

Frederick Holmes School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	118139
Local Authority	Kingston upon Hull City of
Inspection number	358269
Inspection dates	8–9 March 2011
Reporting inspector	Declan McCarthy

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

Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2–19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	79
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	13
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr David Hunter
Headteacher	Mrs Sue Garland-Grimes
Date of previous school inspection	15 January 2008
School address	Inglemire Lane Hull HU6 8JJ
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. They observed 14 lessons, including a joint observation with the headteacher, and saw 12 teachers. Meetings were held with a very small number of parents and carers, groups of pupils, members of the governing body and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at information about attainment and progress, the schools methods for tracking progress, monitoring and self-evaluation and documentation, including how well the school safeguards its pupils. They analysed 25 responses to the parental questionnaires as well as those from pupils and staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether there were any variations in pupil progress in different subjects, in different groups and if there were any factors which might contribute to these outcomes.
- The effectiveness of the use of assessment information in meeting pupils' different learning needs in lessons and in planning new developments in the curriculum.
- The effectiveness of the leadership role of middle leaders and the strategic oversight of the governing body in building capacity.

Information about the school

Frederick Holmes School caters for pupils with a wide range of complex learning difficulties and physical disabilities, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs. A high proportion have profound and multiple learning difficulties. Nearly all pupils use a wheelchair and an equally high proportion use augmentative and alternative communication aids. Pupils are referred from three local authorities: the East Riding of Yorkshire, Hull City and North Lincolnshire. An above average proportion of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. Nearly all pupils are from White British backgrounds with a very small percentage from minority-ethnic backgrounds. There are a few pupils learning English as an additional language. There are 14 children in the Early Years Foundation Stage, accommodated in one class, 10 of whom attend part-time in the Nursery. There is separate post-16 provision in the school, which is known as the College Centre.

The school has achieved the Basic Skills Quality Mark, the Healthy Schools award along with the Healthy Heart Award, the Activemark for sport and the Financial Management Standard in Schools. There have been a number of changes since the last inspection; a new headteacher was appointed in September 2010, there has been an increase in staffing and the pupil profile has changed, with a higher proportion that are referred with complex needs. The school no longer manages the outreach service for pupils with physical disabilities. The accommodation has been expanded and the school has recently begun to offer extended provision at the end of the school day. The school has recently been successful in its 'Building Schools for the Future' bid to further improve the accommodation.

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

Frederick Holmes is a good school, which meets the wide-ranging and complex learning and physical needs of its pupils well. Outstanding care, guidance and support have led to outstanding behaviour and pupils making every effort to always stay healthy. The outstanding promotion of safeguarding ensures that pupils are extremely safe, and this is reflected in their own views and those of parents, who highlighted this as a particular strength of the school. Consistently good teaching and good improvements in the use of teachers' information about their pupils, with good systems for tracking progress, have led to good learning and progress for all pupils, including those with profound and multiple learning difficulties. Very good teamwork between staff and high-quality support from teaching assistants in adapting methods and approaches ensure that all pupils enjoy full and equal access to learning. These highly effective features are reflected in the very positive views expressed by parents and carers, for example, as one stated, 'I am very pleased with the progress my child has made and it is a very well run and altogether fantastic school' And another parent wrote, 'The school is like a second family to my son, everyone is happy and welcoming and you can feel the good atmosphere when you enter the school.'

These views reflect the outstanding links with parents developed through the excellent leadership of the headteacher who is ably supported by her senior leadership team. Their accurate self-evaluation, based on good monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning, has led to rapid developments in systems for tracking pupils' progress, and the school has a good capacity to improve. This has led to a very accurate view of pupil progress to enable leaders to clearly demonstrate that there are no significant differences in the progress of any groups of pupils. Senior leaders are also using best practice to further develop pupils' communication skills across the school. All areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been tackled effectively. However, middle leaders' use of assessment information and the outcomes of monitoring teaching and learning in their subjects is not fully developed. Governance is good.

The curriculum is effective with good opportunities for learning in the Early Years Foundation Stage, enabling children to make good progress, although the use of the outdoor area is underdeveloped. Students in the sixth form make consistently good progress and excellent progress in their vocational courses and in developing their independent learning skills, as a result of the outstanding provision for work-related learning and partnerships with other providers, such as colleges.

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What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Ensure middle leaders improve outcomes in their subjects by focusing their monitoring more sharply on pupils' learning and progress by making better use of assessment information.
- Develop the outdoor play area so that children in the Early Years Foundation Stage can make more free choices in learning either inside or outside the classroom.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

2

Children enter the Nursery with a very low level of skills and as they move through the Reception Year they make good progress in all areas of learning. Given the severity and complexity of their special educational needs and/or disabilities, it is not appropriate to judge attainment against national norms. As they move through the school pupils continue to make good progress so that by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 4, students have built successfully on their earlier learning, both in school and at local colleges. This enables them to achieve good results in a range of accredited courses, which include the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network, including the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness and unit awards. As a result pupils' achievements are good overall.

There are examples of exceptional individual achievements. For example, a student gaining two GCSE's at the higher grades in information and communication technology as a result of a well-developed link with a local secondary school. Older pupils and those in the College Centre make outstanding progress in developing their communication skills and in their vocational courses. This was seen in a work experience placement during the inspection where a student with severe physical and communication difficulties worked hard demonstrating very good computer skills as a clerical assistant, showing great resilience and determination in meeting the challenges presented. Boys and girls make equally good progress. All groups, including looked after children, pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language and those with profound and multiple learning difficulties, make equally good progress. This was also reflected in lessons, where teaching assistants made very good use of resources such as 'switches', objects of reference and communication aids which are matched exactly to the pupils' prior attainment. Pupils remain totally absorbed in their learning.

Pupils' good enjoyment of school is reflected in their participation in the range of activities provided, such as a residential visit where they fully participated in outdoor and adventurous activities. Pupils' excellent behaviour is reflected in the way they show sensitivity and are very supportive to one another, for example, in moving around the school in a very safe and controlled manner. A planned after-school visit to a Chinese restaurant with parents and carers raised pupils' awareness and understanding of diversity. Pupils make a good contribution to the school and community through the Hull City Youth Parliament where they discuss issues related to safe internet use and through the school council, whose views are heeded. Pupils were instrumental in gaining funding from the governing body to have a shelter installed in the school grounds. Strong community links make a considerable contribution to the development of pupils' social skills, self-esteem and personal independence. Pupils' outstanding healthy lifestyles are reflected in their eagerness to participate in sports and healthy eating. For example, all students at the College Centre can choose to participate in swimming and almost all do so.

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Pupils who attend the local leisure centre also choose energetic physical activities. Excellent work-related learning programmes for the oldest pupils and good progress in literacy and numeracy helps pupils to be well prepared for the future. The school has worked hard to achieve broadly average attendance and has seen a significant improvement in attendance over the past year.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	2
Taking into account:	*
Pupils' attainment ¹	
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
The extent to which pupils feel safe	1
Pupils' behaviour	1
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	2
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	3
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

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

* In some special schools inspectors do not make a judgement about attainment in relation to expectations of the pupils' age.

How effective is the provision?

Good teaching is found throughout the school. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and teachers have good subject knowledge and a very good grasp of the wide range of pupils' learning needs in their classes. They use this information well to inform their lesson plans, ensuring that teaching assistants are deployed to maximum effect in supporting pupils' learning and that work and resources are carefully matched to pupils' varied needs. This was seen in a work-related learning lesson where teaching assistants used signing and limited choices so students could successfully identify some occupations in school. Teachers make good use of the newly introduced assessment systems to track progress more accurately than previously. Teachers have high expectations for learning and use a variety of interesting strategies to capture pupils' interest. Teamwork between teachers

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and teaching assistants is strong with teaching assistants continuously checking how well each pupil is doing, and accurately recording their observations during the lesson.

There is a sharp focus on the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology, within a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum. Good enrichment is provided through a wide range of activities, visitors and visits, including the recently developed after-school and holiday clubs. All learners have a personalised curriculum tailored to their individual needs. The 14 to 19 curriculum is very well conceived and enables a smooth progression through the learning modules. An outstanding work-related learning programme builds confidence and widens the aspirations of students in preparing for life after school. Strong partnerships with local colleges and schools have a considerable impact on learning and progress, as seen, for example, in a lesson held in a well-equipped science laboratory in a local high school.

Key strengths of the outstanding care, guidance and support include the excellent and well-managed transition arrangements, the promotion of attendance, and first-rate partnerships with very well-informed parents and carers. Some pupils are supplied with 'switches' to take home with their home-school books with very useful advice and guidance from staff. This also enables parents and carers to know what their children have been doing in school that day. The work of health professionals and therapists enables uninterrupted learning wherever possible through, for example, the administration of medicines in the classroom so disruption to the pupils' learning is minimised. Individual learning plans, medical plans, personal care plans, behaviour support, risk assessments, speech and language therapy, physiotherapy and occupational therapy are all jointly planned with the professionals involved to precisely meet the learning and personal needs of each pupil and maximise their learning.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	2
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	2
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

The headteacher's strong leadership, with excellent support from her senior team, has led to rapid improvements in assessment systems and their use, and in the development of the curriculum. Staff share the same vision for improvement and are keen to drive initiatives forward. Senior leaders rightly recognise that middle leaders are not yet improving subjects as well as they might by making good use of assessment information to raise achievement further. The governing body support the school well and undertake focused visits to gain their own view of the school so they can better hold it to account for its work. They ensure all legal responsibilities are met, particularly in relation to

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safeguarding. All safeguarding procedures, especially those for safer recruitment, are exceptionally well implemented and the site is extremely secure.

The school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination exceptionally well as all groups of pupils have full access to all the school offers and make equally good progress. The school has carried out a full audit of the impact of its community cohesion action plan on the personal development of pupils. Exceptional partnerships and links with parents, which are reflected in the very high positive response rate to the inspection questionnaire have a very positive impact on pupils' learning and well-being. Good use is made of resources to ensure good learning and progress so that the school achieves good value for money.

These are the grades for leadership and management

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

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children make good progress in all areas of learning in the Early Years Foundation stage. When nursery-aged children arrive in the class, they settle into their routines quickly with good support and make good progress. They continue to build on this progress throughout the Reception Year, which is reflected in at least good and sometimes excellent progress in their personal development. With support, children have opportunities to make choices, but the outdoor area for learning is not always used sufficiently to enable children to choose between activities indoors or outdoors. Behaviour is at least good, children enjoy and respond positively with smiles and vocalisations to the involvement of adults in their learning. Teaching is good, with a variety of activities such as songs and sensory experiences used to capture children's imaginations and promote enjoyment of learning. Good leadership ensures that staff work as a team to systematically record small gains in learning and develop a consistent approach in

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personalising learning for each child. The safeguarding arrangements for children are outstanding so they feel extremely safe in school.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2

Sixth form

Provision in the sixth form is good and leads to good outcomes. Staff know the needs of each student very well and plan learning experiences which are tailored well to meet individual needs. There are good opportunities for accreditation through a range of vocational and life-skills courses and strong links with local colleges. For example, a student has a long-term goal to complete a sports award course. To assist this transition the College Centre have arranged for him to take the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Students with more profound learning difficulties benefit from visiting speakers from their planned placements to ensure a smooth transition. Teaching is good and strong teamwork with teaching assistants ensures all students engage in their learning. Leaders have ambitious plans for the future and their vision is currently being shared with the staff. There is a strong drive for improvement, which reflects a thorough and accurate self-evaluation. Good leadership has ensured strong community partnerships with, for example, a high street bank, a local nursery, and Hull City Council for work experience

These are the grades for the sixth form

Overall effectiveness of the sixth form	2
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for students in the sixth form	2
The quality of provision in the sixth form	2
Leadership and management of the sixth form	2

Views of parents and carers

The rate of return of parental questionnaires was high for this type of school and all parents and carers were overwhelmingly positive about the school's work and its impact on their children's learning and well-being. The very few parents and carers who expressed concerns relating to their children's progress, the support for learning and the quality of preparation for the next stage of education were, nevertheless, happy with their

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children's experiences at this school. Inspectors looked at these issues and found that all pupils were making equally good progress as a result of outstanding support so that they were well prepared for life beyond school. Inspection findings endorse the positive views of parents and carers.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Frederick Holmes School 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 25 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 79 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	21	84	4	16	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	92	2	8	0	0	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	19	76	5	20	1	4	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	72	6	24	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	84	3	12	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	18	72	6	24	1	4	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	19	76	6	24	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)	21	84	3	12	1	4	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	22	88	2	8	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	19	76	4	16	0	0	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	23	92	1	4	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	21	84	3	12	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	22	88	3	12	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	59	35	3	3
Primary schools	9	44	39	7
Secondary schools	13	36	41	11
Sixth forms	15	39	43	3
Special schools	35	43	17	5
Pupil referral units	21	42	29	9
All schools	13	43	37	8

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 August 2010 and are consistent with the latest published official statistics about maintained school inspection outcomes (see www.ofsted.gov.uk).

The sample of schools inspected during 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.

Sixth form figures reflect the judgements made for the overall effectiveness of the sixth form in secondary schools, special schools and pupil referral units.

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">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
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.



17 March 2011

Dear Pupils

Inspection of Frederick Holmes School, Hull, HU6 8JJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school. We enjoyed talking to you and seeing you work so hard in your lessons. You told us many good things about your school, which has helped us to write this inspection report.

We agree with you that yours is a good school. Your behaviour is excellent and you all get along extremely well together. Staff provide outstanding care for you, helping you to always stay very safe and healthy. You all make good progress in your learning and enjoy school a lot because teaching is good. Staff know you so well and make good use of this knowledge to help you improve your learning. You told me that you know how well you are doing because teachers tell you and give you targets to work towards. You have the same opportunities to participate in all the school offers you and this is seen in the equally good progress you are all making in learning. The headteacher and senior staff manage your school well and have excellent links with your parents and carers. Your school has outstanding partnerships with other schools, colleges and with other outside professional staff to promote your learning and well-being. To make the school even better, we have asked your teachers to:

- make sure they use their knowledge of how well you are doing to help you make even more progress in different subjects
- develop the outside learning area for the youngest children so they can choose to learn in the classroom or outside.

You can help by continuing to do your best and by letting your teachers know if you get stuck in your work. I wish you good luck for the future

Yours sincerely

Declan McCarthy

Lead inspector

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