pupils are achieving particularly well in the primary department. There is occasionally excellent teaching here and in one inspired lesson about the story of Jesus, pupils related to the story of the three kings bearing gifts to their own experiences of giving and receiving presents. It resulted in a great contribution to their personal development as well as their understanding of scripture as pupils learned that giving and receiving presents can have important value without great cost. Pupils look at, and talk about, a selection of presents that are today given to new babies. They listen attentively as the teacher reads from a children's bible. Methods are very well matched to individual learning needs. Resources are used to great effect to motivate pupils and to promote their thinking and speaking skills. The activities create many links to other subjects: geography, science, information and communication technology, literacy and numeracy, and to personal and social education, for example. This is one of the great strengths in the quality of religious education teaching in the primary department. Year 7 pupils suggest the rules that might be needed to govern a group of people stranded on a desert island.
94. Pupils achieve well in the secondary department because they have access to enthusiastic, specialist and motivating teaching. Lessons are especially effective in promoting pupils' moral and personal development. Pupils have a positive attitude to religious education and they behave well in lessons. They are encouraged to discuss issues and present their opinions. Teaching methods often help pupils to address personal areas of weakness. In studies of war and peace, for example, Year 10 pupils talk to visitors, including a soldier from the Second World War, and learn compassion to moderate their bravado. In Years 8 and 9, pupils discuss the need for rules, laws and regulation in society and learn how different religions promote these. Older pupils continue their study of different faiths. Year 11 pupils sensibly discuss the Christian view of capital punishment. Pupils' achievements enable them to gain unit awards towards the Entry Level certificate. There are plans to introduce GCSE next year but

there is currently not enough time with only one lesson a week for a GCSE course to be studied in depth.

## **PERSONAL, HEALTH AND SOCIAL EDUCATION (PSHE)**

95. An appropriate emphasis is placed on PHSE. It is taught both as a discrete subject and through the many facets of the curriculum that permeate the daily life of the pupils. Sex education and information regarding drug misuse are handled sensitively. This area of the curriculum is enhanced by the pastoral support and guidance that the school offers, particularly in the residential provision. There is a clear focus on developing pupils' skills and an appropriate emphasis on addressing targets within pupils' individual education plans.
96. In the primary department, pupils extend their understanding of being part of a larger group, of what is happening and when. They learn to take turns when playing a game and to relate to other pupils. They develop their independence skills by helping to put away books and resources and by becoming familiar with daily routines. Pupils begin to make choices, for example at break times when they choose a drink. They learn to be tolerant and wait for other children to finish before they go to the next activity. They begin to understand the concept of a timetable and consider what they will do during the day.
97. In Years 8 and 9, pupils take more responsibility for their personal targets. They consider personal relationships and bullying. They look at human rights and discrimination. They learn about their bodies and healthy eating and lifestyles. In Years 10 and 11 they learn about the world of work, undertake work experience and work towards careers based externally accredited qualifications.
98. Teaching is good. Where it is most effective, in the primary department, routines are clearly established and support staff are clear of their role. Lessons are well planned as part of a term's work. This teaching encourages pupils to make choices and decisions. Where teaching is less effective expectations are too low, the pace of the lesson is slow and there is an inefficient use of time. Most pupils respond well to the staff and their class group. They are well behaved and cooperative. Occasionally a pupil becomes disruptive, but this well handled by teachers and support staff.