



# Holly Bank School

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 107796  
**LEA** Kirklees  
**Inspection number** 277844  
**Inspection dates** 27 March 2006 to 28 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Mrs Kath Halifax CfBT Lead Inspector

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Special	<b>School address</b>	Roe Head
<b>School category</b>	Non-maintained special		Far Common Road
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	5 to 19		Mirfield, West Yorkshire WF14 ODQ
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01924 490833
<b>Number on roll</b>	39	<b>Fax number</b>	01924 491464
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Anne Mulherin
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	25 January 2000	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Pam King

<b>Age group</b> 5 to 19	<b>Inspection dates</b> 27 March 2006 - 28 March 2006	<b>Inspection number</b> 277844
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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one additional inspector.

## Description of the school

Holly Bank School is part of the charitable organisation, the Hollybank Trust. It provides day and residential education and, since the last inspection, has changed from a residential school to a children's home in order to offer 52 week boarding to meet the greater needs of pupils. The school currently draws from 20 local authorities. All pupils have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, having a statement to provide for their profound and complex needs. Almost all are of white British heritage with a very small number who are of Asian background or dual heritage. Two pupils do not speak English as their main language. Some 34 pupils are designated as looked after by the local authority for respite care. The percentage of pupils entitled to a free school meal is very low. Though the school caters for pupils from Reception to Year 14, at the time of the inspection, the youngest pupils were in Year 3 and almost half the school in Years 12-14, the post-16 unit. The school has been awarded Investors in People and the ECO School Bronze medal.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

Managers are accurate in their judgement that this is a good school with several outstanding features. Achievement is good overall as a result of good teaching and a relevant curriculum. However, though teaching is good overall, more attention needs to be paid to the introductions and review of lessons in some classes. Achievement in personal, social, health and citizenship education (PSHCE) is excellent. Similarly, pupils make very good progress in communication and in the innovative use of technology to allow them to make their needs known and to access all areas of learning. Furthermore, excellent teamwork with other professionals contributes considerably to pupils' well-being and achievement. Outstanding provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contributes significantly to their personal development. Despite the discomfort caused by their severe medical conditions, pupils are extremely well behaved and show great pleasure in the activities provided both in school and in the residences. Adults know their pupils well and pay good attention to health and safety, but need to be more rigorous in their assessment of potential risks in some subjects. Leadership and management are good at all levels. Managers know what the school does well and what needs to be done to improve. Parents, pupils and other professionals speak highly of the school. The school is moving forward at a good rate and has more than kept pace with developments in education. Staff have the skill and enthusiasm to continue to do so. Value for money is good.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of the sixth form**

### **Grade: 2**

Following the last inspection, provision for students in the post-16 unit has improved, especially in the match of accreditation to students' abilities. All students now leave with a nationally recognised award reflecting their achievement. Inspection findings agree with managers' evaluation that the provision is good. Good teaching enables all students to make good progress and achieve well. Provision for personal development is excellent. Students grow in confidence and become increasingly independent. They are encouraged to take responsibility, think for themselves and make choices. Though not capable of independent living, they gain skills for life through the activities provided, for example, shopping, preparing food and assisting in self-help. Students are prepared well for life after school through, for example, visits to colleges in their own locality or day placement in the Trust's own supported learning provision.

## **Effectiveness and efficiency of boarding provision**

### **Grade: 2**

The latest report by the Commission for Social Care Inspections in January 2006 shows suitable improvement from the previous visit. It recognises that almost all of the National Minimum Standards are met. Since the report, managers have responded well to the two requirements identified. The report can be found at [www.csci.org.uk](http://www.csci.org.uk).

The boarding provision is managed very efficiently. Detailed day-to-day records track progress and highlight concerns. Handover meetings and an extensive filing system ensure effective communication between the residences and school. Care is a priority, and the number of staff, including qualified nurses, provides well for individual safety and needs. Every effort is made to include residents in the local community through, for instance, attending church or Brownies. Very good links are maintained with parents. Good use is made of the excellent facilities for evening activities. However, during the inspection, some events had to be cancelled because of the number of pupils who were ill. All pupils make especially good progress towards targets in their individual plans because care staff, teachers and therapists work together effectively, focusing on one particular target for each pupil six weeks at a time.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- Involve pupils more in the introduction and review of lessons.
- Ensure the assessment of potential risks is undertaken for practical lessons.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Progress for all pupils is in very small steps. Nevertheless, taking account of prior attainment, achievement is good. Achievement in PSHCE is outstanding because of how the subject is taught and consistency between the residences and school. Similarly, pupils make very good progress in communication because of the consistent approach and because communication forms the basis of every lesson. Progress in using electronic equipment is outstanding. Pupils demonstrated amazing determination when, for example, using a camera mouse to sequence events, or a switch pad to control an electric wheelchair.

Achievement in all other subjects is good. Though all pupils are wheelchair users, through work with therapists and links with other subjects they exercise and maintain a range of movement. For example, in a science lesson, pupils considered how exercise contributes to healthy living and, with adult help, stretched their arms and rotated their ankles.

More able pupils are challenged through links with mainstream schools. In addition to contributing to their social development, older pupils have gained awards including Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA) Certificate of Achievement in design and technology.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 1**

Pupils' personal development and well-being, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Of note are the numerous opportunities to develop social skills. Equally, there is very good emphasis placed on raising pupils' awareness of cultures different to their own, through drama, art, stories and music. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. They show immense enjoyment at the successes they

achieve. The very caring, supportive relationships fostered by staff especially motivate pupils so they make tremendous efforts with their work, for example, by using switches to communicate or to make things happen. Successes are continually celebrated by all, which increases pupils' enjoyment and raises their confidence. Pupils have good opportunities to express their feelings and views about school. Their independence is encouraged and they are involved in making decisions and choices. A good example is the students' forum to find out meal and drink preferences. Pupils' awareness of healthy lifestyles is developing well, being reinforced at mealtimes, in lessons and in the residences. In a cookery lesson, for instance, pupils were made aware that the recipes they were following could be modified to contain less fat and be baked rather than fried. Pupils have been actively involved in contributing to others and developing economic awareness, such as raising funds for their link school in Tibet by making and selling products. In the context of their health difficulties, pupils' attendance is good.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Lessons are planned meticulously with specific targets for each pupil. These provide suitably challenging activities to enable all to make good progress. Teachers share this information with other adults in the room, and pupils at the start of each lesson. Sometimes this takes too long and teachers do not always use language that pupils can understand. Similarly, when learning is reviewed at the end of each lesson, some teachers do not involve pupils sufficiently in the process. Teachers, support staff and other professionals work very closely and this benefits pupils' learning considerably, especially for individual work. Where teaching is most successful, activities are planned that appeal to all senses. For example, pupils were totally absorbed in a geography lesson about India as they listened to music and a story, felt fabrics, made a garland and smelled incense. Teachers provide a range of tasks to maintain pupils' interest. In most lessons, pupils demonstrate amazing levels of concentration and determination. In a minority of lessons observed, however, the pace of the lesson slowed and pupils were left for a short while with little to occupy them so their rate of learning slowed. Assessment is good and day-to-day assessment is used well when planning further work, but some teachers do not involve pupils sufficiently in the process.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 1**

Managers have been modest in their judgement of good. The curriculum is outstanding. It meets legal requirements. The decision to adopt a topic approach has made learning relevant and exciting. Pupils benefit tremendously from the holistic approach where professionals work together taking account of physical as well as academic needs. Themed days such as the art day working in the style of Andy Goldsworthy, and the ECO days have been especially successful and raised an awareness of the need for

sustainability. Following the criticism of the last inspection, the re-organisation of pupils aged 14 to 19 into the transition group three afternoons a week has widened the options on offer to both age groups and prepared pupils in Years 10 and 11 very well for their transfer to the post-16 unit. An awareness of the world of work is encouraged through a number of activities, including mini-enterprise projects such as making tea towels. The curriculum for PSHCE has been very well thought out and contributes to pupils' health and well-being. Sex and relationships education is tackled sensitively using suitable resources and high quality booklets prepared by the co-ordinator.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The inspection judgement of good is at odds with the managers' evaluation of outstanding though there are many strengths in this aspect. Pupils are extremely well supported through excellent work with an extensive range of professionals including occupational therapy, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists, ICT technicians and medical personnel. The input of these groups is very well co-ordinated, recorded, and fully supports pupils' educational and personal progress. Similarly, very good links with parents increase adults' knowledge of pupils. Procedures for child protection and recording incidents are robust. Meals are healthy and nutritious. Extremely detailed assessments of potential risks have been carried out for individual pupils, transport, and a number of other situations but the identification of potential hazards in practical subjects is not in place. Staff are conscientious about safe practices, particularly infection control. Pupils report they feel safe in school, are helped to understand safety issues, and prepared for life after school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. The senior management team has changed since the last inspection with the appointment of a new headteacher three years ago and the creation of two posts of assistant head. The headteacher has her finger on the pulse of the school and inspires staff with her energy, enthusiasm and ideas for the future. The assistant heads have worked hard improving the curriculum. This is evident in improved provision and achievement.

Governors reorganised two years ago. The committee structure is working well. Links with curriculum managers and governors' individual skills enable them to challenge and question the headteacher about the decisions made. Though there are only a few schools of this type, governors and senior managers have compared the school's performance to that of similar settings and set targets to make the provision even better.

The deployment of resources is excellent and contributes to improved achievement, particularly in communication technology. The recent completion of a high quality multi-therapy centre adds significantly to both the school and residential provision.

An analysis of all aspects of the provision demonstrates an in depth understanding of what the school does well and what needs to be improved. Parents, pupils and other professionals are consulted and their ideas taken into account in planning future developments. Managers sensibly bought advice and support from the local authority effectiveness team and devised a suitable action plan following the report, but some aspects have taken a while to put into place. Furthermore, the recommended individual subject plans tend to be for provision rather than linked to raising achievement.

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## Inspection judgements

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

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1	1
The quality and standards in foundation stage	NA	NA
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	Yes	Yes
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes

### Achievement and standards

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

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	1	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1	
The behaviour of learners	1	
The attendance of learners	2	
How well learners enjoy their education	1	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1	

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	1	1
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	2

<sup>1</sup> 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**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	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 performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets, through quality assurance and self-review	2	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	1	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	1	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
The adequacy and suitability of staff to ensure that learners are protected	Yes	Yes

<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to be healthy</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which providers ensure that learners stay safe</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which learners make a positive contribution</b>	
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
<b>The extent to which schools enable learners to achieve economic well-being</b>	
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**

I know many of you find reading difficult, so I have asked Mrs King and your teachers to talk to you about this letter. As you know, I met a number of you during the recent inspection of your school. I especially enjoyed eating lunch with you, visiting you in your homes and talking to you. Thank you for being so polite and friendly, and helping me in my work.

What I liked most about your school

- You are very well behaved, enjoy all the interesting activities staff prepare for you and try extremely hard, even when things are difficult.
- The way you use switches, computers and other technology to communicate is outstanding.
- Your teachers, care staff, physiotherapists, the occupational therapist, speech and language therapists and nurses work extremely well together to make sure you are comfortable, able to learn and to achieve well.

What I have asked your teachers and governors to do now

- Involve you more in the introduction and end of lessons.
- Make a careful check of things that could be a hazard in practical lessons such as cookery and science.

I enjoyed my short time with you and wish you well for the future.