



# Holly Lodge Girls' College

## Inspection Report

**Unique Reference Number** 104688  
**LEA** Liverpool  
**Inspection number** 277207  
**Inspection dates** 22 March 2006 to 23 March 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Ms Ruth James HMI

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

<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary	<b>School address</b>	Queen's Drive
<b>School category</b>	Community		West Derby
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 18		Liverpool, Merseyside L13 0AE
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Girls	<b>Telephone number</b>	0151 228 3772
<b>Number on roll</b>	1426	<b>Fax number</b>	0151 228 0161
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair of governors</b>	Mr Peter Killeen
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	4 October 1999	<b>Headteacher</b>	Ms Julia Tinsley

Age group	Inspection dates	Inspection number
11 to 18	22 March 2006 - 23 March 2006	277207

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and four additional inspectors.

## Description of the school

Holly Lodge Girls' College is a specialist Arts College located on the outskirts of Liverpool. It is larger than average with a sixth form of 173 pupils. Most of the pupils are of white British heritage with a small number from minority ethnic heritages. Very few pupils have a first language other than English. Most pupils come from the immediate locality, but a small proportion travel from other parts of the city. Some pupils come from relatively disadvantaged areas. The proportion of pupils with additional learning needs is about average but the number with statements of special educational need is low.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## **Overall effectiveness of the school**

### **Grade: 2**

This is a good and improving school. Results have improved and pupils make good progress at Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4, and satisfactory progress in the sixth form. However, standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 4 are not as good as in some other subjects.

Pupils enjoy being at school. They behave well and they are courteous to each other and to adults they meet in school. Attendance is below average despite the persistent efforts of the school. Teaching and learning are good overall. Pupils enjoy lessons where they are actively involved in activities such as group work or discussions. Pupils' progress is assessed and monitored, but in some subjects this is not sufficiently rigorous.

There is a good range of extra-curricular activities. The Key Stage 4 curriculum offers a good choice of courses including vocational options. Pupils are well cared for. The school works well with external partners and agencies to support the education and welfare of pupils.

The headteacher and leadership team are effective and well supported by staff. Senior staff have an accurate view of what needs to be improved and the capacity to improve is good.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The school judges the effectiveness of the sixth form to be satisfactory and inspectors agree. Pupils enter with standards which are a little below average and make satisfactory progress overall. This enables them to achieve A-E pass rates in line with national averages in general certificate of education advanced level (GCE A level) examinations. Although there are differences between subjects, there are clear indications of improved standards amongst the current cohort of sixth formers. Pupils are well taught, but there are limitations in the setting of individual targets. Pupils have access through the collaborative arrangements with other schools to a variety of courses. This is helping to boost recruitment and retention rates. Some appropriate pathways from general certificate of secondary education (GCSE) courses are in place, but the school recognises it needs to offer more level 1 and 2 courses. There are some well-supported extra-curricular activities, such as sport. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy their education. Opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility and play a fuller role in the life of the school are starting to grow, for example, through the re-launched sixth form council and in mentoring younger pupils. Pupils are well supported by their subject teachers. The monitoring and support role of staff, including form tutors, in tracking pupils' attendance and performance and in providing more appropriate guidance for them is in need of development. New leadership has put into effect improvements in several aspects of provision providing a good base for the future.

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

- Improve the attendance of pupils where it is below average.
- Improve the achievement of pupils in GCSE English and mathematics.
- Improve the rigour and consistency of individual progress monitoring.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Pupils enter the school with attainment slightly lower than the national average.

At Key Stage 3, results are improving although they are below average overall. Results in English improved significantly between 2003 and 2005 and pupils make particularly good progress in this subject. Progress is also good in mathematics during Key Stage 3 and is satisfactory in science.

At Key Stage 4, the proportion of pupils achieving five or more A\*-C grades at GCSE has improved significantly over the last five years, and reached 60% in 2005. This is slightly above the national average. Pupils do better in arts subjects and languages than in other subjects. Good results are also obtained in General National Vocational Qualification (GNVQ) intermediate information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils perform less well in GCSE English and mathematics. Only about one quarter of pupils achieve five A\*-C passes including both English and mathematics, which is lower than the national average. The proportion of pupils who do not attain any GCSEs is similar to that found nationally. Overall pupils make good progress from Year 7 to Year 11. Progress in English and mathematics is average. Pupils with additional learning needs make good progress.

Standards and progress in the sixth form are as expected but with some variation between subjects.

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

### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

Personal development and well-being are good. The majority of pupils are positive about school and show appropriate attitudes towards their learning.

The school is committed to the inclusion of all pupils. This is particularly demonstrated through recently improved behaviour management procedures which draw on the support of outside agencies. This has significantly contributed to the elimination of permanent exclusions. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school, and pupils have positive relationships with each other and with staff.

The school's specialist status is used well to promote personal development, for example, through participation in the wider community. Pupils have worked with a

number of professional artists, and have participated in a wide range of creative partnerships resulting in the exhibition of their work in city and national galleries.

Overall, there is good provision for social, cultural, moral and spiritual development and some elements of outstanding practice. For example, pupils learn about and reflect on the life experiences of others through presentations by pupils and speakers from the local community in assemblies, as well as through school displays and activities across the curriculum. Pupils are also able to become more self-reliant and to participate in the school through the pupils' council, food council, peer mentoring, and fund raising for charities.

Despite significant efforts, the school's progress in addressing attendance has been limited. Though slowly rising over recent years, attendance remains below the national average.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and some excellent teaching was seen. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils who are well behaved and willing to learn. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations, the pace is brisk and there is constant challenge. Learning is enjoyable. Teachers ask searching questions, which result in prompt responses and good progress. Pupils enjoy pair and group work, where there are opportunities to work independently. Pupils with learning difficulties and/or disabilities progress well and support by teaching assistants is valued when available. Relevant homework is set. However, there is some inconsistency in marking and written feedback to pupils across the school and within departments. In some areas, appropriate individual targets are set and pupils' progress is carefully monitored against these, but in other areas assessment processes and records lack rigour and consistency. Although there is now greater focus on the use of assessment data to raise standards, the full impact has yet to be seen. The school has a system to monitor the work of teachers which is linked to the provision of staff development opportunities.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

#### **Grade for sixth form: 3**

The school provides a wide range of courses that are well matched to pupils' abilities. There has been a recent curriculum review and an increasing number of vocational courses enhance the choice for pupils in Key Stage 4, in order to cater for differing abilities. The Uplands programme caters well for the many varied needs of disaffected pupils. Specialist arts college status has enabled a further variety of subjects to be studied, for example, ceramics and photography. Opportunities to develop essential life skills are provided through work related courses and young enterprise schemes. The newly introduced 'learning to learn' programme in Year 7 is proving popular, and

is helpful with transition from primary to high school. There are good links with primary schools, high schools, colleges, businesses and the community. The curriculum is complemented by many extra-curricular activities, which are well supported. Pupils benefit from residential experiences and a wealth of cultural opportunities, including theatre visits and foreign travel.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Staff are skilled in supporting and caring for pupils and work well with a wide range of agencies, including parents, to ensure that all pupils are safe and progress well. Child protection procedures and risk assessments are carefully attended to. There are also good arrangements for dealing with bullying and conflict which help contribute to the calm atmosphere around the school.

Good arrangements throughout the school are in place for identifying and supporting those at risk. The good care and support by the Skills Base staff is particularly valued by pupils most at risk. Most pupils have understanding of their targets and what they need to do to improve, but more work is needed to ensure that assessment is regular and rigorous across the school.

Arrangements for choosing future course options in Year 9 have been improved this year. Careers guidance is offered. The needs of pupils are also met through alternative provision, with support for fostering basic skills and preparation for the world of work. There are effective systems to support all pupils on entry to the school and this is especially enhanced through the work of the Pupils' Support Centre for the most vulnerable.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

Leadership and management are good overall and satisfactory in the sixth form. The leadership team is having a very positive impact in raising standards and expectations. The headteacher refers to 'having a passion for teaching and learning' and this is reflected within the work of the school across all areas.

The school has grasped the opportunities offered through its specialist college status and is achieving its aim of enhancing learning through the visual arts. The Arts College Director has instigated activities that support all departments and encourage greater collaboration. Pupils in the main school take at least one arts subject and targets for the designated subjects have been met.

At middle management level, there have been a number of long term absences resulting in some inconsistencies of practice. Many curriculum areas are well led with high staff morale and motivation, and these achieve good results. The rolling programme of

secondments to the leadership group has been welcomed by curriculum leaders and enables them to have clearer understanding of school priorities.

The sharing of good practice is actively pursued and achieved by 'best practice' meetings and the appointment of advanced skills teachers.

Systems for tracking pupils' progress are established and constantly being refined. The use of data to set pupils' targets needs further refinement to reflect appropriate levels of challenge for each pupil. Senior staff monitor teaching and recognise where improvement is needed.

The school seeks the views of parents and pupils and takes them into consideration. It is accurate in its self-evaluation. With the support and encouragement of governors, the school has put in place many good systems for improvement. The school offers good value for money and has the capacity to improve further.



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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	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
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	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	2	

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2	
The behaviour of learners	2	
The attendance of learners	4	
How well learners enjoy their education	2	
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2	
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2	
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2	
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	3	

### 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>	2	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2	3

<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	3
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	3	
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2	
How effectively and efficiently resources are deployed to achieve value for money	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3	
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**

Thank you for contributing to the recent inspection of your school. We enjoyed visiting Holly Lodge College. We were able to visit lessons and to talk to a number of you and to the staff. We also looked at the results of questionnaires sent in by your parents. The majority of your parents are supportive of the school.

The school's GCSE results have improved and are now about average. Many of you do well in arts subjects, languages and GNVQ Intermediate ICT. Most of you make good progress overall during Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. However, the results in English and mathematics at GCSE are not as good as some other subjects. You need to try especially hard in these subjects to learn as much as possible and achieve the highest grades that you are capable of. In the sixth form, the GCE A level results are about average. The school works with other schools to increase your choice of GCE A level subjects.

Most of you enjoy being at school. You behave well and are polite. Attendance at your school is not as good as it should be. Many of you do attend regularly, but some do not and they miss out on important work. All of you need to attend school regularly to ensure that you learn as much as you can. Your parents can help in this.

Teaching is good overall. Your progress is assessed and monitored but some subjects do not do this as well as others. We have asked the headteacher to work with staff to do more to help you understand how well you are doing and how you can improve your work in all your subjects. The school has improved the arrangements for choosing your options in Year 9. You have a good choice of courses at Key Stage 4, including GCSEs and vocational courses. The school provides a good range of interesting activities for you, and a lot of you participate in these. The school cares for you well. Some of you benefit from the good care and support offered in the Skills Centre, and the Uplands Centre particularly helps some of you who find school difficult.

Your headteacher knows what she wants to do. She has worked hard with the staff to make improvements and more are planned. We feel confident your headteacher and staff can make your school even better and we know you are willing to put in the hard work. We wish you every success for the future in all that you do.