

Chaigeley School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	111498
Local Authority	Warrington
Inspection number	310608
Inspection dates	20–21 November 2007
Reporting inspector	Arif Hussain

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	8–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School	54
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr Micheal Hennessy
Headteacher	Mr Drew Crawshaw
Date of previous school inspection	11 November 2002
School address	Lymm Road Thelwall Warrington Cheshire WA4 2TE
Telephone number	01925 752357
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Age group	8-16
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two Additional Inspectors. The boarding provision was inspected at the same time by a qualified Inspector of Residential Care.

Description of the school

The school caters for boys with extreme behaviour, emotional and social difficulties. A few pupils also have other learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The small number of boys in Key Stage 2 are taught separately. In Key Stages 3 and 4 the class groups have a fairly even spread of boys. All the boys have experienced major difficulties in mainstream and other educational settings and most have been excluded. The socio-economic background of the boys is one of disadvantage. The great majority are eligible for free school meals. Around 20% of the boys are in the care of local authorities (LAs). The school has residential provision for up to 24 boys during term time and including weekends. A small number of boys are currently boarding. A report on the residential provision may be obtained at <http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/report>.

Key for inspection grades

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

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 2

This is a good school. Representative views from parents include, 'If the school had not taken my son, I don't know what would have happened to him. His work has come on leaps and bounds in every aspect of his education, and his behaviour and tantrums have also improved.'

Though attainment on entry to the school is very low, achievement is good, given the severity of the boys learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Achievement is good across the school because the quality of teaching is good. Teachers relate to the boys well and every opportunity is taken to develop the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. There is a strong emphasis on teaching and learning through practical experiences and the boys respond well to this. The school has developed a good curriculum which enables all boys to achieve well. Boys enjoy drama, design and technology, art and physical education and have produced much good work in these areas. Good care, guidance and support ensure that boys make up for much of the lost ground that has resulted from their previous disengagement in education. The vast majority of boys of school leaving age successfully complete many external accreditations and also do well at GCSE level, given their very low levels of prior attainment. Accreditation includes Duke of Edinburgh Awards comprising areas such as personal challenge, community service and personal skills. Other accreditation includes health and hygiene, community sports leader, literacy, numeracy, money management, physical education and social skills.

The school works effectively with the many local authorities who send boys to it. Other links are also strong. For instance, all boys in Years 10 and 11 attend colleges regularly to undertake vocational 'taster' courses. These courses include construction skills, car mechanics, catering, leisure-related and sports-related courses. These factors ensure that boys are well prepared for the future.

Personal development is sound. The majority of boys behave satisfactorily. However, a significant minority sometimes disrupt learning. Eventually, boys mature positively as they realise that they are capable of much more than they had believed. This is because the school takes every opportunity to raise self-confidence. Attendance is satisfactory overall. A good number of boys have made good improvements in their attendance when compared to that in their previous schools. However, there is a significant minority who do not respond to the school's good efforts to raise attendance. Boys develop satisfactory attitudes towards healthy living. For instance, they show concern about smoking and learn much about alcohol and drugs abuse through a community agency. Participation in physical education is enthusiastic and the new sports hall is helping to channel boys' energies positively. Boys' contribution to the community is good. The school council has made a number of good suggestions leading to school improvement and often raises funds for good causes.

Leadership and management are good at all levels. The principal and deputy complement each other well, and together with the senior leadership team move effectively towards their vision of further improving boys' personal development and raising standards. The school was judged as satisfactory at the last inspection. Improvements in key areas, most notably in teaching and leadership, demonstrate a good capacity for improvement. In view of the good achievement and positive changes in the boys' personal development, the school provides good value for money.

Effectiveness of boarding provision

Grade: 2

Leadership and management of the boarding provision are good. School managers and the head of care work effectively together to ensure the progress and well-being of boarders. Strong links between care staff and teachers foster boys' enjoyment and achievement positively. Provision for boarders is good and clearly enhances personal development. The National Minimum Standards for boarders are fully met. The action points identified in the most recent inspection have been satisfactorily addressed. Child protection and health and safety procedures are clear and effective. Boarders say that any bullying is taken seriously and dealt with.

What the school should do to improve further

- Ensure that all the boys improve their attendance.
- Eliminate the disruption caused by a minority of boys in lessons.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Though standards are low because of boys' learning difficulties and/or disabilities, achievement is good. There is always a strong focus on literacy and numeracy in learning. Every opportunity is taken to promote interest in reading and this has resulted in very good progress in many cases. Progress in writing is good. Most boys make sound gains in their information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Boys are successful in obtaining accreditations from Year 6 upwards. The younger boys who are boarders receive well coordinated support and several gain basic certificated awards in personal and social development. All the boarders are making good progress in their learning as are the boys in local authority care. In the last school year, the great majority of school leavers left with various accreditations or examination passes. GCSE passes included English, mathematics, science, food technology and art.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 3

The school has embraced the 'every child matters' agenda positively. Slowly but surely, boys mature into respectful young citizens as a result of sound personal, social, health and citizenship education. This maturity takes time because the majority of boys have previously had difficult and poor experiences. New boys often start school with a deep mistrust of teachers and other adults. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Moral development is the strongest element as most boys do show respect for the school rules. Although many boys improve their attendance well during their time at this school, the attendance of a significant minority remains low. Parents confirm that their children are managed adequately and a significant number say that they notice some good improvements in behaviour. However, there is a little way to go before behaviour can be judged any better than satisfactory.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers try to provide as many practical or real-life situations as possible because boys prefer this. A good lesson for the youngest boys

included guided reading of a story called 'scratch'. This was full of appeal for the boys because the everyday events in the story were amusing, interesting and had clear underlying messages about health and hygiene. Boys also learnt much about how they can engage readers through their own writing. Strengths in teaching across the school include the use of 'running sheets' to record progress, use of praise and reward to motivate boys and teamwork between adults in the classroom to support learning. However, disruptive boys occasionally restrict teaching and learning as time can be taken up managing their behaviour. Assessment is improving. The school recognises that there is scope to make better use of information to set clearer learning targets in lessons to improve progress further.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

There is good provision in numeracy and literacy and this helps boys to gain essential and basic skills. Enrichment of the curriculum is provided through many educational visits and residential outdoor pursuits. Visitors also make a positive contribution to learning. For instance, theatrical groups regularly work with boys and help them to learn and express themselves through drama. Boys enjoy practical activities and have produced some good work. For instance, artwork and pottery is of a high standard. Participation in sporting activities is good and this makes a significant contribution to improving health and fitness. Sports coaches often work with boys to develop their stamina and skills. The curriculum includes many chances to learn about independence, money, further education and jobs. Vocational and work-related experiences are of a good quality, a key reason for the positive outcomes when boys leave school. The school recognises that ICT skills can be improved and that more opportunities are needed for boys to develop their skills.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

Representative views from the oldest boys include, 'I'm no longer worried about the future and look forward to going out in the real world, I'll miss the caring staff and help with everything, they've been brilliant.' The school's provision to support the boys is thoughtful and wide ranging. For instance, induction includes allocation of a peer support to help new boys settle in. Also, the 'every child matters' and 'pupil support' rooms enable boys to work through their difficulties through good counselling and mentoring. Procedures to support boys in the local authorities care are strong and this ensures that they achieve as well as other groups. Arrangements for safeguarding and ensuring the health and safety of boys are in place and regularly reviewed. Academic guidance is generally strong. Boys develop a good awareness of their learning needs as they get older. However, despite well developed rewards systems, a significant number of boys still have issues concerning their attendance or behaviour.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The impact of strong leadership and management is seen in boys' good academic progress. The leadership of the school is successfully focused on achievement and is working hard to promote personal development and well-being. There is a common sense of purpose across the school. Staff are effectively deployed and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. The governing body is very supportive and holds the school to account well. For instance, expenditure is

scrutinised closely to ensure value for money. Inclusion is good and equality of opportunity is vigorously pursued. Any underachievement is quickly identified and effective support provided so that all boys achieve equally well. The school has improved the quality of teaching since the last inspection through rigorous monitoring and good arrangements for professional development. Systems to set challenging targets for boys are developing positively. Self-evaluation is largely accurate. The main difference between the school's self-evaluation and the inspection judgements concerns personal development. The school judged this as good without having full regard for all the aspects of personal development.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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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?	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of boarding provision	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2

Personal development and well-being

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

The quality of provision

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

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

Annex A

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Thank you for all your help during the inspection of your school. We enjoyed talking with you and learning about your school. Inspectors judged that the school and boarding provision are good. Your school is effective because most of you make good progress. Your curriculum is strong because there are many chances for you to learn in the way you prefer. The school and boarding provision ensure that you receive good care, support and guidance. Inspectors were impressed by the suggestions made by the school council to improve things. We were also pleased to see the good contribution you make to the community through taking up responsibilities around the school and in the residential provision. Personal development is satisfactory overall. I can see that you are well prepared for the future through the accreditations you achieve and the work-related experiences you take part in. Most of you show positive attitudes to learning and behave reasonably at all times. However, a significant minority of boys sometimes spoil things for others by disrupting the good teaching in school. Also, many of you have improved your attendance compared to your previous schools but some of you have not.

Leadership and management of your school and boarding provision are good. The principal, head of care, senior staff and governors are working hard to make sure you carry on doing well. The full report about the school covers all the points in this letter in more detail.

In order to improve, the school must:

- ensure that all of you attend better
- eliminate the disruption in lessons caused by a significant minority of boys.

The small number of boys whose behaviour is disruptive or whose attendance could be better can obviously help the school, and themselves, by improving in these areas.