



# Holloway School

## Inspection Report

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**Unique Reference Number** 100453  
**Local Authority** Islington  
**Inspection number** 285800  
**Inspection dates** 30 November –1 December 2006  
**Reporting inspector** Gill Close HMI

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Hilldrop Road
<b>School category</b>	Community		London
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16		N7 0JG
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7607 5885
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	869	<b>Fax number</b>	020 7700 3697
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	Mr Peter Rees
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr Bob Hamlyn
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	21 May 2001		

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<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
11–16	30 November –1 December 2006	285800

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## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one of Her Majesty's Inspectors and three Additional Inspectors.

## Description of the school

Holloway School is an ethnically diverse school. About one third of students are White British, the other main ethnic groups being Black African, Black Caribbean, mixed heritage and Turkish. A third of the students speak a first language other than English and about 5% are at an early stage of learning English. Students come from a range of social backgrounds in Islington and neighbouring boroughs. An above average proportion is eligible for free school meals and the number joining the school after Year 7 is high. Attainment on entry is substantially below average. More students than average have learning difficulties or disabilities and statements of special educational need. The school admitted girls for the first time in 2001; they make up about 30% of each year group. The school became a specialist sports college in September 2005 and a full service extended school, in partnership with its main feeder primary school, in September 2003.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 3

The overall effectiveness of the school is satisfactory. The headteacher has brought new vision and determination to the school that have led to important improvements, such as in standards and behaviour, which demonstrate a sound capacity for further improvement. Self-evaluation is accurate overall although too generous in places, and monitoring is extensive. Nevertheless, systems do not focus sufficiently on improving the quality of students' learning. Senior managers provide a clear sense of direction and have successfully developed the roles of some others with management responsibilities, although expertise varies in understanding how to improve learning.

The recent focus on raising attainment at Key Stage 4 has been successful. In 2006, standards at Key Stage 4 rose to below average and students made satisfactory progress from their low starting points. In contrast, Key Stage 3 students made inadequate progress in mathematics and science in 2006 and achieved exceptionally low standards in all three core subjects. There was not enough emphasis on the fast development of numeracy and literacy skills in Key Stage 3. However, students in both key stages are currently making satisfactory progress.

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The combined impact of teaching and support enables students to make satisfactory progress. There is some good, lively teaching but the quality is inconsistent, with some dull teaching that does not challenge students sufficiently to think hard or get actively involved in their learning so that their standards can rise to national averages. The school has effectively identified and supported students as they approach national assessment. It has put in place a sound system for assessing and tracking students' progress and is currently developing it to increase its accuracy and impact throughout the school.

The good quality of pastoral care supports students in making good progress in their personal development, which reaches a satisfactory level. Most students have a positive attitude to work although many do not take the initiative needed to help them do well. Attendance is below average. Although behaviour has improved and is satisfactory, parents and students express some concerns about it, with the management of some low level disturbance in some lessons holding back students' progress.

In the first year since its successful bid to become a specialist sports college, provision improved for physical education and information and communication technology (ICT), but the school did not meet its ambitious targets and has now identified more realistic goals. The school works well with outside agencies, through its extended school provision and otherwise, to assist students' personal and academic development.

### What the school should do to improve further

- raise standards and accelerate progress in the core subjects from Year 7 onwards
- improve the quality of teaching so that students are more challenged and actively involved in learning
- focus monitoring more effectively on the quality of learning

- increase the accuracy of the way in which students' progress is tracked so that challenging targets are set and met.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 3**

Achievement and standards are satisfactory. A recent focus on standards at Key Stage 4 has successfully led to improved attainment. In 2006, it broadly met the school's targets and was below average. Students joined the school with substantially below average attainment and made satisfactory progress by the time they completed Year 11. Nevertheless, progress in science was below average.

Standards at Key Stage 3 have not risen and did not reach the school's targets in any of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In 2006, they remained exceptionally low and students made inadequate progress in mathematics and science. However, students in Key Stage 3 are currently making satisfactory progress, as are those in Key Stage 4.

Students at an early stage of learning English when they join the school also make satisfactory progress as do those with learning difficulties and disabilities. The sound provision for students at risk of gaining no qualifications has enabled their standards to improve.

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

### **Grade: 3**

The personal development and well-being of students are satisfactory. Good pastoral care supports students in making good gains in their personal development, in particular in their self-esteem and confidence. Most students enjoy coming to school and attend regularly. However, attendance is below average and holds back students' learning. Students generally have positive attitudes to work, although many do not take sufficient initiative and responsibility to help develop their own learning. Relationships between students and with staff are good. Some students take an active role in the school community, for example representing their class on the school council or acting as mentors for younger students. Students know what is right and wrong, and overall their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. Spiritual development has improved since the last inspection.

Behaviour in classrooms and around the school has improved as a result of concerted school action and is satisfactory, although persistent low level disturbance still sometimes interrupts lesson flow and affects the progress of others. Parents and students express some concerns about behaviour. The good support provided through the mentoring system helps those with behavioural difficulties to improve. The number of exclusions is declining as the school works increasingly successfully to keep students in school and to reintegrate them into school life.

Students know the importance of staying safe and adopting healthy life styles, although they do not always choose well-balanced meals for lunch or take up the opportunities for exercise that the specialist sports college status offers.

Their progress in basic skills, together with work related and vocational learning, prepare them satisfactorily for later employment and economic well-being.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 3**

Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The combined impact of teaching and support within and outside lessons enables students to make satisfactory progress, but the quality of teaching is inconsistent. Support offered to students outside lessons does much to raise their confidence and help them succeed.

Teaching in the good lessons is lively. Tasks and concepts are clearly explained and activities are carefully designed to challenge the students to learn at a swift pace. Students know exactly what is expected of them and what they need to do to improve. Working relations are warm and productive. Praise is used extensively to motivate students and teaching assistants provide good support.

In a number of lessons, particularly in core subjects, teaching is dull rather than engaging and expectations are not high enough to raise standards to the national average. Work is not planned sufficiently well to meet the full range of students' potential. Students spend too much time listening to teachers talking rather than being given the chance to find out or learn actively for themselves. In these lessons, students become too passive, are not challenged to think hard and are over reliant on the teacher. The management of inappropriate behaviour by small numbers of students in some lessons is not always effective, so the progress of the class is slowed down on these occasions.

The assessment and marking of students' work are variable and do not always inform students sufficiently of what they need to do to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 3**

The curriculum is satisfactory overall and broadly meets the varied needs of students, especially at Key Stage 4.

As a result of a major review of the curriculum, substantial improvements have been made to the organisation of the school day and to the breadth and quality of provision. The school has introduced a range of vocational courses which reflect both students' particular interests and employment opportunities. Courses such as GCSE applied business studies and BTEC first certificates in sport and ICT are doing much to prepare them for life after school. Specialist college status has improved the provision in both physical education and ICT. However, the school recognises that more needs to be

done to ensure that work related learning and enterprise education are fully included. In addition, there is not enough emphasis on the fast development of numeracy and literacy for students who start at the school with below average standards. Many join the school with reading ages lower than their chronological age, and some far lower. The school has identified that developments are needed to improve students' literacy levels quickly so that faster progress may be made across all subjects.

The school works with a wide range of partners to provide an extensive range of high quality opportunities for students to extend their learning out of school hours. Drama, dance, music and sporting activities, as well as a comprehensive programme of revision and study support, do much to foster students' personal development and academic progress. Large numbers of students come back into school on Saturday morning for the 'SHINE' study programme, although too few take advantage of the lunchtime and after school activities.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 3**

Care, guidance and support for students are satisfactory. The pastoral system, based on form tutors and heads of year, provides good care and support. Academic support and guidance are satisfactory.

Students feel safe and secure in school. They have confidence in the wide range of adults, including outside professionals, to whom they can turn if they have any concerns, knowing that they will be taken seriously and that action will result. The school meets the latest government requirements for safeguarding children and its child protection procedures are in place. Support for students with a wide range of personal or special educational needs is effective. For example, help with improving behaviour provided by learning mentors enables students to make good progress in their personal development.

Students approaching national assessments are effectively identified and provided with support. The school has put in place a sound system for assessing, target setting and tracking students' progress to which all teachers contribute, and which provides adequate information for reports to parents. It is currently developing this to increase its accuracy and use in supporting and challenging students throughout the school.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 3**

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The headteacher has brought a new vision to the school which is helping it to move forward. Senior leaders have high aspirations, and provide a clear sense of direction through the priorities identified in the school improvement plan, although the plan itself is over-ambitious. The school has successfully implemented its plans to bring about improvements to students' behaviour and the use of homework. It has also raised standards at Key Stage 4 and effectively addressed most of the issues raised at the last inspection, although standards

in science and consistency in teaching quality remain areas for development. These features demonstrate its satisfactory capacity to continue to improve.

School self-evaluation is broadly accurate, although some of its judgements are too generous, and has identified appropriate overall priorities. The system of self-review is helping teachers to share good practice but has had insufficient impact on overall quality. The school undertakes extensive monitoring which concentrates on checking that elements are in place rather than evaluating the quality of outcomes. The systems have not focused sufficiently on improving the quality of learning.

The senior management team have met with some success in developing the roles of others with management responsibilities. For example, heads of year and others with pastoral responsibilities are especially effective in ensuring that students are well supported and cared for. They are playing a key part in helping the school to create a harmonious community. However, there are inconsistencies in the expertise of some heads of subject, especially in relation to their understanding of how to improve learning.

The governing body supports and challenges the school and has contributed particularly effectively to improving facilities, resources and financial management. The staffing of the school has improved and is more stable than in the recent past which is providing the school with continuity.



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## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</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>	3
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	3
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	4
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	3
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	3

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	3
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The behaviour of learners	3
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	3
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	3
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	3
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>	3
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	3
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	3

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	3
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	3
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	3
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	3
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	3
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## **Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

Thank you for welcoming us to your school and for all the comments that you made to us during our visit.

We found that the school gives you a satisfactory education. The headteacher and staff have made some important changes that have led to improvements.

Year 11 students reached higher standards last year than in the year before. The staff give you support in and out of lessons that helps you to make satisfactory progress. We have asked the school to help you do even better in English, mathematics and science from the beginning of Year 7.

The staff and other adults look after you well. They help you to increase your confidence, stay safe and get on well with each other. Behaviour has improved but some of you and your parents told us that you wanted it to be better. Many of you come to school regularly but some of you are absent too much and this slows down your progress.

You have some good teaching with lively lessons where you make good progress, but in some other lessons you spend too long listening and the work is too hard or too easy for you. We have asked the school to give you work which makes you think hard and to make more time in lessons for you to be actively involved. We have also asked the school to set you targets that help you make more progress and to check more carefully how well you are doing. You can help by thinking hard in lessons, using your initiative and making sure you meet your targets each year.

Yours sincerely

Gill Close HMI