

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLLY BANK SCHOOL

Mirfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107796

Headteacher: Mrs. S. Garland-Grimes

Reporting inspector: Mr. M. Warman 1516

Dates of inspection: 25 to 27 January 2000

Inspection number: 188746

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:	5 to 19
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Roe Head Far Common Road Mirfield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	WF14 0QD
Telephone number:	01924 490833
Fax number:	01924 491464
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. J. Dyson
Date of previous inspection:	13 to 16 May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	
Mike Warman	Registered inspector
Guy Hirst	Lay inspector
Katherine (Kath) Halifax	Team inspector
Stuart Charlton	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

*West Yorkshire Inspection & Consultancy Services
6, Lees Moor Road
Cullingworth
Bradford
BD13 5HG*

*Phone: 01535 274318
Fax: 01535 271892
E-mail: WestYorks@email.msn.com*

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holly Bank School is part of the Holly Bank Trust which is a charitable organisation offering education and development to children and young people with disabilities. The school offers residential provision for pupils and students with physical disabilities, moderate, severe and profound learning difficulties, medical conditions and speech and language problems. It is registered for 50 boarding and 15 day pupils aged between 5 and 19 years of age, and currently there are 56 pupils and students on roll in the age range 8 to 19 years, with just under 50% of pupils (25) aged 16 plus. Pupils and students are sponsored by 23 local authorities. There are 185 staff working in the school including care staff, teachers, support assistants, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, occupational therapist, information and communications technology technicians, nurses, administrative, personnel and premises staff. The school offers a 24-hour curriculum for seven days each week for 38 weeks of the year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a successful school with a number of very good features. The pupils and students make good progress overall and they approach their work with enthusiasm and excitement. Overall, the teaching is good and just over a third of it is very good or outstanding. The headteacher provides strong leadership. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection and there is a clear commitment to improve further. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Strong leadership provides very clear direction for the work of the school.
- New technology is used very effectively to enable the pupils and students to develop their communication skills, to gain maximum independence and access to the whole curriculum.
- The interdisciplinary approach provides a very effective environment within which pupils and students feel secure and are able to develop to their full potential.
- Pupils' and students' achievements in communication and in personal development are very good.
- Pupils' and students' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good.
- Pupils and students develop very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.

What could be improved

- The accreditation of achievements appropriate to pupils' and students' needs in Key Stage 4 and post-16.
- The governing body's procedures for monitoring and evaluating the whole provision.

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 made good improvement since the last inspection in 1996. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good, resulting in pupils' and students' learning being good overall. High quality schemes of work are now in place for all subjects, consequently teachers' planning is detailed and identifies clearly what individual pupils and students will learn from lessons. Individual education and care plans have clear targets and pupils' and students' progress can be tracked through them. The provision for pupils' and students' spiritual development has improved and is now good, with opportunities planned to provide a sense of wonder, and time for reflection. The provision for music is much improved and is now good, enabling pupils and students to make good progress in this area.

STANDARDS

The table summarises inspectors' judgements about how well pupils achieve in relation to their individual targets by the time they leave the school.

Progress in:	by age 11	by age 16	by age 19	Key	
speaking and listening	A	A	A	very good	A
reading	B	B	B	good	B
writing	B	B	B	satisfactory	C
mathematics	B	B	B	unsatisfactory	D
personal, social and health education	A	A	A	poor	E
other personal targets set at annual reviews or in IEPs*	B	B	B		

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

The school sets targets for individual pupils and students and for whole-school performance which are both realistic and challenging. Pupils' and students' achievements in communication and personal development are very good and technology is used very effectively to support the work in these areas. In all other areas, pupils' and students' achievements are consistently good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils and students are highly enthusiastic, very interested in their work and the great majority concentrate for surprisingly long periods of time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils and students behave very well at all times and all aspects of the work of the school proceed in a tranquil manner.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils and students have very good relationships with each other and with adults. They are as independent as they possibly can be in all aspects of their life in school. They show a high level of respect for the feelings of others.
Attendance	Very good. Attendance rates are well above those expected for this type of school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 5-11	aged 11-16	aged over 16
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	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 good overall and in just over a third of lessons it is very good or outstanding. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching in different parts of the school or in different subjects of the curriculum. The teaching of communication skills and personal and social development underpins all work in both classroom and residential activities thus enabling pupils and students to achieve more highly in these areas. This high proportion of good, very good and outstanding teaching has a significant impact on pupils' and

students' achievements and ensures they make good progress overall. Teachers' planning is very detailed and contains clear indications of what individual pupils and students are expected to learn from the lessons. Teachers have high expectations and continually challenge pupils and students to achieve of their best and consequently most lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Teachers and support staff work very well together and the work of therapists, medical and care staff supports the provision in classrooms very well. All staff know the pupils and students very well, always expect them to do their best and are adept at knowing when to exert pressure and when pupils and students need to be left alone for a short while. Pupils' and students' individual difficulties are never allowed to be used as an excuse for lack of effort.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The whole curriculum is very good and highly relevant to the needs of all pupils and students. The provision for pupils' and students' personal, social and health education underpins everything they do and is excellent. Elements of the well-planned sensory curriculum and the National Curriculum are cleverly intertwined to provide pupils and students with interesting learning opportunities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for pupils' and students' spiritual and cultural development is good and that for their moral development is very good. The provision for social development is a particular strength and is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. A high quality of care is given in both the day and residential provision. All aspects of the monitoring of pupils' and students' performance and development, and of providing support and guidance for them, are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The strong leadership of the headteacher provides very clear direction for the work of the school. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's performance by the headteacher and other senior staff are very good. Co-ordinators have a significant impact on the work in their subjects and support other staff well.
How well the appropriate authority fulfils its responsibilities	Good. The governing body is very supportive of the school and has clear procedures to fulfil its responsibilities. Their work in terms of monitoring and evaluating the work in subjects ensures they are well informed but the procedures for applying the principles of best value are not sufficiently systematic and rigorous.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The detailed development plan is very well matched to the needs of the school and is the result of significant involvement by all staff and governors. Each department effectively evaluates its own performance against specific targets.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The excellent accommodation, the high level of staffing and the very good resources are all used very effectively to support pupils' and students' development. The use of new technologies is excellent.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils make good progress.• Teaching is good.• The high level of information they receive about what their children are doing at school.• Pupils are encouraged to work hard and achieve the best they can.• The high level of care their children receive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The level of extra curricular activities.

The inspection team fully agrees with the strengths identified by parents. A good range of extra curricular activities is provided for both resident and day pupils and students.

PART B: COMMENTARY

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

Strong leadership provides very clear direction for the work of the school.

1. The school is very well led by the headteacher and senior management team who work well together and with the governing body. A very clear strategic direction has been formulated to ensure the school continually improves the quality of its provision. Through this, much has been achieved since the last inspection.
2. The recently appointed headteacher leads the school very well and ensures a sense of common purpose amongst all staff, leading to very good teamwork and a high degree of consistency of practice throughout the school. This enables the school to implement its aims, values and policies very effectively and creates an ethos in which pupils and students of all ages and abilities thrive.
3. The governors are very supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have good knowledge of the school and are clear about the main issues relating to its future. Individual governors are responsible for monitoring the provision in some subjects, for example literacy and numeracy, but not in all. Since the last inspection the roles of subject leaders have been clearly defined and these are now well understood. The subject leadership role is now effective. Subject leaders have developed detailed schemes of work and support their colleagues well.
4. The headteacher and deputy headteacher effectively monitor the curriculum and the quality of teaching. The outcomes of this monitoring are having a strong impact on school improvement. The school development plan is very detailed and clearly identifies targets for improvement. It covers all essential areas of school life, has suitable time scales and detailed action plans for each area. The criteria for success are clear, as are the arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the progress made in implementing the plan.
5. Relationships in the school are very good which result in all pupils, students and staff working with confidence and high self-esteem.

New technology is used very effectively to enable the pupils and students to develop their communication, gain maximum independence and access to the whole curriculum.

6. The use of technology to support pupils' and students' development is a major feature of the school's provision. A huge amount of work has gone into using technology to enable pupils and students to become as independent as possible through being able to operate a wide range of aids to support their learning and living. Careful assessment is made of each pupil or student's disability to identify the most appropriate 'switch' suitable to their needs. This ensures pupils and students gain access to the most appropriate equipment and develop the necessary skills to use it. All pupils and students have regular one-to-one support from specific staff to help them develop these skills. The school is not afraid to try new advances in this area if these are likely to liberate pupils and students and provide them with ways of showing what they know and can do. The most recent development, 'Eagle Eyes', has exciting possibilities to help pupils and students communicate through computer technology.
7. Teachers' planning in all areas of the curriculum identifies ways in which technology can support individual pupils and students. There is a good range of computers and programmes to support all areas of the curriculum, although use of the Internet as a staff, pupil and student learning resource is at an early stage of development. Many pupils and students are able to use technology very effectively to demonstrate their achievements. For example during an English lesson, a pupil in Key Stage 4 used the computer to write out, illustrate and check the spelling of a poem which he had just composed. In a mathematics lesson, pupils were using computers to work on number programmes by successfully using switches which requiring minimal manual movement. In music lessons, a range of switches was used to enable pupils to play a range of percussion instruments and join in at the appropriate times. Independence for specific pupils is also supported by the use of electric tracks for their wheelchairs to follow.

The interdisciplinary approach provides a very effective environment within which pupils and students feel secure and are able to develop to their full potential

8. Teamwork is one of the most striking features of the way the school meets the needs of pupils and students who have a wide range of severe, profound and multiple learning difficulties and medical conditions.
9. Pupils and students are very well looked after and supported very effectively by all the specialists working in the school. Teachers and support staff work very well together to provide a very effective learning environment within classrooms. This well-integrated support was seen in all classrooms, but a particularly noteworthy example was in a post-16 lesson on the moon landing with one of the support staff dressed as an astronaut. Planning is detailed and all staff are clear about the purposes of the activities and their roles and responsibilities. All staff are prepared to be flexible if the need arises, so that they can deal with the unexpected; for example, when a pupil was unresponsive in a one-to-one information technology session, the technician was able to use the detailed records kept in the classroom to work effectively with another pupil. The residential provision, and the way staff support pupils and students development when they are not in class is very good, and ensures all pupils and students are treated with dignity and respect. This was particularly evident during meal times. Parents commented on the high quality of care their children receive. The programmes for all pupils and students for speech and language, physiotherapy and occupational therapy are closely linked to work in the classrooms and in the residential setting. This was evident during a session in the physiotherapy room involving physiotherapy and classroom staff and during a session in the gym using soft play and rebound activities. Often the work takes place within the classroom alongside classroom staff; for example, when information technology technicians work with individual pupils and students to support their access to the curriculum. When this is not possible, classroom staff often work along side therapists to ensure that the regime is supported at other times, for example, a session observed in the sensory room. These very close links between staff mean that pupils and students are treated consistently, thus ensuring maximum progress in their learning but also enabling them to feel secure.

Pupils' and students' achievements in communication and in personal development are very good.

10. Pupils' and students' communication needs are very carefully assessed and thoughtful plans for their future learning are prepared. All staff plan in detail with clear objectives to ensure that pupils and students understand the purpose of the lesson. Teacher's planning gives a very clear focus to developing communication skills throughout the school by using a wide range of strategies; for example, speech, eye pointing, facial expression and the use of aids such as 'Big Macs'. A good deal of oral work takes place during all lessons but particularly in literacy sessions when pupils and students express their views about stories they hear. Staff use many imaginative ways to bring the stories alive; for example, the smell and tastes of different cheeses during the story of 'The Old Man who Loved Cheese', the feel of 'gloop' for the story 'Mandy likes Mud', and the smell of garlic in a post-16 food preparation session. Staff place strong emphasis on the use of vocabulary in all lessons; for example the use of key words such as pepper, mince, onions and blender in a post-16 practical lesson which focused on preparing lunch. Another example was in a Key Stage 4 English lesson where there was a strong focus on using positional words. Pupils' and students' individual education plans contain clear literacy and communication targets so that their progress in these areas can be easily tracked. This evidence shows that pupils and students make very good progress over time in developing their communication skills.
11. The provision for pupils' and students' personal, social and health education underpins everything they do and is excellent. All areas of the school make strong contributions to these developments. Pupils and students are expected to be as independent as possible for example when manoeuvring their wheelchairs around the classrooms or working on their own on a numeracy computer programme. There are many opportunities for them to express their views and opinions; for example, in a Key Stage 4 lesson they talked about what makes them afraid or embarrassed. Post-16 students have good opportunities to work with pupils and students from other schools; for example, when pupils from a local high school joined them to write a 'pop' song in mixed groups. There are good links with the local high schools and the further education college, from which all pupils and students benefit both socially and academically.

Pupils' and students' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good.

12. Pupils and students are highly enthusiastic, very interested in their work and the great majority concentrate for surprisingly long periods of time. Good examples were when the younger pupils were listening to

stories and when the pupils in Key Stage 4 and students in post-16, took part in music lessons where they had to join in by singing, playing an instrument, or activating the 'Big Mac' at an appropriate time. All pupils and students are keen to join in discussions and the many interesting activities provided for them.

13. Pupils and students behave very well at all times and all aspects of the work of the school proceed in a tranquil manner. All staff work very hard with pupils and students who exhibit behavioural difficulties which are associated with their disabilities. All staff have high expectations in relation to behaviour, and pupils and students respond well to their calm, consistent approach. All adults give pupils and students effective and sensitive support as they learn to manage their own behaviour. Many pupils and students take an increasing number of independent decisions; for example, when they decide what they would like to eat at breakfast and lunchtimes. When there are occasional outbursts in class, other pupils and students show tolerance and successfully continue with their own tasks.

Pupils and students develop very good relationships with each other and with the adults who work with them.

14. Relationships between pupils and students and staff are respectful, trusting and constructive. The very good teamwork between members of staff provides an excellent model of co-operation for pupils and students. All staff contribute to the school's warm and welcoming atmosphere, within which pupils and students know they are valued and respected. All pupils and students, including those who have few verbal communication skills, listen politely and attentively to adults and each other. Equally, staff listen very carefully to what the pupils and students have to say and value all their contributions. This enables pupils and students to develop their maturity and ensures that their dignity is respected. The emphasis on listening and being aware of others makes a very strong contribution to the quality of the learning of all pupils and students. During the inspection many moments of kindness and courtesy between pupils and students were observed, but particularly noteworthy were the sessions in the sensory room.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

The accreditation of achievements related to pupils' and students' needs in Key Stage 4 and post-16.

15. The curriculum provision for students in post-16 is well-balanced and provides a good range of activities which are well-matched to their needs. The students demonstrate a very wide range of achievements from those working towards the 'P' levels to those working in the Entry Level of Key Skills programmes. A small number of students attend the local further education college where the Foundation Programme uses 'Wordpower' and 'Numberpower' as accreditation. The school currently uses Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Certificate of Achievement. Recently there has been some work on mapping achievements on to the National Skills Profile but the work in identifying appropriate accreditation is at an early stage of development.
16. Although for many pupils and students the current approaches are appropriate there is a significant minority for whom accreditation of their achievements using the nationally recognised qualifications framework, particularly in respect of Key Skills, will prepare them more effectively for life after school.

The governing body's procedures for monitoring and evaluating the whole provision.

17. The governing body is generally well informed about the work of the school through reports from the headteacher and other staff with management responsibilities. The governing body is very supportive of the school and has clear procedures to fulfil their responsibilities. Governors are instrumental in initiating policies or agreeing ones developed in the school. They have also embarked upon a programme of self-review for the whole school and setting targets at all levels within the school. As part of this process they have recently given specific governors responsibility for monitoring specific areas of the provision. To date these cover literacy, numeracy, information technology, care and aspects of the post-16 provision. These governors have started to visit classes, talk to staff and report back to whole governing body. They also receive information from the headteacher on the progress of monitoring the quality of teaching but do not use this to identify where teaching is effective and the areas for improvement. The procedures for identifying that initiatives have fulfilled best value criteria are not sufficiently systematic and rigorous.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- develop appropriate accreditation of achievements related to pupils' and students' needs in Key Stage 4 and post-16 using the nationally recognised qualifications framework;
- further develop the Governing Body's procedures for monitoring and evaluating the whole provision by:
 - developing more systematic and rigorous procedures to identify the quality of teaching;
 - setting clear targets for improvement related to the quality of teaching;
 - continuing to review each area of provision through the work of appointed governors.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	22
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5	32	50	13	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	No of pupils
Number of pupils on the school's roll	56
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	3.8

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	3
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	52
Any other minority ethnic group	1

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y13

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	5
Average class size	6

Education support staff: Y3 – Y13

Total number of education support staff	117
Total aggregate hours worked per week	3302

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Financial information

Financial year	1998-99
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	£
Total income	2122392
Total expenditure	2078499
Expenditure per pupil	38491
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	43892

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	56
Number of questionnaires returned	17

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65.0	29.0	0	0	6.0
My child is making good progress in school.	76.0	24.0	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65.0	29.0	0	0	6.0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50.0	10.0	0	10.0	30.0
The teaching is good.	94.0	6.0	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	82.0	18.0	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	88.0	6.0	6.0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	88.0	12.0	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	65.0	29.0	6.0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	82.0	12.0	6.0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75.0	19.0	6.0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71.0	18.0	6.0	6.0	0