

Inspection of The Hollies Pupil Referral Unit

The Stables, The Hollies, Stafford, Staffordshire ST16 1BY

Inspection dates: 28–29 January 2020

Overall effectiveness

Requires improvement

The quality of education

Requires improvement

Behaviour and attitudes

Requires improvement

Personal development

Requires improvement

Leadership and management

Requires improvement

Previous inspection grade

Inadequate

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils join this school at different times of the year. They arrive here after exclusion from their previous school. Some younger pupils stay here for short periods of time. Most older pupils stay until the end of Year 11.

Leaders and staff work very hard to give pupils another chance at education. Their expectations of pupils are high. They build positive relationships with pupils. Small class sizes help all staff to know pupils very well.

Many pupils behave well. They try in lessons. Staff manage most poor behaviour skilfully. A few pupils distract others. Some pupils' attendance and punctuality are erratic.

Pupils usually get on well with each other. They are often well mannered, smart and engaging. Bullying among pupils is rare. Pupils' personal development is at the heart of this school. It helps pupils to grow in confidence. Leaders are encouraging a new and wider range of activities outside of the classroom.

Leaders have improved the school since the last inspection. Most pupils achieve well, but in a limited number of subjects. A few younger pupils still struggle with reading. Older pupils leave Year 11 ready for further education at local colleges.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Effective teaching helps pupils learn in mathematics and writing. The curriculum in these areas is well organised. New topics build on earlier work. Most lessons fill gaps in pupils' learning. A few pupils, including some with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), do not get enough help with reading.

Pupils also study physical education, geography, art and design, food technology and citizenship. They learn useful life skills in these subjects. But pupils do not always learn and remember enough of what they are taught. Pupils do little history, music or science because of lack of accommodation and staff expertise.

Teaching has improved. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. Most lessons start with interesting activities. This helps to engage pupils. Teachers expect pupils to make an effort. They encourage pupils to complete work. However, they do not always give pupils enough opportunities to recall or practise what they learn.

Pupils say they like the practical aspects of lessons. They enjoy it when they work outside or go on visits. Many are keen to exercise in the local gym and play sport. Older pupils study for the Duke of Edinburgh's Award. They work together very well when doing these activities.

A few lessons occur away from the main school sites. Some pupils, for example, learn about agriculture or construction for a day each week. Pupils say they love these lessons. Leaders know that pupils enjoy learning practical skills. They are launching new vocational courses next year.

Pupils have other opportunities outside of the classroom. They visit local museums and places of worship. They learn about themselves and the wider world. Pupils volunteer and raise money for local causes. The school football team is very successful. Leaders have introduced new citizenship lessons to help prepare pupils for life in modern Britain.

Most pupils achieve level 1 or level 2 qualifications. All Year 11 pupils sit GCSEs in mathematics and English. Independent careers advice helps pupils make good choices about what to do next. Most Year 11 leavers go onto a relevant college course.

This school is better than when it was last inspected. Some leaders and many other staff are new. Leaders have improved the curriculum. They are starting to widen the range of subjects that pupils learn. The behaviour, attendance and teaching of a few pupils need to improve further. The programme of pupils' personal development is still very new. A lack of capacity means that some pupils with SEND do not have their exact needs recognised.

The school is inclusive and caring. Leaders support staff well. A new management committee oversees the work of the school. It supports and challenges school leaders well. A local multi-academy trust provides useful and effective support for the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Pupils are safe in school. They know what to do if they have any difficulties.

Staff know what to do if they are worried about a pupil. They know how to protect pupils from harm. They act quickly when they have concerns.

Staff teach pupils about local and wider risks to their safety. For example, pupils learn about child exploitation and extremism. Staff help pupils understand the serious consequences of involvement in gangs, or with alcohol or drugs.

Safeguarding is well led. School staff work closely with other agencies to help keep pupils safe. School safeguarding records are detailed.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- The school offers a limited range of subjects due to lack of accommodation and staff expertise. The school expects to move into new accommodation by 1 September 2020. Before this, the school and its leaders need to plan for a broader curriculum, by:
 - increasing staff capacity to teach all national curriculum subjects in key stage 3
 - developing the range of subjects on offer at key stage 4, including vocational options
 - ensuring that the new accommodation has sufficient specialist teaching areas.
- Although pupils usually listen well and learn in lessons, they do not always remember what they have been taught. Leaders and staff should ensure that teaching helps pupils to remember more of their learning, including by giving pupils further opportunities to recall and practise what they have learned.
- A few low-attaining pupils, and some with SEND, struggle when reading. To remedy this, leaders should:
 - review the current arrangements for SEND to ensure that there is enough capacity to diagnose all pupils' needs accurately
 - ensure that all pupils who are struggling with reading receive more effective support.
- Behaviour and attendance have improved since the last inspection. However, the poor behaviour, erratic attendance and irregular punctuality of a few pupils disrupts learning. Leaders need to ensure that they review and revise strategies to improve punctuality, behaviour and attendance so that they have greater impact on all pupils.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

If you are the school and you are not happy with the inspection or the report, you can [complain to Ofsted](#).

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	132997
Local authority	Staffordshire
Inspection number	10122473
Type of school	Pupil referral unit
School category	Pupil referral unit
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	54
Appropriate authority	Local authority
Chair of governing body	Ann Kingman
Headteacher	Sonia Lockett
Website	www.holliesschool.staffs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	25 June 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school now operates on two sites. Most key stage 3 pupils are taught on the new Rodbaston site. Key stage 4 pupils are taught at The Stables.
- Some pupils at this school attend alternative provision for part of each week. The alternative providers used by the school are: Reaseheath College, South Staffordshire College, the Military Preparation School, A Company of Horsemen, Beechcliffe Farm, Ingestre Stables and Julian Porter Alternative Provision.
- The school is due to move into new accommodation from 1 September 2020.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

In accordance with section 13(5) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that the school no longer requires significant improvement.

- During the inspection, we visited all classes in the school on both sites. We spoke with pupils and observed them learning in lessons. We looked at the work they

were doing. We looked at their examination results. We also took account of pupils' destinations once they leave the school.

- We looked in detail at English, mathematics, citizenship, and physical education. We also looked briefly at other subjects taught at key stage 3 and key stage 4.
- We spoke to senior leaders, other staff and members of the management committee. We also spoke to a local authority officer and the chief executive of a multi-academy trust that provides some support for the school. We scrutinised a range of documents, including safeguarding information. We took account of views of pupils and staff. No pupils, staff or parents returned the Ofsted questionnaires.
- Inspectors talked with leaders, staff and pupils about the school's safeguarding procedures. They reviewed policies and records relating to safeguarding, attendance and children who have left the school.

Inspection team

Mike Cladingbowl, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Johanne Clifton	Ofsted Inspector
Jane Edgerton	Ofsted Inspector

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