

The Priory Lodge School

Priory Lane, Roehampton, London SW15 5JJ

Inspection dates

21 to 23 May 2019

Overall effectiveness	Good
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Good
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Good
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Good
Outcomes for pupils	Good
Sixth form provision	Good
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Good

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- School leaders and the Priory Group ensure that all the independent school standards are met.
- Leaders show a clear sense of purpose. They carefully analyse the school's strengths and weaknesses, and they take appropriate action to bring about improvement.
- The Priory Group supports and challenges school leaders very effectively. They are determined to see that the school continues to improve.
- The hospital school run by the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) meets pupils' needs very well. It enables most pupils to continue successfully with their education.
- Teaching is good. Teachers use a range of activities and approaches to engage and interest pupils.
- Systems for checking and recording progress help teachers to plan work that meets individual needs.
- Activities, visits and visitors help to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world.
- Attendance has improved. The school works hard to encourage persistent absentees to attend more regularly.
- The curriculum is providing a good range of courses and qualifications which help to prepare pupils for adult life.
- The qualifications post-16 students gain enable them to go on to suitable courses, though the options are still relatively limited.
- The emphasis on life and social skills helps pupils to become more confident young people who are able to make decisions about their future.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Good relationships between staff and pupils promote good behaviour.
- Pupils are kept safe in the school and are taught how to keep themselves safe, particularly when using the internet.
- Most parents are supportive of the school. Some still feel they are not well enough informed about their children's education and progress.
- Opportunities for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills are not provided consistently across the curriculum.
- Sometimes the questioning and feedback in lessons and in books does not give pupils enough scope to think for themselves.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

- The school meets the requirements of the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 ('the independent school standards') and associated requirements.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- To continue the drive to improve the quality of education and raise standards, leaders should ensure that:
 - they continue to develop the school curriculum and work closely with the colleges to improve the options for education, training or employment when pupils leave school at the end of key stage 4 or the sixth form
 - pupils are consistently given more opportunities to practise their literacy and numeracy across the whole curriculum and more time and scope to respond to the questioning and feedback they are given
 - they continue to work with parents to improve communication so that they are better informed about their children's education and personal development.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- The headteacher and senior team have all been appointed since the previous inspection. They have systematically tackled the weaknesses identified in the previous report and put a range of systems and procedures in place. These are being monitored closely by the Priory Group to ensure that they are supporting improvement.
- Leaders have a clear vision and have put into action plans for the further development of the school, and they are strongly committed to raising expectations for what the pupils can achieve. They are determined to see that the school continues to improve.
- These priorities are shared by the recently appointed middle leaders and by the staff as a whole. They too are strongly committed to promoting the welfare and well-being of individual pupils and their families.
- The CAMHS hospital school caters for young people with severe mental health needs who require in-patient treatment. It is very well managed. Very good liaison with families and the schools the pupils usually attend ensures that, as far as possible, they are able to catch up or keep up with their peer group. Pupils can take GCSE and A-Level examinations as appropriate. Leaders work closely with the home schools to make sure the provision continues to meet pupils' needs. Pupils at the hospital school benefit from access to some of the specialist facilities of The Priory Lodge, particularly in PE.
- Difficulties in appointing suitably qualified therapy staff affected the school's work in 2018. Similarly, difficulties in science and mathematics affected some of the teaching in these subjects. This has been an unsettling experience for some pupils who have not always had access to the appropriate therapy time. They are now starting to receive their full entitlement again, as the school has now been able to appoint staff. Extra teaching sessions have also been offered, both to make up for those sessions missed and to reassure pupils.
- Leaders review teaching regularly and evaluate its impact on the quality of learning. They use the information from this to help to plan the programme of staff development, for example the recent work on 'autism friendly' teaching. This helps equip staff with the skills they need to enable their pupils and students to make good progress.
- Some staff expressed anxiety about the changing nature of the school intake. Senior leaders and the Priory Group are aware of this and are currently reviewing how best to ensure that specific training needs are identified and relevant training provided.
- Leaders are in the process of reviewing the curriculum to make sure that it is more responsive to pupils' needs. Key stage 3 pupils take subjects which closely match the subjects of the National Curriculum, which they would be following in their home schools.
- In key stage 4, all pupils take English, mathematics, sciences, physical education (PE), personal, social and health education (PSHE) classes through to life and social skills classes. Pupils can then choose options which reflect their interests and aptitudes. These provide pupils with academic subjects, such as history, and vocational courses designed to meet individual needs and aspirations. The performing arts qualification is particularly successful in supporting pupils' personal development and well-being. The courses lead to

recognised academic and vocational qualifications such as GCSE, Functional Skills and BTEC.

- In the post-16 years, three pathways allow students to take vocational or academic qualifications which enable them to move on to further education colleges or apprenticeships. The highest attainers take A Levels and may progress to higher education.
- The planning for further development recognises that the options for post-16 courses and the opportunities for progression to further and higher education are not as extensive as they could be.
- The school is strongly committed to being inclusive and to promoting equality. All pupils have an education and health care plan (EHCP) and the recently appointed special educational needs coordinator is updating the systems for reviewing and implementing the requirements of these plans.
- Leaders make sure that additional funding is used effectively to help pupils make good progress and to enable them to take part fully in all school activities. Pupils learn to understand and respect diversity in all its forms. They are taught about the protected characteristics identified in the Equality Act 2010.
- Life skills and other aspects of PSHE help pupils to develop personal and social skills which complement their academic development and expand their understanding of the wider world. Careers guidance is well planned to help pupils make sensible decisions about moving on to college or other placements.
- The wide range of opportunities for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development include a good range of visits and visitors. Recently, pupils have been to various museums and galleries, and have taken part in an acting workshop with the Old Vic Theatre. The link with Fulham Football Club is particularly beneficial, not just in terms of sport but other skills such as leadership and developing resilience, teamwork and independence.
- Most parents are supportive of the school and, though some still have concerns, others cannot speak too highly of what the school has done for their children. The volume of complaints has continued to decline since the previous inspection and the letters of praise that the school receives far outnumber complaints. However, even the supportive parents still feel that they are not well enough informed about their children's education and progress.

Governance

- Two members of the Priory Group act as governors. They work closely with the school leaders to check all aspects of the school's work. They are challenging and constructive in the way in which they hold senior leaders to account for the quality of teaching and pupils' progress. The Priory Group monitoring systems are thorough and the regular checks they carry out provide the school with valuable feedback. For example, the regular health and safety audits help the school to keep up to date with changing statutory requirements.
- The regional operations director and quality assurance adviser use their expertise well and have been fully involved in discussions about the school priorities. They have worked closely with the school to help to resolve the staffing issues. Governors ensure that pupils'

welfare and safety are always a high priority for everyone and that all staff have received the appropriate safeguarding training.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff know that ensuring the welfare and safety of pupils and creating a culture of safety are everyone's responsibility. All staff receive relevant training and regular updates on safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff know the signs that should raise concerns, and what to do if they are worried about any pupil's safety and well-being.
- The school safeguarding policy reflects the government's latest guidance. It is available to parents and staff on the school website. This includes information about how to report concerns.
- Leaders and governors ensure that the required checks on adults working at the school are carried out. Safeguarding records are detailed and fit for purpose. Sensitive information is kept secure. The senior staff in the school and the in-school support services work closely with other professionals and agencies, including the local authority, to help keep pupils safe.
- Health and safety checks and risk assessments ensure that pupils are kept safe in school and when on visits.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils' individual needs well, both the academic and the personal and social. They tailor the approaches they use to help pupils make good progress.
- In the hospital school, high-quality teaching helps to ensure that pupils can keep up with their school work. Regular contact with families and the exchange of information with the home schools contribute very well to pupils' good progress and attainment.
- The school is a pleasant and well-maintained environment for staff and pupils to work in. Classrooms and shared spaces are uncluttered and have relevant and attractive displays which include examples of pupils' work. Staff manage pupils' behaviour well so that classrooms are generally orderly places for pupils to work and learn.
- Teachers, therapists and teaching assistants work together to help pupils in all key stages to consolidate what they know and can do, and to learn new skills. Work is carefully planned to develop pupils' confidence and resilience as well as promote their academic progress.
- Teachers check on and record pupils' progress in detail. They analyse the information carefully to identify the next steps or areas where further work or practise is needed. The work with other schools in the group, which had just started at the time of the last inspection, is proving to be helpful to teachers when checking their assessment judgements.
- In English lessons, teachers make sure that pupils develop their literacy skills as much as possible, as, for example, in the work on persuasive writing and in reading the set texts for GCSE English. Numeracy activities in some subjects support the effective mathematics

teaching. They help students to learn through practical activities, for example using every day mathematics in food and design and technology lessons. Support for literacy and numeracy is, however, not always consistent across the curriculum.

- Speaking and listening skills are taught well across the curriculum. In a social skills session, younger pupils were encouraged to listen to each other as well as contributing their own ideas on friendship. In older classes, discussions were used similarly effectively to encourage pupils to express their ideas.
- Where teaching is most successful, teachers and assistants give pupils the scope to respond to questioning and feedback, which helps them to explain what they mean. Very occasionally, though, pupils are not given enough time to think about their responses or were not asked to explain their ideas in more depth.
- Teachers take every opportunity to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world. This includes introducing them to British Values and helping them to understand what it means to be a good citizen. Pupils learn about democracy through the work of the school council.
- Visits, visitors to the school and the choice of topics all help to widen further pupils' understanding. For example, key stage 3 pupils had visited Hampton Court Palace, which linked with their work in history. Teachers use visits to galleries and museums to support work in art and science.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- On the school site and in the hospital school, relationships between staff and pupils are good. As a result, pupils are generally attentive and able to contribute in class. Staff try hard to make sure that pupils understand the need for any changes to routine and are not unsettled by these. For example, during the inspection pupils were well informed about room changes because of public examinations.
- The transitions between different stages of the school are carefully managed so that pupils can move confidently into the next stage. Older pupils have access to good personal and careers guidance which helps them to understand what is involved in different courses they may wish to take. Pupils are encouraged to be ambitious.
- Pupils' wellbeing is taken very seriously. The sensory room, the regular 'well-being walk' and clubs, such as the 'LEGO' Club, managed by therapy staff, promote well-being. The school provides pupils with help on anger and anxiety management and understanding autism. The work of the school counsellor and the student well-being lead is highly valued by staff, pupils and parents.
- The school places great emphasis on helping pupils to take responsibility for themselves. Older pupils have good opportunities to take responsibility, for example as mentors who provide support for younger pupils and as leaders in PE. They take their responsibilities seriously.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- A calm start helps pupils to settle quickly and sets the tone for the day. Pupils are greeted on arrival and staff use the time well to pick up on any individual needs.
- Pupils generally enjoy school. They are polite and friendly, and they make visitors feel welcome. Behaviour in lessons is good and any individual difficulties or poor behaviour are not allowed to disrupt the education of others. Pupils understand the systems of rewards and sanctions.
- The new recording system is enabling leaders to monitor more closely both personal development and behaviour and provide support where necessary. Staff have all now had training in de-escalation techniques and the use of physical restraint. This is very much used as a last resort.
- Attendance is improving. However, a small group of pupils are still absent too often and are not making as much progress as they could.
- There are a few reported incidents of bullying but, in discussion, most pupils thought that these are dealt with appropriately. Staff and pupils think behaviour has improved, and school records support this view.
- Pupils say they feel safe in the school and are well cared for, and a few older pupils felt that, if anything, the school is overprotective. The staff work hard to make sure that pupils understand the issues which might affect them, as, for example, on issues around the use of social media and radicalisation. Pupils say they know how to stay safe when using the internet and social media.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Pupils' starting points are usually below those typical for their age and pupils tend to have gaps in their education. Those who attend regularly in all the key stages make good progress both academically and in developing their personal, social and life skills.
- The range of activities and experiences provided encourage them to make their own choices and become confident and more resilient. Pupils attending the hospital school make good progress both academically and in their personal development.
- Pupils who are entitled to support through additional funding make similar progress to other pupils. The school has few pupils who speak English as an additional language and none at an early stage.
- Speaking and listening skills are promoted across all classes. Though pupils are encouraged to read, they do not consistently get as much practise in using reading and writing skills in all subjects. Pupils practise numeracy skills through practical mathematics, for example in food lessons or design and technology where accurate measurement is important.
- From Year 9 onwards pupils can take functional skills examinations in English and mathematics. In Years 10 to 13, they take recognised qualifications such as BTEC vocational courses, GCSE English, mathematics, science and in the option subjects, such as history and ICT.

- The number of pupils taking examinations is too small to make valid comparisons with national figures. Most pupils, however, achieve results which enable them to go on to take more advanced academic and vocational qualifications in the school sixth form or at college.
- Independent careers education starts in key stage 3 and, by the time pupils leave, they have received help and advice so that they understand what is involved in different courses. Most key stage 4 pupils move on into the sixth form or to a suitable other placement in college, or an apprenticeship.

Sixth form provision

Good

- The school's post-16 provision has developed well since the previous inspection. A high proportion of pupils now stay on into the sixth form to follow academic and vocational programmes such as GCSEs and A levels and BTEC. All the relevant independent school standards are met.
- The sixth form is well led and managed. The new sixth form leader is working on an action plan to ensure that students are better prepared for independent study. The school is also keen to expand the links with colleges so that students have access to a wider range of opportunities.
- The current provision is carefully matched to students' individual needs and their prior learning. Some students may spend three years in the post-16 provision, enabling them to improve on their qualifications and their skills in other areas. Some students have been able to undertake work experience in the sixth form, but this has not been as widely available as the school had hoped.
- Teaching is good, which helps students to achieve the academic qualifications they need for their next stage. The work around personal development focuses strongly on preparation for the next steps, employability and on independent living. Students now have their own area of the school, which includes a garden, and a kitchenette, where they can make drinks and snacks.
- Post-16 students are encouraged to take on responsibility within the school. They play an important part in the school council, act as PE and sports leaders and take on the role of mentors to younger pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	136110
DfE registration number	212/6041
Inspection number	10092511

This inspection was carried out under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008, the purpose of which is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	71
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	30
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	The Priory Group
Chair	Gaby O'Meara
Headteacher	Jane Straw
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 to £70,000
Telephone number	020 8392 4410
Website	www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk
Email address	thepriorylodeschool@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	16 to 18 November 2016

Information about this school

- The Priory Lodge School is part of the Priory Group and, together with the CAMHS hospital school, caters for up to 102 pupils and students aged five to 19 years, though very few are of primary age. The Priory Lodge has historically admitted pupils with autistic spectrum disorders. Admissions to the hospital school have been for pupils with eating disorders, anxiety disorders and other special educational and medical needs. The admissions to The Priory Lodge are changing in that the school is now taking pupils with

other needs as well as autism. All pupils have an EHCP and almost all are placed and funded by their local authorities.

- The school is located within the grounds of The Priory Hospital in Roehampton, south-west London. The CAMHS hospital school is opposite the main building. All post-16 provision is now on the school site and the premises known as the sixth-form learning hub are no longer in use.
- At the time of the previous inspection, the current headteacher had been appointed but had not yet taken up her post. Since then, two deputy headteachers have been appointed. A new regional operations director from the Priory Group has also taken over responsibility for the school. Pupil numbers have continued to increase.
- From time to time the school uses some alternative provision, usually at South Thames and Kingston Colleges.
- The school website meets the requirements of the independent school standards.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection took place with one day's notice.
- The inspector jointly observed teaching and learning with the headteacher, a deputy headteacher and the leaders of the CAMHS hospital school during four learning walks across the two sites. She also met with a group of pupils and spoke with pupils and staff informally throughout the inspection.
- The inspector scrutinised the school's information about pupils' progress and attendance.
- The inspector took account of parents' contributions to Ofsted's online questionnaire, Parent View, and spoke on the telephone with one parent.
- The inspector had several meetings with a wide range of staff, including teachers, therapists, leaders and managers and representatives of the Priory Group. She observed a morning briefing and considered questionnaires completed by staff, and a small number of pupils.
- The inspector reviewed a wide range of documentation, including school policies, logs, evidence of staff training and information related to safeguarding and health and safety. The inspector also toured both premises and considered additional information and evidence in relation to the independent school standards.

Inspection team

Grace Marriott, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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