



Shaftesbury House School

Inspection Report

Unique Reference Number 134130
LEA Lancashire
Inspection number 282464
Inspection dates 14 February 2006 to 15 February 2006
Reporting inspector Mr Andrew Margerison

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

Type of school	Pupil referral unit	School address	Stratford Road
School category	Pupil referral unit		Chorley
Age range of pupils	11 to 16		Lancashire, PR6 0AF
Gender of pupils	Mixed	Telephone number	01257 516067
Number on roll	51	Fax number	01257 516069
Appropriate authority	The governing body	Chair of governors	Mrs Elizabeth Laverty
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable	Headteacher	Mrs Ann Clark

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 16	14 February 2006 - 15 February 2006	282464

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

Description of the school

The school is situated in Chorley and has funded capacity for 65 pupils but currently caters for 51 pupils aged 11 to 16 years of age. This is the school's first inspection report since it opened in its current designation in April 2004. Almost three quarters of pupils are in Years 10 or 11. All pupils have experienced difficulties in coping with school life, and attainment on entry is usually below average. About three quarters have been permanently excluded from previous schools. The rest are also on the roll of other schools. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. Pupils in Years 7 to 9 are taught wholly on the school site. Pupils in Years 10 and 11 have individual programmes that combine college placements, work experiences, time in school and a limited amount of supported self-study at home. A few pupils have part time placements from their mainstream secondary school. Most pupils are of white British origins. Two pupils have English as an additional language.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 3

This is a satisfactory school giving sound value for money. Inspection evidence confirms the school's view of its own performance in most areas. In a relatively short time, the headteacher has successfully created a positive learning atmosphere based on mutual respect between pupils and adults, well supported by the management committee. Other staff are very committed to the school and make a positive contribution to its development so it is in a secure position to move forward. However, the role of subject leaders in leading school improvement is in the early stages of development. They have a clear understanding of their role, but they do not have action plans to guide the direction of their work or to help them evaluate the effect of new initiatives on pupils' learning. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance and keeping parents informed of their children's progress. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there are consistent strengths across classes, particularly the management of pupils' behaviour and the contribution of support staff to pupils' learning. The school has introduced satisfactory procedures to check pupils' progress towards their individual targets, most of which are linked to English and mathematics. However, there are no whole-school systems to track the progress pupils are making in other subjects in order to give an overview of their achievement and to identify any areas of concern. In addition, the range of opportunities for pupils to gain accreditation in the performing arts, science and information and communication technology (ICT) are limited. As a result of these factors, overall, pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school supports pupils well so they develop good personal skills and are well prepared for the next stage of their education or work.

not applicable

What the school should do to improve further

- Develop the role of subject leaders in implementing and monitoring school improvements.
- Improve pupils' achievement by establishing systematic procedures to track the progress they make in science and ICT.
- Increase the range of opportunities for pupils to gain accreditation in the performing arts, science and ICT in Year 11.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 3

Overall, pupils' achievement, irrespective of their background or ability, is satisfactory. When pupils join the school, many have missed considerable amounts of schooling, which affects their attainment on entry. Information about prior attainment rarely accompanies pupils when they first arrive but pupils are quickly assessed. Realistic individual targets are set, mainly linked to improving their basic skills. Progress towards the targets is reviewed frequently and confirms that pupils are making satisfactory progress. The success of this work for pupils in Years 7 to 9 was reflected in 2005 when

all pupils in Year 9 returned to mainstream schools. Pupils' individual learning targets are mainly linked to English and mathematics. Not surprisingly, pupils' best achievement is in these subjects. Last year, virtually all pupils gained a qualification with a good proportion being at general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) level and the school expects similar success this year. Some 40% of pupils in last year's Year 11 gained 5 or more GCSEs which compares very favourably with similar centres in the area. In addition, most pupils gained college certificates and Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) assessments in a range of subjects. However, relatively few pupils gain accreditation in the performing arts, science or ICT. Despite this, the progress being made by older pupils is evident in the high numbers who enter college, training or work when they leave.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 2

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Parents and pupils say pupils enjoy being at school and as a result, most pupils' attendance is good. However, the figures are adversely affected by a few persistent non-attenders who are being pursued by the local authority. Pupils' behaviour is good and they have positive attitudes to learning, although when the pace of lessons slows, a few lose their concentration. However, their behaviour rarely deteriorates to the point where other pupils' learning is significantly disrupted. The fact that there have been no exclusions in the last year is testimony to the effectiveness of the school's approach to managing and developing pupils' understanding of what is expected of them in school. Pupils learn how to stay safe in different situations. The school does not condone any form of substance abuse and pupils understand the importance of living a healthy lifestyle. However, many do not always follow the advice on healthy eating in their everyday lives out of school. Pupils make a positive contribution to the local community. They develop secure basic literacy and numeracy skills and the work-related experiences mean that they are well prepared for the next phase of their education or work.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 3

Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but there are consistent strengths in all classes. Teachers and support staff manage pupils well and have clear expectations of how they expect pupils to behave. As a result, lessons are calm and orderly. On the few occasions when an individual's behaviour becomes a distraction to others, the school has good procedures to deal with it. Teachers use pupils' individual plans well as the basis for their planning and use support assistants well to work with groups or individuals. The support staff are very important members of the staff and make a very good contribution to pupils' learning through their enthusiasm and the sensitive support they give pupils. In the best lessons, teachers share the aims of the lesson

with pupils and keep the pace moving briskly by good questioning, using ICT well as a teaching tool and keeping each activity relatively short. As a result, in these lessons pupils make good progress. However, on occasions, activities are too long and as the pace of the lesson drops pupils lose their concentration. In addition, not all lessons end in a clearly structured way. Consequently, opportunities are missed to involve pupils in reviewing their own learning by returning to the objectives of the lesson.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 3

The curriculum is satisfactory. All pupils are provided with a broad range of carefully planned experiences that develop their knowledge and understanding in most subjects. Specific strategies are used well to tackle gaps in individual pupils' learning in English and mathematics. The individual programmes for pupils in Years 10 and 11 vary from pupil to pupil, but normally are a combination of school-based teaching, college placement and work experience, supplemented by individual tuition and a limited amount of self-study at home. Where possible, a few pupils spend time in mainstream school. Provision for English, mathematics and personal, social and health education is good, but fewer opportunities are available for older pupils to work towards external accreditation in the performing arts, science and ICT. However, the curriculum is enriched well by opportunities for pupils to take part in sport and outdoor education. The school has established good links with external organisations, such as the Prince's Trust, to provide relevant work-related provision for pupils in Years 10 and 11.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

This aspect of the school's work is good and parents are confident that their children are well cared for. Overall, the school places a high priority on ensuring pupils are safe in school and when they are off-site on visits or placements. The procedures to promote good attendance are thorough and generally very effective. However, procedures to check on pupils working at home are not rigorous enough. As a result, the school cannot be fully confident that they are engaged in school work. The school provides pupils with good academic and personal support. For example, a counsellor is in school on a weekly basis to work with pupils with specific personal issues or worries. Parents are contacted daily to keep them informed about their children's performance and any concerns the school may have. In addition, all pupils have regular opportunities to discuss their learning and how well they are doing towards the targets in their individual plans which are mainly linked to basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, the school does not have detailed procedures to gain an overview of pupils' achievement by tracking the progress pupils are making towards the targets set for them in subjects, except English and mathematics. As a result, pupils' achievement is not as good in other subjects, such as science.

Leadership and management

Grade: 3

This is the only aspect of the school's work in which inspection evidence does not fully support the school's own evaluation. Rather than good, leadership and management are satisfactory. However, the school knows itself well and has accurately identified significant strengths in the leadership showing that self-evaluation procedures are good. The headteacher leads the school well and in a short time has established a positive school ethos with clear direction and a commitment to raising pupils' achievement. She is well supported by the management committee who have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subject leaders have a clear vision of how they want to develop their roles and areas of responsibility. However, several have only held their posts for a short time and do not have action plans clearly setting out what they should do and achieve. As a result, they are not in a position to evaluate how effective new initiatives are in improving pupils' learning. In addition, their role in monitoring pupils' performance is limited. Strong teamwork between staff is a feature of the school and they are involved in setting school priorities.

Parents are canvassed on their views of the school, but the school doesn't systematically seek the views of pupils. Overall, the school is in a secure position to move forward and improve further.

Inspection judgements

<i>Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate</i>	School Overall	16-19
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Overall effectiveness

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	3	NA
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	NA
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3	NA
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	NA
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	NA

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	3	NA
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3	NA
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3	NA
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3	NA

Personal development and well-being

How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	2	NA
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	NA
The behaviour of learners	2	NA
The attendance of learners	3	NA
How well learners enjoy their education	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	NA
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3	NA
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	NA
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2	NA

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	3	NA
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	3	NA
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2	NA

¹ Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	3	NA
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3	NA
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	NA
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3	NA
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	3	NA
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	NA
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	NA

The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy	
Learners are encouraged and enabled to eat and drink healthily	Yes
Learners are encouraged and enabled to take regular exercise	Yes
Learners are discouraged from smoking and substance abuse	Yes
Learners are educated about sexual health	Yes
The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe	
Procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements	Yes
Risk assessment procedures and related staff training are in place	Yes
Action is taken to reduce anti-social behaviour, such as bullying and racism	Yes
Learners are taught about key risks and how to deal with them	Yes
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution	
Learners are helped to develop stable, positive relationships	Yes
Learners, individually and collectively, participate in making decisions that affect them	Yes
Learners are encouraged to initiate, participate in and manage activities in school and the wider community	Yes
The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being	
There is provision to promote learners' basic skills	Yes
Learners have opportunities to develop enterprise skills and work in teams	Yes
Careers education and guidance is provided to all learners in key stage 3 and 4 and the sixth form	Yes
Education for all learners aged 14–19 provides an understanding of employment and the economy	Yes

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

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Mrs Ann Clark

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14 February 2006

Dear Pupils

Thank you very much for welcoming me to your school this week and letting me join in with your lessons and at lunchtime. I enjoyed talking to you and finding out about all the things you do. You were really friendly and I would have liked to have been able to stay longer. The things I particularly liked were:

you behave well and you are keen and enthusiastic to take part in lessons and other activities

your school makes sure that you will be helped if you need extra support either personally or with your work

the programmes for pupils in Years 10 and 11 prepare you well for leaving school

your teachers and the management committee know what your school does well and how they want to make it better.

I have asked your headteacher and the managers to make your school even better by:

improving your work in all subjects, but particularly in science and ICT by working out ways of checking that you are doing as well as possible

giving more structure to the way that teachers with specific responsibilities carry out their role

providing more opportunities for you get qualifications in the performing arts, science and ICT.

Thank you again for helping me so much with the inspection.

Andy Margerison

(Lead inspector)