

# The Hollyfield School and Sixth Form Centre

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	102600
<b>Local Authority</b>	Kingston Upon Thames
<b>Inspection number</b>	308065
<b>Inspection dates</b>	27–28 February 2008
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Anne Wellham 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>	Modern (non-selective)
<b>School category</b>	Foundation
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–18
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number on roll</b>	
School	1097
6th form	202
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Dr M H B Morton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr S Chamberlain
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	9 February 2004
<b>School address</b>	Surbiton Hill Road Surbiton KT6 4TU
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8339 4500
<b>Fax number</b>	020 8339 4572

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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

Hollyfield School and Sixth Form Centre is an average size, mixed 11–19 non-selective secondary school in Kingston-upon-Thames where some schools select their intake on academic ability. There is a gender imbalance with girls in the minority. About a third of the students are from minority ethnic groups and just over a quarter of students have English as an additional language. An average proportion of students have learning difficulties and disabilities. The sixth form has doubled in size since the previous inspection. It is a technology specialist school and has the Healthy Schools Award and the ICT Quality Mark Award.

## Key for inspection grades

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

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Hollyfield is a good school with a record of continuous improvement. Students have good attitudes to learning and are supported well by a committed team of staff and senior leaders. One parent reflected this view by commenting 'My son has been at the school for seven years. In that time, I have seen the school develop into the wonderful, supportive, encouraging and excellent environment it now is. I cannot praise the headteacher and his staff highly enough.'

Students begin school with levels of attainment a little above average. Standards are above average at Key Stages 3 and 4 and examination results at GCSE in 2007, including passes at English and mathematics at GCSE grade C and above, were the school's highest ever. Students make good progress overall relative to their starting points. However, a minority of students including students with learning difficulties and disabilities, do not achieve as well as other students. The school have rightly targeted these students and have taken decisive action to improve their progress.

Students' personal development and well-being are good. Students report how secure and comfortable they feel with each other and with their teachers. The school deals with any anti-social behaviour rapidly, including any bullying or racist incidents. Students attend school very regularly and behave well. They participate in an outstanding enrichment programme and understand the importance of being healthy and keeping fit. The school council plays an excellent role in representing students' views and contributes to decision-making in the school.

Teaching and learning are good overall. Learners make good progress because teachers and support staff have high expectations. Students are well motivated and enjoy learning. There are effective whole-school tracking systems to monitor progress and students are aware of their targets and most know how well they are doing in their efforts to reach them.

The curriculum is broad and responsive to learners' needs and capabilities. The school's specialist status enhances the curriculum and contributes to rising standards. In particular, the school has invested considerably in information communication technology (ICT) resources. These have developed teaching and increased the opportunities for students to engage in independent research. In 2007, the school met most of its targets for Key Stage 3 and Key Stage 4. It missed several of the targets for specialist status, particularly for technology. The report on specialist status is not sufficiently evaluative, especially in recording actions to meet targets.

The headteacher and the senior leadership team are committed to the school and have been very successful in raising standards and achievement. They set a clear direction for improvement and have a good appreciation of the school's strengths and areas for development. Self-valuation is good and underpins the school's good capacity to improve. The governing body are supportive of the school. They provide an appropriate level of a challenge to ensure challenging targets are set to lead to further improvement.

## Effectiveness of the sixth form

### Grade: 3

The sixth form is satisfactory overall. It has expanded considerably during the past two years under the good leadership of a new director of sixth form. An increasing proportion of Year 11 students now transfer into the sixth form. The school admits students from a wide range of ability with the majority studying A levels. A relatively small number of students took GCE A levels in 2007 and standards were broadly average. These students made good progress. A high

proportion of students did not complete the courses that they started in 2005 and 2006. Students leaving the sixth form received appropriate support in transferring to vocational courses or to training for employment that were more suited to their needs. Achievement overall is therefore satisfactory. Students' personal development and well-being are good. The school community benefits from the presence of sixth form students because they are mature and responsible and provide good role models for rest of the school. Students value the strong support they receive from their teachers and the excellent range of enrichment opportunities outside the classroom. Most lessons enable them to be involved in their own learning and to think for themselves. The sixth form curriculum is good. It offers a broad range of subjects at AS and A2 level with level 2 courses in ICT and public services. Care, guidance and support are satisfactory overall because not all students have received appropriate guidance in choosing suitable courses. Actions taken to improve transition procedures for the current students in Years 10 and 11 are effective. Leadership and management of the sixth form are good. The director of sixth form is tackling a legacy of underachievement very well. As a result, teaching and learning are good because they are more consistent than they have been, with higher expectations of performance from both staff and students. Achievement targets are clear and students receive regular and detailed feedback on their progress. Monitoring of attendance and the use of data analysis to track performance are improving. There is a very clear vision for future development so capacity for improvement is good.

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

- Improve the progress of students who do not achieve as well as their peer group.
- Ensure all targets for specialist status are met.
- Ensure all sixth form students enrol on appropriate courses particularly those following vocational routes.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

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

Students enter the school with attainment that is a little above average. They make good progress throughout Key Stages 3 and 4 and attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 11. Standards in Key Stage 3 tests have been consistently above average for the last three years. The percentage of students gaining five or more higher passes including English and mathematics has been consistently good. Students of higher ability make good progress because of the school's high expectations and good teaching. There are differences between the performance of departments. For instance, results in modern foreign languages are good while those in technology lag behind those of other subjects. There have been changes to the curriculum and new appointments in technology. As a result, monitoring data show that standards are rising. Until recently, students with learning difficulties and disabilities and a minority of lower and middle attaining students did not achieve as well as other students. The school has taken decisive action to meet their needs and interests. Consequently, these students are now making more rapid progress.

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

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. All groups of students respect each other and get on well together. There is a strong sense of what is right and wrong and students will challenge others who make inappropriate comments. Students have opportunities to take part in assemblies twice a week and participate in a daily 'thought for the day', which allows some spiritual reflection. Students know how to keep safe and the vast majority of them enjoy their time in school. There is a good understanding of the importance of healthy lifestyles and every student works to achieve a fitness target. Improving attendance has been a high priority for the school and it is now above the national average although lateness to school remains a concern. Although a few parents and students expressed concerns about behaviour, inspectors observed good behaviour around the school and in lessons. Students are keen to contribute to the life of the school and the wider community. Members of Year 10 and 12 act as willing mentors to younger students and the school council is effective in contributing to school policy. Students have a strong sense of social responsibility. For example, there are close links with a school in Ghana, which sixth form students will be visiting in summer, and each year group supports its own charity. Students develop skills in literacy, numeracy and ICT that prepare them well for the world of work.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

Students make good progress overall as a result of effective teaching. Teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and engage students so that they learn attentively and behave well. The level of challenge overall is good. In the best lessons the pace of learning is fast and challenging, and a strong feature of sixth-form lessons is that students are inspired to think for themselves. The school is taking decisive action to tailor work to the full range of students' ability. The well-managed 'going for gold' scheme is increasing the numbers of students who achieve grade C at GCSE and students with learning difficulties and disabilities are now being taught effectively in small groups. Students understand how well they are doing in relation to the national average. Some students have the opportunity to assess their own work and measure the progress they are making. However, the quality of marking is variable so not all teachers make clear what students need to do to improve the quality of their work.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The curriculum is good overall and enhanced by the school's specialist status. It successfully builds on students' interests and promotes their personal development. It is well matched to the academic needs of most students, although there are too few courses with a strongly vocational content to satisfy need in Years 10 and 11. There is good provision for literacy and numeracy and ICT is used effectively in all subjects across the curriculum, a significant

improvement since the last inspection. Curriculum enrichment is outstanding throughout the school. There is a wealth of opportunities for each student to participate in extra-curricular and enrichment activities, including a wide range of trips and visits, activity days, and clubs that are very well attended. Students report with pride the many occasions on which they are able to represent the school in the community. Well-planned booster courses are beginning to have an impact on raising the achievement of students who might otherwise miss their GCSE targets. In the sixth form curriculum enrichment is excellent. It enables students to serve the community and to prepare them for living independently in the next stage of their education.

## **Care, guidance and support**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 3**

There are good levels of care, guidance and support that have a positive impact on students' personal development and well-being. Students report that they feel safe and that staff are committed to their care. The school provides very good support for vulnerable students and monitors their progress carefully. Close links with a range of external agencies provide additional support and care. Safeguarding procedures are thorough and the school provides a safe environment. Effective systems to track academic performance at Key Stages 3 and 4 allow students to know their targets. Parents are able to meet with tutors every term to review progress. This together with the curriculum information they receive about the various courses means that they are very well informed. Individual interviews for all Year 9 students together with a careers day provide good guidance on the options for Key Stage 4. In the past guidance provided for Year 11 students entering the sixth form placed students on inappropriate courses leading to low retention rates. The school has taken effective action to rectify this and to improve support for transition.

## **Leadership and management**

**Grade: 2**

**Grade for sixth form: 2**

The headteacher and his senior team provide good leadership and management. They demonstrate a strong commitment to driving up academic standards and raising expectations of learning from both staff and students. Managers at all levels are involved in reviewing performance and planning for school improvement, which creates a shared sense of purpose. The effective process of self-review is based on systematic data analysis of students' performance and thorough monitoring of teaching and learning. This identifies relevant and appropriate actions for development. For example, action taken to match the curriculum to the needs and interests of lower attaining students at Key Stage 4 is improving their progress. The school has tackled areas for improvement identified during the previous inspection successfully although there remains capacity for further improvement in design and technology. The school sets challenging targets but does not meet all those relating to specialist status. The efficient deployment of resources secures value for money and helps budgeting for future priorities. Links with parents and outside agencies are strong. The governors provide dedicated support to the school. They have a very good appreciation of its progress and a realistic understanding of what still needs to be done. They provide a good level of challenge. The clear strengths in leadership and management are providing the school with a good capacity to improve.

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## Annex A

## Inspection judgements

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

How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?	2	3
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	2	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2	2

### Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2	3
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	2	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	3	

### Personal development and well-being

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

### The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?	2	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	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 to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Annex A

**Leadership and management**

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2	
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	3	
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2	2
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	2	
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	2	
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes	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

12 March 2008

Dear Students

Inspection of The Hollyfield School and Sixth Form Centre, Surbiton, KT6 4TU

Thank you for the friendly welcome you gave us when we inspected your school recently. We enjoyed meeting you and your teachers and visiting some of your lessons. We think Hollyfield is a good school. Most of you achieve good results in examinations and make good progress. Some students in Years 10 and 11 and some with learning difficulties and disabilities do not progress as well as others so we have asked the school to make sure that this improves.

We were very pleased to see how well you get on together and respect each other. You behave well and most of you clearly enjoy school. We were very impressed with the excellent opportunities you have to take part in a wide range of interesting activities, clubs and trips. The teaching is good and the staff care and support you well. All these things combine to help you achieve during your time in the school both academically and personally. The headteacher and senior staff, helped by the governors, lead your school well. They make sure that you are continually encouraged to have high expectations of yourselves and others. The school's specialist status for technology provides you with extra opportunities to improve your learning particularly in mathematics, science, design and technology and ICT. The school has to meet targets linked to this specialist status but is not doing so fully. We have asked the school to make sure it meets them in the future.

The sixth form is a popular and important part of the school. The sixth formers set a good example for younger students to follow. We think the sixth form is satisfactory overall and improving rapidly. The director of the sixth form is doing a good job in leading the sixth form and the majority of students in Year 11 now stay on. It is important that all students receive the correct guidance when they are choosing their sixth form courses. This has not always happened and has meant that some students last year left before completing their courses. We have asked the school to make sure that all students receive the right advice in the future especially if they want to study vocational courses.

We wish you all at Hollyfield a very successful future.

Anne Wellham

Her Majesty's Inspector