

Holly House School

Inspection report for residential special school

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Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic
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Address	Holly House School Church Street North Old Whittington CHESTERFIELD Derbyshire S41 9QR
Telephone number	01246 450530
Email	info@hollyhouse.derbyshire.sch.uk
Registered person	Derbyshire County Council
Head of care	Peter Brandt
Head / Principal	Peter Brandt
Date of last inspection	3 May 2006

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About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Service information

Brief description of the service

Holly House is a residential special school run by Derbyshire County Council catering for children of both sexes with emotional and behavioural difficulties, aged 7 to 14 years. The aim of Holly House is to meet the special educational, emotional and behavioural needs of its students and enable students to return to mainstream school wherever possible. The school is situated in a suburb of Chesterfield and students attending the school live in different parts of Derbyshire. Transport to the school is provided by the local authority. The school has its own mini buses for students to use for trips and activities. The residential provision consists of two units, which have their own kitchen/dining facilities, lounge and bathing facilities. There are four single bedrooms and six shared bedrooms. There are activity rooms in both units. The school currently provides residential care for boys only. The residential provision operates Mondays to Fridays in term time only. Students access the residential provision on a voluntary basis and can choose to stay between one night and four nights a week. Students can also stay for extended day activities where students have tea in the residential unit and go home after the evenings activities. At the time of this inspection only one unit was being used and could offer up to five places. Four staff are on duty on each shift in the residential unit. A cook is employed to provide the teatime meals.

Summary

This was a key announced inspection. The purpose of this inspection was to meet the statutory requirement of one announced inspection visit each year and to check on the progress made in meeting the recommendations made in the last inspection report for 3 May 2006. The recommendations made were as follows: 1. The name and contact details of the students' GP should be obtained from all students using the residential provision. 2. Written consent from the parents or carers should be obtained for the use of the wrist leash or any other equipment, which may be considered as a form of restraint. 3. Residential managers should attend further management training to cover staff supervision and appraisal, leadership and the management of teams. 4. The internal quality assurance systems should be implemented and established to ensure they are effective and that students are safeguarded and protected from harm. 5. Support from the local authority should continue to ensure the improvements made continue and the standards achieved are maintained. All the key standards in the six outcomes were inspected during this inspection. Standards 7 (Notifications), 11 (Admission and leaving), 16 (personal appearance, clothing, requisites and personal money), and 21 (Preparation for leaving care) were not inspected

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

Improvements since the last inspection

To encourage healthy eating, bowls of fresh fruit are now available in the residential unit. A new file has been set up which contains the new Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and the head of care has attended training on LSCB procedures. The head teacher has produced and presented training to taxi drivers and escorts on safeguarding procedures, behaviour management and the transporting of medication. A major incident form has also been produced for taxi drivers and escorts, to complete in the event of an incident with a student taking place during travelling to and from the school. The head of care has consulted

with the local fire authority regarding the required frequency of fire safety training for staff. Residential staff now receive fire safety training every six months. Residential staff now attend students' annual reviews. A new 'Welcome' booklet has been produced for students using the residential provision including extended day activities. This is very informative about routines, expectations and services provided for students staying in the residential unit. The head of care and deputy head of care have continued to develop their managerial skills. They have both attended courses on continued professional development and supervision skills and the head of care has started studying for the Registered Manager's Award. This has resulted in the residential managers being more confident and competent in carrying out their managerial tasks which has ultimately resulted in a higher standard of care being provided to the students. All residential staff have personal development portfolios which contain their professional development needs, training records and supervision records. The head of care has produced a three year plan which outlines how the five outcomes of Every Child Matters and National Minimum Standards (NMS) will be met. This includes areas for development and ongoing monitoring and review of progress made. Internal quality assurance systems have improved. Records and staff practice is being monitored and where shortfalls are identified these are being addressed. Staff are given support where areas of need are identified. The head of care provides a written response to the Standard 33 reports which outlines actions taken to address the recommendations made in the reports.

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Students live with their parents or carers, who have overall responsibility for their child's health needs. Staff are committed to meeting students' health needs and promote a healthy lifestyle ensuring their needs are met whilst staying in the residential unit. Care records give clear details of health needs and what actions to take to meet the needs of students. Procedures are in place to ensure that medicines are appropriately handled and stored to safeguard students' welfare. However, it is unclear if some medication should be managed in line with the guidelines for the management of controlled drugs. The practice of staff breaking tablets in half to give a student the prescribed dose, does not ensure the correct dose is given or protect against the risk of cross infection. Staff who are responsible for the administration of medication receive training in this area. Parental consent is obtained for the administration of medication. Accident report forms are completed but these do not give details of any monitoring or follow up action. The head of care and head teacher produced a form during this inspection to address this shortfall. Staff receive training in basic first aid. The standard of meals at the school is very good and healthy eating is actively promoted. Menus give a range of well-balanced meals which include fresh fruit and vegetables. The school 'tuck shop' does not sell sweets or crisps but sells healthy option foods such as fresh and dried fruit. Fresh fruit is available in bowls in the residential unit. Choices are given. Individual needs and likes are catered for. The head of care, the cook and the local authority's catering manager are devising menus specifically for the residential unit with a view to implementation when the new school year starts in September 2007. For this purpose evaluation forms were used to ensure that students' likes and dislikes are taken into account. However, students are not routinely consulted about the menus. Students say they like the meals and say they have plenty to eat. Mealtimes are relaxed. Socially acceptable behaviour is encouraged by staff and the behaviour of the students at mealtimes is very good. Students are encouraged to be as independent as possible and expected to help with the domestic chores. Students sometimes go shopping for food and cook their own tea in residential with support from staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Students are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Systems are in place and training is provided to all staff who have contact with students to ensure students are protected from the risk of harm or abuse. Students say they feel safe staying in residential and feel well looked after by staff. Students are afforded privacy and dignity whilst staying in the residential unit. Students say that staff knock on their bedroom doors before entering. All records are kept securely. There is a complaints procedure, which is on display in different parts of the school. It does not include the contact details for Ofsted. Records are kept of complaints received and actions taken. Complaints are dealt with appropriately. Students' concerns are listened to and acted upon where appropriate. Students say that they would tell their key worker if they were unhappy about something. There is a file which contains the LSCB procedures. The file contains a referral flow chart for staff to refer to. Staff including taxi drivers and escorts receive child protection training. Child protection issues are referred promptly to Local Safeguarding Children teams and appropriate action is taken by the school to ensure the safety and well-being of students. However, there are delays in the Local Safeguarding Children team arranging strategy meetings or discussions which may leave students and staff vulnerable. Anti-bullying posters are up around the school. Students say that bullying happens a lot in education time and staff deal with it. Students say that bullying does not happen in the residential unit. Staff are aware of the need to be vigilant and high staffing ratios in the residential unit help to reduce the risk of bullying. Care records including risk assessments do not include any reference to the risk of bullying, although the major incident forms which are used include a section on bullying. Bullying is not a regular 'agenda item' in key worker sessions. The school has a clear policy on 'Absence of a child without authority'. Students' risk assessments include a section on the risk of absconding. Clear boundaries are set for students whilst staying in the residential unit and students are clear about what is expected of them, in terms of their behaviour. Students are encouraged and supported to take responsibility for their behaviour and to face the consequences of their actions. A reward system operates in the school and students understand the system very well and are enthusiastic about it. Sanctions are used for inappropriate and unacceptable behaviour although sanctions are not used very often in the residential unit. Records of sanctions imposed are kept. Some entries lack sufficient detail on the nature of the behaviour which results in a sanction. The lack of detail makes it difficult to understand the severity of the sanction imposed and leaves the reader unclear about staff imposing sanctions fairly and consistently. Sanctions do not always give a timescale which potentially makes it difficult for students to achieve or work towards a goal. Records of restraint are kept. Restraint is not often used in the residential unit. Staff receive training on Restrictive Physical Intervention (RPI). The management of health and safety is good. Records seen show that appropriate actions are taken to ensure the school is a safe environment. Equipment is serviced as required. Weekly fire alarm tests are carried out and fire drills are carried out regularly. Risk assessments for activities and for the environment are in place although these were not looked at. Staff receive fire safety training at appropriate intervals and students are given information on the fire evacuation procedure. Recruitment checks of new staff are carried out to protect students from the risk of harm or abuse. However, Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks are not always obtained before staff start working at the school. Although safeguards are put in place to ensure that the staff member does not work unsupervised before receipt of a CRB check, there is no documentary evidence to support this. CRB checks have not been obtained for ancillary staff them. CRB checks are obtained for all taxi drivers and escorts.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Students are encouraged and supported by staff to pursue their particular interests and try different activities which enables them to develop self-confidence and acquire different skills. Joint key worker sessions involving the student, the class teacher, and the residential key worker take place. All students have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (SEN). Students have Individual Education Plans (IEP) and reports are produced by both the class teacher and their residential key worker for their annual reviews. Residential staff attend annual reviews. Students have ample opportunity to access the educational facilities outside the school day. There are excellent opportunities for students to pursue a wide range of social and leisure activities both inside and outside the school. Students are encouraged to try new activities which helps to build up their self-confidence and self-esteem. Students are enthusiastic and enjoy these activities. Individual risk assessments are in place. Students receive a high quality service based on their needs and needs are met during their time in the residential unit.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Positive relationships exist between staff and the students. Residential staff are caring and provide clear boundaries with the emphasis being on the encouragement of socially acceptable behaviour. The staff team have a range of skills and experience which compliment each other and this allows for a good level of care to be given. Staffing levels allow for choice and flexibility in the routines and range of activities provided. Staff are knowledgeable about students' needs. Key worker sessions are held, some of which are joint with education staff and records are kept. The sessions tend to be focused on the student's targets and behaviour and do not demonstrate that students are asked about the day to day running and routines of the residential unit. Care plans and risk assessments are of a good standard. Records are signed by the key worker and the student and they are regularly reviewed. Care records are based around the objectives in the students' care plans. The quality of recording and daily logs is improving and they are monitored by the head of care as part of the internal quality assurance system. There is regular contact between the school and parents or carers. Students are encouraged and supported to have contact with parents whilst staying in the residential unit. Staff are sensitive to students who may be 'missing home' and support them to make contact with their families.

Achieving economic wellbeing

The provision is outstanding.

A full inspection of the premises did not take place. Systems are in place to ensure no unauthorised persons have access to the school. The residential accommodation is of a very high standard with excellent facilities, which provide a comfortable and safe environment for students to stay in. Communal areas are well furnished and decorated to a high standard. Students' bedrooms are decorated and furnished to a high standard. Students are encouraged to bring in their personal belongings. Students are happy with their bedrooms. Students say that they always use the same bedroom when they stay. The student's own 'Welcome' booklet is placed in their bedrooms for when they stay in the residential unit.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The statement of purpose reflects the services offered and gives the information required in Standard 1 of the NMS. A 'Welcome' booklet is given to each student using the residential provision. It gives information about routines, expectations and services provided for students staying in the residential unit including extended day activities. Students' care files contain all the information required by Standard 18.2. The quality of recording has improved and records are signed and dated. The deployment of staffing has changed since the last inspection. One unit is being used for overnight stays. Waking night staff are no longer used and the nights are covered by two staff sleeping in each night. As a result of this change there are now four staff on each shift which includes a senior member of staff. This has resulted in increased support and supervision for students and more flexibility in offering different activities. Staff say that the change in night time cover has not impacted on the students and that they are very rarely called upon by students during the night. No residential staff have left since the last inspection in May 2006. Staffing rotas give time for staff to carry out key worker tasks, have regular staff meetings and assist in the classrooms most Fridays. Weekly staff meetings are held and records kept. Staff are given the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues including children's behaviour and progress. Staff receive the required mandatory training and courses which are appropriate to the work. Staff are also encouraged and supported to attend courses where their individual interests lie which will benefit the students. Most of the care staff have the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 3 in the Caring for Children and Young People and one staff member is studying for it. All residential staff have personal development portfolios. The head of care and deputy head of care both have the NVQ Level 4 in Care and Management and have attended training in supervision skills which has enabled them to carry out their roles and responsibilities more effectively. The head of care is studying for the Registered Manager's Award. New staff follow an induction programme which includes time with the head of care going through policies and procedures and the routines of the residential unit, training in health and safety and child protection and time on shift shadowing other staff. New staff also attend the local authority's two day induction programme. Staff including the head of care and the deputy head of care are receiving supervision but not always at the required intervals. Staff say that they find supervision useful and supportive and receive copies of their supervision notes. Quality assurance monitoring systems are in place. Each member of the school's management team is responsible for specific areas. Records and staff practice is monitored and support is given to staff where necessary. There is a three year plan in place which outlines how the five outcomes of Every Child Matters and NMS will be met. This includes areas for development and ongoing monitoring and review of progress made in meeting the targets. Standard 33 visits are carried out every half term and reports produced. Checks are made on the areas prescribed in Standard 33.3 and the visitor also assesses progress made in meeting the recommendations made in previous inspection reports. The head of care provides a written response to the report outlining what actions are being taken to address the recommendations made in the report.

What must be done to secure future improvement?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- take advice from the pharmacist or school nurse on the handling and storage of controlled drugs. NMS 14
- take advice from the pharmacist about breaking tablets in half. NMS 14
- update the complaints procedure to include reference to Ofsted. NMS 4
- ensure that records of sanctions give sufficient detail of reasons for the sanction given and ensure a timescale is given for all sanctions imposed. NMS 10
- ensure all new staff receive a satisfactory CRB check before starting work. NMS 27
- obtain CRB checks for all ancillary staff. NMS 27
- ensure all staff receive supervision at the required intervals. NMS 30.

Annex

Annex A

National Minimum Standards for residential special school

Being healthy

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children live in a healthy environment and the health and intimate care needs of each child are identified and promoted (NMS 14)
- children are provided with healthy, nutritious meals that meet their dietary needs (NMS 15)

Ofsted considers 14 the key standard to be inspected.

Staying safe

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children's privacy is respected and information about them is confidentially handled (NMS 3)
- children's complaints are addressed without delay and children are kept informed of progress in their consideration (NMS 4)
- the welfare of children is promoted, children are protected from abuse, and an appropriate response is made to any allegation or suspicion of abuse (NMS 5)
- children are protected from bullying (NMS 6)
- all significant events relating to the protection of children in the school are notified to the appropriate authorities by the head of the school or designated person (NMS 7)
- children who are absent without authority are protected in accordance with written guidance and responded to positively on return (NMS 8)
- children are assisted to develop appropriate behaviour through the encouragement of acceptable behaviour and constructive staff responses to inappropriate behaviour (NMS 10)
- children live in schools that provide physical safety and security (NMS 26)
- there is careful selection and vetting of all staff and volunteers, and monitoring of visitors to the school to prevent children being exposed to potential abusers (NMS 27)

Ofsted considers 3, 4, 5, 6, 8, 10, 26 and 27 the key standards to be inspected.

Enjoying and achieving

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- the school's residential provision actively supports children's educational progress at the school (NMS 12)
- children have ample opportunity to engage in purposeful and enjoyable activities within the school and in the local community (NMS 13)
- children receive individual support when they need it (NMS 22)

Ofsted considers 12 and 22 the key standards to be inspected.

Making a positive contribution

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children are encouraged and supported to make decisions about their lives and to influence the way the school is run; no child should be assumed to be unable to communicate their views (NMS 2)
- children have sound relationships with staff based on honesty and mutual respect (NMS 9)
- children experience planned and sensitively handled admission and leaving processes (NMS 11)

- children have their needs assessed and written plans outline how these needs will be met while at school (NMS 17)
- in accordance with their wishes children are able and encouraged to maintain contact with their parents and families while at school (NMS 20)

Ofsted considers 2, 17 and 20 the key standards to be inspected.

Achieving economic well-being

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children can wear their own clothing outside school time, can secure personal requisites and stationery while at school, and are helped to look after their own money (NMS 16)
- children about to leave care are prepared for the transition into independent living (NMS 21)
- children live in well designed and pleasant premises, which provide sufficient space and facilities to meet their needs
- children live in accommodation which is appropriately decorated, furnished and maintained to a high standard, providing adequate facilities for their use (NMS 24)
- children are able to carry out their personal care in privacy and with dignity (NMS 25)

Ofsted considers the key standard to be inspected.

Organisation

The intended outcomes for these standards are:

- children, parents, staff and placing authorities have access to a clear statement of the school's care principles and practice for boarding pupils (NMS 1)
- children's needs, development and progress are recorded to reflect their individuality and their group interactions (NMS 18)
- there are adequate records of the staff and child groups of the school (NMS 19)
- children are looked after by staff who understand their needs and are able to meet them consistently (NMS 28)
- children are looked after by staff who are trained to meet their needs (NMS 29)
- children are looked after by staff who are themselves supported and guided in safeguarding and promoting the children's welfare (NMS 30)
- children receive the care and services they need from competent staff (NMS 31)
- children and staff enjoy the stability of efficiently run schools (NMS 32)
- the governing body, trustees, local authority, proprietor or other responsible body monitors the welfare of the children in the school (NMS 33)

Ofsted considers 1, 28, 31 and 32 the key standards to be inspected.