

William Henry Smith School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	107589
Local Authority	Calderdale
Inspection number	324602
Inspection dates	14–15 January 2009
Reporting inspector	Kath Halifax

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

Boarding provision	
Social care URN	
Social care inspector	Robert Curr

The inspection of social care was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Type of school	Special
School category	Non-maintained special
Age range of pupils	8–16
Gender of pupils	Boys
Number on roll	
School (total)	59
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mr D Sisson
Principal	Mr B Heneghan
Date of previous school inspection	22 February 2006
School address	Boothroyd Brighouse West Yorkshire HD6 3JW
Telephone number	01484 710123
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Age group	8–16
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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by an Additional Inspector and a Social Care Inspector.

Description of the school

The school is a non-maintained residential special school supported by the Smith Foundation. It caters for up to 64 boys from 18 local authorities. All students have a statement of special educational need for their behavioural, social and emotional difficulties. A high proportion has other associated learning difficulties. A few students are known young offenders. There has been an increase in referral to the school of students with more severe problems, including those with mental health issues or significant histories of offending. Students are predominantly White British, with a small number of students of mixed heritage. An above average proportion is in the care of the local authority. All students are in receipt of free school meals. At the time of the inspection seven boys attended as day students. The school has achieved Investors in People, the Sportsmark and the Healthy Schools Award.

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 school with outstanding features. Good progress has been made since the last inspection and students achieve more. For example, those in Year 11 now achieve more passes at higher grades in the GCSE examinations. Good leadership and management at all levels are at the heart of the improvement and have brought about good teaching and a good, relevant curriculum. There are very effective links between the education and boarding staff and this has resulted in a successful balance being struck between promotion of students' academic and social achievements, learning and provision for their well-being.

On entry, students' attainment is considerably below that expected of their age because many have spent time out of school or become disenchanted by education. The majority arrive with a history of failure in mainstream schools and in their social lives. However, because the provision is good, they make remarkable progress in their attitudes and attendance. Their behaviour is good. This allows them to be more settled and to apply themselves to their studies. As a result, students make good progress in lessons. There has been a year-on-year rise in GCSE examination success. By the time students leave, while standards are broadly average, their achievement is good with all attaining nationally recognised awards. Achievement in sport and art is outstanding. Students who learn more slowly make excellent progress in reading. It is not unusual for them to make what would normally be one or two years' progress in reading in two terms. This has enabled some students to return to their neighbourhood schools, and a very high proportion to move on to further education and employment.

Students receive good care, support and guidance. The pastoral care they receive is outstanding. Adults in both boarding and education are extremely skilled in building relationships founded on mutual respect. This is very effective in reversing disaffection and problematic behaviour, enabling students to maximise their life chances. Most of the procedures to ensure students' health and safety are very good, but a small number of aspects do not meet the required National Minimum Standards for boarding schools. Students enjoy their education very much and show this by their willingness to come to school. Students who had formerly refused to go to school or who attended just a couple of days a week now attend regularly. Attendance is good with many students achieving 100%.

Students make exceptional gains in their personal development. Overall, their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, reflecting the outstanding quality of the personal, social, health and citizenship education they are given. This prepares them exceptionally well for life after school. Students have an excellent understanding of keeping healthy and safe. Equally, students make an outstanding contribution to the school and local community. Alongside their good achievements, this prepares them well to be good citizens. Leaders recognise, however, that while students have a general understanding of other faiths and cultures, this is an area for development. Pockets of good practice are evident in a number of subjects but leaders have not yet produced a plan to encourage community cohesion more fully. Provision for the promotion of community cohesion is satisfactory.

A new system to record students' achievements has been introduced recently, but the information is not easy to retrieve and so its value is limited. The use made of assessment information, therefore, is not as effective as it might be. Leaders and staff have great aspirations for the students in their care. Links with other agencies, schools, and the considerable number of local authorities contribute significantly to students' achievements. Leaders are accurate in

their self-evaluation; they are confident in what the school does well and what would raise standards and achievement further. The school provides good value for money, not just for those on roll, but through good support for a number of primary and secondary schools in managing pupils with difficult behaviour. With the enthusiasm and skill of both education and boarding staff, the school has good capacity to continue to improve.

Effectiveness of boarding provision

Grade: 2

The boarding provision is good. Students enjoy fruitful relationships with staff based on mutual respect. The majority of parents and carers report their appreciation of the school and have every confidence that their son is well cared for in every respect. Leaders have made suitable improvements since the last inspection with the introduction of new health care plans and the careful monitoring of the medication records. The provision for students keeping healthy is good. Students' individual health and personal care needs are identified as part of the school's admission process, and the qualified nurse contributes considerably to their health and well-being. The catering team provides nutritious meals which take account of students' choices, and food from different cultures encourages them to try new dishes. An excellent range of physical activities contributes to students' fitness levels.

Suitable policies and procedures are in place for the safe storage and administration of medication with the nurse taking overall responsibility for ensuring safe practice. However, not all national standards are fully met. Though staff have received training in the safe handling and administration of medication, this is not identified as a formal process and is not recorded in the training records. Furthermore, while the use of household remedies is common, and staff follow the guidance on the container, there is no clear written policy on how to administer non-prescription medicines to students.

The provision for staying safe is good. Staff have high regard for the privacy of students, and intimate care tasks are carried out in a sensitive manner ensuring that dignity and privacy is upheld. Clear policies are in place to maintain confidentiality, but the format of some records includes information about other students on the same page. This breaches confidentiality when students ask to see these records. The school uses a closed circuit television system (CCTV). This is greatly appreciated by most adults and students, but the use of this system is not regularly monitored and reviewed to ensure that its use is appropriate at all times. Students report they feel safe and consulted; they especially appreciate being able to raise their concerns, either verbally with staff, or through the 'grumbles book' maintained in each house.

Leaders are vigilant in ensuring that all staff undergo rigorous checks prior to employment. Procedures to safeguard students are well thought out and known to all adults. Staff are alert to relationships within the houses and school, and take immediate action if bullying is suspected. Students have a very clear understanding of the sanctions for unacceptable behaviour. All adults noticeably demonstrate their experience and training in relation to managing challenging behaviour, skilfully ensuring the health and safety of the young people. A comprehensive range of assessments of potential risks is in place for all aspects of boarding and school life.

The provision for students to enjoy and achieve is outstanding. Students receive high levels of support. The school values, promotes and encourages all students to make the best of their educational opportunities. Considerable effort is put into creating a seamless transition between school and the houses to further students' social, educational, care and health needs. Students' social skills are particularly well promoted as they are encouraged to engage in a variety of

activities in their local community. Staff share their own interests and enthusiasms with students and encourage them to try out new activities and interests.

The provision for positive contribution is outstanding. An active school council ensures that students' views are taken into account and influence the way the houses are run. This guarantees students recognise that their ideas and decisions are valued. Students benefit from detailed placement plans which set out how adults will meet their assessed needs. Reviews and reports are up to date and this allows staff to measure any progress that has been made. The young people are able to maintain valued relationships with family and friends through appropriate contact arrangements.

The provision for students' economic well-being is good. Students are encouraged to develop life skills that prepare them for adulthood and independence. Careful consideration has been given to enabling students to make the transition to independent living with students reporting, for example, that they are able to make more informed choices about daily life and are beginning to feel empowered, motivated and more confident. The houses are decorated and furnished to a good standard which creates a pleasant homely environment appropriate to the age and culture of the students. However, the independent living flat is not of the same standard as the rest of the residences.

The organisation of the boarding provision is good. The statement of purpose clearly sets out what the school will provide and the way in which this will be achieved. An attractive welcome booklet provides useful information for parents and carers. The residential houses are very well managed by the head of care. The service provides a safe setting for young people with complex needs, and a positive and supportive learning environment for staff. The boarding staff team are competent, motivated and professional. Currently, overall the qualification recommendation is exceeded. The promotion of equality and diversity in the service is good. The number of staff on duty is sufficient to meet the needs of students, and there has been a consistent care staff team in place for some time. Excellent links between education and boarding staff, including comprehensive 'hand over' meetings, contribute well to students' well-being. Currently the service is monitored effectively by the head of care, and the chair of governors visits the houses as part of the overall monitoring of the school. This practice enhances the good quality assurance processes already in place.

What the school should do to improve further

- Extend students' understanding of, and appreciation for, other faiths and cultures while formalising the planning to promote community cohesion.
- Make better use of assessment information to improve lesson planning and track students' progress.
- The school must ensure that it meets the National Minimum Standards currently not met, as detailed below.

National Minimum Standards (NMS) to be met to improve social care.

- Review the policy and procedures in relation to non-prescribed and household medicines (NMS14)
- Maintain individual daily records for students (NMS 3)
- Ensure that the use of CCTV is reviewed regularly (NMS 3)
- Ensure that the independent living flat is brought up to the same high standard as the other residences (NMS24).

Achievement and standards

Grade: 2

Students' achievement is good. Younger students in Years 4, 5 and 6 make good progress because of good teaching and a good curriculum. Their progress in the key subjects of literacy, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) is very good. This has given them the confidence to tackle activities they had previously dismissed as impossible and is reaping benefits in other subjects such as humanities and science. Good progress continues in Years 7 to 11. By Year 11, higher attaining students gain GCSE in up to eight subjects, with the proportion of those achieving five or more passes having risen from one quarter three years ago to three quarters in 2008. This has allowed students more choices in their life after school. Most students embark on a career of their choosing, following courses such as the performing arts, the uniformed services and animal care. While some vocational courses such as qualifications in fabrication and welding have been established, leaders have identified the need to introduce more nationally recognised awards for students who learn more slowly.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The notable improvement in students' attitude, behaviour and attendance is the consequence of excellent relationships and a consistent approach to managing behaviour. Students, many of whom have had little regard for education or authority, want to learn and to be accepted. They begin to understand the responsibilities of community living. The majority are determined to turn their lives around and succeed. This is evident in their increased confidence; for example, in the way they walk around the school and make eye contact with visitors. As each new student becomes familiar with the school and its expectations, the student becomes less self-centred. Students begin to enjoy their lessons. They show concern for others through generous fund-raising and, for example, the youth crime 'Granny Project', and organising football matches for youths on the adjacent estate. Students are proud of their achievements and genuinely celebrate those of their classmates. While, overall, students' personal development is excellent, opportunities for students to understand more fully cultures other than their own are not quite as effective as they might be.

Quality of provision

Teaching and learning

Grade: 2

Students of all ages make good progress as a consequence of good teaching. Those in Years 4 to 6 benefit from teachers who have a good understanding of the latest primary practice. Equally, students in Years 7 to 11 make good progress in all subjects because teachers have specialist knowledge and expect high standards. Challenging targets are used effectively to raise standards, especially in accelerating improved behaviour and basic skills. Though some students still have the occasional outburst, the discerning use of the Education Support Centre causes minimum disruption to learning. In addition to having time to 'cool off' and consider their actions in a room that is calm and conducive to study, the one-to-one tuition allows students to continue their learning out of the classroom. Lessons are conducted with good pace and humour. Teachers make learning relevant and interesting. For example, students studying towards the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC) sport award made

considerable gains in their personal development, and in their mathematical and literacy skills, by taking on the roles of 'organiser', 'administrator' and 'health and safety representative' when they arranged the school cross-country event. Assessment has improved since the last inspection. While many staff encourage students to assess their own learning, leaders recognise the practice is not consistent and have identified this as a priority for further development. Teachers and skilled support staff work together very effectively. Over the past three years, five assistants have qualified as teachers through the Graduate Teaching Programme.

Curriculum and other activities

Grade: 2

Students make good progress because the rigorous induction and assessment period during their first half term in school is used very effectively to produce a personalised learning plan that is designed to challenge and raise aspirations. Excellent links between boarding and education staff ensure, for example, that behaviour and literacy targets in individual education care plans (IECPs) are followed consistently in both settings. This contributes especially well to students' personal development and their progress towards independent living. The focus on academic subjects is evident in students' good achievement. Furthermore, evening sporting activities and cultural visits contribute significantly to achievement in physical education, art and English. Leaders recognise that older students do not study a modern foreign language and are considering ways to reintroduce this to the timetable. Good provision is in place for students who are gifted or talented with arrangements being made for those talented in football or cricket to go home mid-week to take part in club training. Staff go the extra mile to enable students who attend daily to take part in the same activities as the residents.

Care, guidance and support

Grade: 2

The same good standard of care evident in the residences is reflected throughout the school day. Students report they feel very well cared for, supported and guided. They say that the introduction of therapies and more time for discussions with adults give them time to reflect and come to terms with their problems. In addition, training and mediation services provided by the school for parents and carers enable them to continue the good work at home. Parents report that this has made a considerable difference in helping them cope with their sons. Support for students with additional learning difficulties is good, as is that for the young offenders. All students receive good educational guidance and are realistic when negotiating points in the reviews at the end of each lesson. They are especially proud when their 'book look' report is read out in assembly prior to their annual review.

Leadership and management

Grade: 2

The leadership team representing education, boarding and health provide very good direction for the work of the school. Led by the charismatic principal, staff share a common aim in delivering the best possible provision for all, and in celebrating achievement. They are determined that every student will have equality of opportunity and that safeguarding meets requirements so every student feels safe and secure in the school and residences. Leaders are forward thinking and innovative. This is particularly evident in the creation of the post of therapeutic interventions manager. His coordination of a range of therapies helps students come to terms with all the

traumas and turbulence in their lives. Similarly, the recently appointed deputy principal already has well-advanced plans to introduce national qualifications suitable for lower attaining pupils in Years 10 and 11. Subject leaders are rising well to the demands of their roles. All are clear about the strengths in their subjects and have suitable plans for improvement.

Governors and leaders keep their fingers on the pulse of the school. Unannounced 'mini inspections' in the classrooms, residences and, for example, to a camping experience, quickly identify where change is needed and have been instrumental in improving the quality of the provision. A considerable amount of time has been spent setting up and collecting information on students' achievements. However, this is taking longer than expected, and information to track and compare the performance of individuals and groups of students is not easily available. This limits effective use of assessment information in lesson planning.

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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
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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
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The effectiveness of boarding provision	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2

Achievement and standards

How well do learners achieve?	2
The standards ¹ reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	2

¹Grade 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.

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
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	1

The quality of provision

How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of learners' needs?	2
How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?	2
How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?	2

Leadership and management

How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?	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	2
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	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
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B**Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection**

As you are aware, a colleague and I spent a couple of days looking at your school. Thank you for taking time to talk to us, for showing us around, and for inviting us into your houses to eat with you. We especially enjoyed our tour of your animal area, even though Napoleon and Pedro did try to chase us away.

Your school is providing you with a good education. As a result of good leadership in the school and the houses, you have made lots of progress in improving your behaviour, attitudes to learning and attendance. This has allowed you to make good progress in class and achieve good results. Your teachers and support staff have very good links with the staff in the houses so your progress is continuous in both areas. You have a good curriculum and an excellent range of evening activities.

These are the areas that we have asked to be improved to make your school even better.

- Your leaders need to make sure you have more opportunities to understand cultures other than your own.
- Teachers record a lot of information about your achievements, but this needs to be used better.
- The school must ensure that it meets the National Minimum Standards currently not met, as detailed in the boarding provision section of the full report.

We know you will continue to do all you can to help the staff at the school and wish you well for the future.