

# Clifford Holroyde Specialist SEN College

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	104742
<b>Local Authority</b>	Liverpool
<b>Inspection number</b>	355625
<b>Inspection dates</b>	11–12 November 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	David Smith

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Special
<b>School category</b>	Community special
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	41
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Terrence Sweeney
<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Elaine Dwyer
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	14 November 2007
<b>School address</b>	Thingwall Lane Knotty Ash, Liverpool Merseyside L14 7NX
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors observed teaching and learning in five lessons and saw five teachers. The inspectors held meetings with groups of students, members of the governing body and staff. They observed the college's work, looked at records of students' progress, safeguarding documentation and the college development plan. Five questionnaires from parents and carers were analysed.

- Leadership and management at all levels across the college and the capacity for sustained improvement.
- The impact of the collection, evaluation and use of data on the learning and progress of different groups of students.
- The relevance of the curriculum and the level of challenge provided in the courses provided for the older students.
- The effectiveness of the college's arrangements for safeguarding.

## Information about the school

The students at Clifford Holroyde Specialist SEN College have a statement of special educational needs because they are experiencing severe social, emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A very large majority of the students are known to be eligible for free school meals and six are in public care. A very large majority of the students are White British. The college has a wide range of awards including specialist status for behavioural, emotional and social development. It is also a high performing specialist school for applied learning. The college manages an outreach service to support students in the city's mainstream schools. It has developed and runs the 'Helena Project' for girls with emotional and behavioural and social difficulties for whom no other special provision is made.

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

## Main findings

The overall effectiveness of the college is good. The students' attainment on entry is exceptionally low but despite making good progress their overall attainment remains in the low range. Progress in Years 10 and 11 is good with occasional examples of outstanding progress in students' examination courses. Consequently, the students' achievement is good and they enjoy their learning. The capacity for sustained improvement is good. This is because clear improvement is effectively promoted by ambitious leaders and managers, a strong team ethos and a sharp focus on the needs of each student on roll. The staff team places the best interests of the students at the heart of their work. Self-evaluation is effective, which provides a good understanding of the college's strengths and areas for development. However, the subject leaders make too little contribution to the monitoring of teaching and learning, which does have a restrictive impact on spreading the strengths of teaching throughout the college. Members of the governing body provide a good balance of support and challenge to help maintain the strong focus on school improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff team is enthusiastic and make learning enjoyable. Very positive relationships between staff and students and consistent management contribute to the students' good behaviour. The provision of a good curriculum is enhanced by an excellent range of outdoor and adventure activities. However, there is insufficient use of information and communication technology (ICT) to support learning in other subjects.

Care, guidance and support are good. Some features of it are outstanding, such as the innovative strategies used to promote good behaviour. Attendance is broadly average overall. However, despite the excellent links with other agencies and positive partnerships with parents and carers, the attendance of a few students remains too low. Students' comments such as, 'I really enjoy coming to school' and 'Staff have time for me' reflect the high quality support provided by the staff. The provision to include students in all college activities and ensure that they have an equal opportunity is excellent. The college's outreach services are greatly appreciated by other schools and the students that it supports. Students appreciate the good opportunities provided to learn in the work place, which is an example of how the work of the college has a good impact on the students' future economic well-being. This is supported by the development of good team-building skills in physical activities

## What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the attendance of the few students who are persistently absent by:

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- focusing on breaking the cycle of persistent absence of a few students by innovative work with parents, carers and other agencies.
- Strengthen the contribution of the subject leaders to the college's self-review and improvement process, by:
  - extending their role in the monitoring of teaching and learning
  - ensuring that opportunities are provided to share the strengths of teaching and learning in the college.
- Improve the use of ICT in other subjects to help promote learning by:
  - ensuring that students' progress in ICT is promoted by challenging targets
  - providing appropriate training for all staff in the effective use of ICT.

**Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils****2**

When they start at the college most students are not motivated to learn. However, the enthusiastic staff team provide a stimulating curriculum and quickly re-engage the students in their learning. As a result, learning and progress observed in lessons were good overall and achievement is also good. Students made good progress in their use of scientific equipment to extend their understanding of the changes made to substances when heated. There was a particularly strong focus on health and safety during the practical work. They made good progress in their use of coordinates in mathematics to produce a range of shapes. In design and technology students became more confident and accurate in their use of a range of tools. Students are proud of their work and have the confidence to learn from their mistakes.

The students' attainment on entry is exceptionally low and despite making good progress their attainment remains low. Students in Years 7 to 9 make good progress in English and particularly marked progress in their reading and speaking and listening. They make good progress in mathematics and particularly good progress in science because of the increased opportunities to take part in practical work. The majority of students in Years 10 and 11 are now making good and occasionally outstanding progress in subjects such as English, science and art and design, which is a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Opportunities to sit examinations from Year 10 onwards are helping to raise student aspirations and confidence. The progress of groups of students, including those in public care, is similar to their peers in the college.

The students' attitudes to work are positive and they behave well. They display good levels of respect for the staff and each other. Students are confident that they feel safe in the college, are able to form friendships and have staff who will listen to them. Relationships are particularly good and this helps the students to take increasing responsibility for their own actions. There is a wide range of initiatives that promote healthy eating, including the use of their garden to grow food. A student commented that the lunches are, 'great with good choices'. Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. For example, the students displayed excellent attitudes during a two-minute silence to mark their respect as part of the college's focus on Remembrance Day. Their views are taken seriously and help to shape developments in the college. Attendance is satisfactory because, despite their hard work, the college and other

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agencies are unable to modify the entrenched persistent absence of a few students that join them in Years 10 and 11.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	3
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

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

## How effective is the provision?

The quality of teaching and learning in the college is good. Any challenging behaviour is managed well, which ensures that very little learning time is lost. The staff team are enthusiastic and make learning enjoyable. They have the confidence to use humour to help develop very positive relationships. The support staff provide a good balance of support and challenge and have an appropriate focus on learning as well as behaviour. Very skilled support is provided in English, to help Year 11 students make excellent progress in their speaking and listening. Occasionally the teachers talk too much, which slows the pace of learning, leading to satisfactory rather than good progress. An extensive range of data about students' progress is collected and recorded very thoroughly. This information helps to inform the students' challenging targets and their individual achievement plans.

The good curriculum is effectively planned to meet the complex needs of individual and groups of students. There is a good focus on developing the students' literacy and numeracy skills but too little emphasis on promoting their learning by the use of ICT. For example, opportunities are lost for students to use ICT to manage and evaluate data in science and mathematics or extend their writing in history. They thoroughly enjoy their

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outdoor and adventure activities and are particularly positive about the time they spend on residential trips. Many students have the opportunity to access a wide range of courses at alternative placements in the locality. These help to engage students in their learning and prepare them effectively for the next stage of their education or employment.

Good care, support and guidance are at the centre of the college's work and aspects of this provision are outstanding. Staff work hard to ensure that students have every opportunity to take responsibility for their own actions. They acknowledge and celebrate positive behaviour but are consistent in applying agreed consequences for negative behaviour. Staff make sacrifices and put the students first by, for example, giving up their time to be involved in residential trips and activities at the end of the college day. This is a particular strength of the college's provision. They also take every opportunity to spend time with the students during the breakfast club and lunch break. Staff fully involve the students in setting and managing their own targets, which helps to promote their ambition to achieve.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

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

## How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher provides a very high level of ambition and expertise across the provision and is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher. There is a shared vision and the staff team are constantly exploring innovative ways to improve in their drive to transform the students' learning and well-being. They are also proactive in ensuring that they have a positive impact on providing support for vulnerable students across the local authority. Staff involved in the outreach and support services share their expertise with the staff team so helping to ensure that the students' learning needs in the college are well met. The effective management of the school's specialisms has a positive impact on the college and other schools. The additional funding helps, for example, to provide alternative courses. The students' displays of their artwork in the local community help to highlight the college's good promotion of community cohesion. The college's work with a wide range of partners is outstanding and provides all groups of students with plentiful and highly appropriate opportunities to succeed. This also helps to provide an excellent equality of opportunity for the students. Arrangements for safeguarding are good. The staff place a strong emphasis on ensuring that the students are made fully aware of the consequences of their actions. Members of the governing body are aware of the college's strengths and areas for development and make a good contribution to college improvement. Subject leaders manage their subjects well but are not sufficiently involved in monitoring teaching and learning, which leads to lost opportunities to share the strengths in the college. The college provides good value for money.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

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

## **Views of parents and carers**

All parents and carers who responded to the questionnaire indicated satisfaction with the school in all of the statements. This is consistent with the views of the inspectors. Comments from the parents include, 'I could not be happier with the support from the school.' and 'The school meets my child's needs well.'

## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Clifford Holroyde Specialist SEN College to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 5 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 41 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	4	80	1	20	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	3	60	2	40	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	5	100	0	0	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li><li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li><li>■ The quality of teaching.</li><li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.</li><li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li></ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



15 November 2010

Dear Students

**Inspection of Clifford Holroyde Specialist SEN College, Liverpool L14 7NX**

We thoroughly enjoyed our visit to your college and spending time looking at your work. Thanks for the time spent with us discussing your work and activities. We decided that the college is good. It is clear that you take great pride in the college and you should be proud of the displays of your work. The opportunities provided for you to take part in outdoor and adventurous activities are impressive. The staff team is well led and they work hard to ensure that you are well cared for. You are taught well and, as a result, make good progress. We were impressed with the outstanding progress being made by the older students in their examination courses. Also, the college's work with other partners is excellent, which ensures that you all are provided with every opportunity to succeed.

We have asked your headteacher, staff and governing body to focus on improving attendance to ensure that all of you make as much progress as possible. Also, it is important that more opportunities are provided for you to use information and communication technology to help your learning in all subjects. We have asked that your teachers are provided with the opportunity to see each other teach. You can help by ensuring that you all attend whenever possible, work hard and maintain your positive attitudes.

Yours sincerely

Mr David Smith

Lead inspector

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