

# The Priory School

Inspection report for residential special school

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC038758
<b>Inspection date</b>	3 March 2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Paul Clark
<b>Type of Inspection</b>	Key

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<b>Address</b>	The Priory School Pickeridge Close TAUNTON Somerset TA2 7HW
<b>Telephone number</b>	01823 275569
<b>Email</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	C Sweeney
<b>Head of care</b>	Rod Cockram
<b>Head / Principal</b>	Christopher Sweeney
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	18 September 2007

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## About this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcome for children set out in the Children Act 2004 and relevant National Minimum Standards for the establishment.

## The inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding:	this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality
Good:	this aspect of the provision is strong
Satisfactory:	this aspect of the provision is sound
Inadequate:	this aspect of the provision is not good enough

## Service information

### Brief description of the service

Priory school is a Local Authority provision for boys who are subject to an Educational Statement of Need, within the category of behaviour, emotional and social difficulties (BESD). The school is located on the outskirts of Taunton within a housing development. The boarding house is attached to the school and operates as a separate provision. The boarding provision is used flexibly to meet individual needs, which includes after school activities for a small number of pupils. Pupils can stay for up to four weekday nights each week.

The boarding facility at the school has sufficient single bedrooms, living space and toilet and shower facilities to accommodate up to 10 boys. At the time of inspection the school had 47 boys on roll of whom seven were using the boarding facility. Ages of the boys attending the school range from 11 to 16 years.

Although major building works were planned to begin for the whole school site in January 2008, which was to include a complete refurbishment and upgrade of the boarding provision, this has been postponed by the education authority pending consideration of the school's progress in meeting its educational provision.

The Head of Care acts as the Registered Manager of the boarding facility and the current Head Teacher acts as the Responsible Individual. The Head Teacher is due to leave the school at the end of the next term. The school have been advised that they must inform Ofsted in writing of the name of the replacement Responsible Individual.

### Summary

This two day, unannounced inspection was an integrated inspection carried out by a Social Care Inspector under the leadership of an Education Inspector. Questionnaire surveys were conducted on boarders and parents. The inspection of the Boarding provision included visual inspection of all internal and external parts of the building, scrutiny of policies and procedures, statutory and operational records, staff personnel and training records and young people's case files. The Registered Manager, Acting Head of School, Designated Child Protection Officer, care and teaching staff, Catering Manager, School Governor and young people were interviewed. Care practice was observed. The Social Care inspection included one late night and early morning visit.

Young people told the Inspector that they enjoyed being in the unit and that they felt safe and free from bullying. Good relationships were observed between staff and young people. Good policy, procedural and recording systems support the good practice observed.

The overall quality rating is good.

This is an overview of what the inspector found during the inspection.

### Improvements since the last inspection

A system is now in place to record when a young person's medication has been returned to their parents and the recording system for the management of the administration of medication now ensures confidentiality.

Young people's health records now contain detailed information on all aspects of their health.

Young people's information documents about the boarding provision now contain the contact details of Ofsted.

Recording systems about such events as physical restraints, sanctions, complaints and the actions taken are appropriately monitored by the Head of School or their Deputy.

Staff now date and sign records that they have been trained in, and understand school policies.

Risk assessments are now in place to ensure that potential hazards are identified and guidance action is made known to staff.

Fire safety checks and drills are now carried out at intervals recommended by the local fire authority.

Young people now have Care Plans on their files which make a comprehensive assessment of their needs and which are appropriately reviewed.

A member of the School's governing body now conducts regular welfare monitoring visits to the boarding provision and makes reports and recommendations to the School.

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Report notes under this Outcome Group are contained within 'Organisation'.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Report notes under this Outcome Group are contained within 'Organisation'.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Report notes under this Outcome Group are contained within 'Organisation'.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Report notes under this Outcome Group are contained within 'Organisation'.

### **Achieving economic wellbeing**

The provision is good.

Report notes under this Outcome Group are contained within 'Organisation'.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The quality of boarding at the Priory School is good. Young people enjoy living here, feel safe and enjoy positive relationships with staff. Recommendations made at the previous inspection of boarding have all been implemented.

The promotion of equality and diversity is good, evidenced by the attention to personal care needs, balanced gender staff group, diversity of cuisine, sex education programme and policy on dealing with racism.

Children's health is well promoted, supported by detailed record keeping. Psychological assessment and support for children is facilitated when necessary.

Care staff are trained in the storage and administration of medication, First Aid and Food Hygiene as part of their induction.

First Aid boxes do not contain a list of contents.

A qualified cook oversees well managed catering arrangements. A balanced and nutritious diet is provided which staff and young people comment favourably upon.

Support for children who may bed-wet is discreet and sensitive.

The school has a 'No Smoking' policy for pupils and staff.

Children feel safe and protected from bullying. All relevant policies are monitored through effective recording systems. The school has a designated Child Protection Officer to whom all allegations/disclosures of abuse are referred. The Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) procedures are available to all staff. Young people stated that behaviour management systems are fair.

Care staff are appropriately trained to drive the minibuses for children's evening activities. Vehicles are routinely checked and serviced.

Staff recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that young people are cared for by staff who do not present a risk to their safety. The 'Single Central Record' of staff does not record every Criminal Records Bureau check and some of those recorded show that several staff have not been checked for over three years. Visitors sign into the school, wear badges and are not allowed unsupervised access to young people.

Fire safety checks and fire drills are carried out at recommended intervals and staff undertake fire training.

Risk assessments ensure that potential hazards are identified and guidance is made known to staff. A record of staff and young people's accidents is kept.

Boarders are allocated a key worker with direct knowledge of their needs. Care staff occasionally assist teaching staff in class, on school trips/activities and help young people with homework, reading and educational projects.

There are a wide variety of after-school activities available both within the school campus and externally.

There are computers in the boarding house that young people can use for educational purposes, which are appropriately safeguarded. There are a range of musical instruments available, toys and games, plus TV lounge with DVD player and a pool table. Several boys have TVs in their room.

Children enjoy an introductory visit (with parents) and trial overnight stay before a decision to board is made. Long term plans are aimed at returning to live and be educated from home. A 'Parental and Family Support Advisor' is employed to help achieve this.

Young people have care plans with comprehensive assessments of their needs which are appropriately reviewed.

Daily meetings between the care staff and boarders take place where they are consulted about choices in the running of the Unit and where daily events and individual behaviour is discussed. Boarders can accrue points and money for good behaviour and there are fair and appropriate sanctions for misdemeanours.

Good relations between staff and boarders were observed.

All boarders may use the unit's telephone to phone their families free of charge and in private. There is regular communication between staff and parents.

Boarders can change out of their uniform after school. The school manages laundry effectively.

There are an adequate number of showers, bathrooms and toilets which are well maintained and which provide privacy. There are stocks of personal requisites/ toiletries should a young person run out.

Although the general standard of the premises and the furnishings and décor is reasonable standard the building is quite old and requires regular updating. Proposed building works to improve the space and facilities in the boarding area have been postponed pending consideration of the school's progress in meeting its educational provision.

'Connexions' Personal Advisors visit the school and assist young people in preparing for independent living.

Although the school has not produced an overall Statement of Purpose there is a Statement in place for the boarding provision. There are information leaflets for young people and parents on the organisation and running of the provision, although these are not dated to show when they are reviewed.

A daily log is completed by care staff, discussed at shift handovers ensuring productive communication between staff. There is good liaison between care and teaching staff.

Staff files are reasonably well ordered. Although there is a comprehensive staff induction programme and an ongoing training programme which addresses key needs, the training records of both care and teaching staff involve retention of loose leaf course certificates and no dated list. Two care staff have an NVQ Level 3 qualification in Child Care, two others are registered candidates. The Head of Care has many years experience in child care and a NVQ Level 3 Qualification in Child Care.

Care staff have 1:1 supervision with the Head of Supervision at least every half term, there are weekly team meetings. Annual personal development plans record staff training and development needs.

A member of the School's governing body conducts regular welfare monitoring visits to the boarding provision and makes reports to the School.

**Recommendations**

The school must ensure that it meets the National Minimum standards currently not met, as detailed below:

ensure that First Aid boxes contain a list of their contents. NMS 14.

ensure that the Statement of Purpose and prospectus for young people and parents are dated to record the frequency of their review. NMS 1.8

ensure that the major building works planned to begin for the whole school site in January 2008 which was to include a complete refurbishment and upgrade of the boarding provision, and which has been postponed by the education authority pending consideration of the school's progress in meeting its educational provision, continues. NMS 23

ensure that at least 80% of care staff have the NVQ Level 3 Qualification in Child Care and that the Head of Care obtains the NVQ Level 4 Qualification in Care Management. NMS 31

construct a dated list of training undertaken on the personnel files of individual staff. NMS 19

ensure that the 'Single Central Record' for all staff at the school records every Criminal Records Bureau check and that staff are CRB checked at least every three years. NMS 27

**What must be done to secure future improvement?**

**Statutory requirements**

This section sets out the actions, which must be taken so that the registered person meets the Care Standards Act 2000, and the National Minimum Standards. The Registered Provider must comply with the given timescales.

Standard	Action	Due date
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**Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that First Aid boxes contain a list of their contents. NMS 14.
- ensure that the Statement of Purpose and prospectus for young people and parents are dated to record the frequency of their review. NMS 1.8
- ensure that the major building works planned to begin for the whole school site in January 2008 which was to include a complete refurbishment and upgrade of the boarding provision, and which has been postponed by the education authority pending consideration of the school's progress in meeting its educational provision, continues. NMS 23
- ensure that at least 80% of care staff have the NVQ Level 3 Qualification in Child Care and that the Head of Care obtains the NVQ Level 4 Qualification in Care Management. NMS 31



- construct a dated list of training undertaken on the personnel files of individual staff. NMS 19
- ensure that the 'Single Central Record' for all staff at the school records every Criminal Records Bureau check and that staff are CRB checked at least every three years. NMS 27