

Priory Hurworth House

Westfield Drive, Hurworth-on-Tees, Darlington DL2 2AD

Inspection dates	4–5 November 2015
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
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Leaders and managers have high expectations which have raised the quality of teaching, resulting in improved outcomes for pupils.
- Pupils make good progress, often from low starting points, because of good, well-planned teaching.
- In particular, the school has introduced a wide range of therapeutic support for pupils, which has led to a significant improvement in pupils' personal development and behaviour.
- Pupils are safe and well supported in their personal development, especially in building their self-esteem and self-confidence.
- Pupils benefit from the developing broad academic and vocational curriculums which meet their needs.
- Pupils in the small sixth form make good progress by following a work-related curriculum, often in partnership with a college near their home, which equips them well for the next stage in their lives.

It is not yet an outstanding school because

- Achievement in English is less strong than in mathematics.
- All teaching does not yet challenge pupils to do everything they are capable of.
- Not all pupils have yet developed an enthusiasm for learning.
- Governors lack the regular contact with the school to carry out their role with the necessary rigour.
- Although attendance is improving, it remains below average.

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?

- Raise pupils' achievement in English to the level of that in mathematics.
- Ensure that all teaching gives all pupils the opportunity to reach their personal best.
- Involve governors more extensively in the leadership and management of the school.
- Improve attendance to at least the national expectation.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management **is good**

- Leaders demonstrate an ambition for the school to constantly improve its performance. This ambition is shared by staff and pupils. Leaders have also ensured that all independent school standards are met. Leaders know the school's strengths and areas for development. They have produced an accurate self-evaluation which has moved the school forwards through regular review, planning and implementation.
- Leaders have effectively monitored the quality of teaching and chosen to develop their own higher-level teaching assistants as potential teachers. As a result of good-quality teaching and support, pupils make good and improving progress.
- All staff have access to a broad range of relevant training, both in school and at other institutions. There is no inadequate teaching.
- The school has established a range of partnerships with high-performing schools and shares good practice. Pupils undertake work experience in a local primary school. Opportunities to work and learn in the local community have contributed to pupils' increased self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of British values and citizenship, for example by their participation in the democratic 'student voice' group. They learn about life in multicultural Britain and are taught to respect the rule of law.
- The curriculum in personal, social, health and economic education (PSHE) and Citizenship ensures the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. Pupils display growing self-confidence and an understanding of right and wrong. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on literacy and numeracy and enables pupils to make good progress.
- The behaviour and welfare of pupils is ensured through robust policy and practice. Procedures for safeguarding pupils are outstanding.
- **The governance of the school**
 - The school has valuable, regular support from representatives of the proprietor, who are effective in holding leaders to account.
 - The governors meet only twice a year and are not regularly in school. They are not sufficiently involved to carry out their duties.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment **is good**

- Good teaching leads to effective learning and good achievement.
- Teachers' planning is detailed and provides activities which often fulfil pupils' needs. However, in a small minority of lessons there is not enough challenge for the most-able pupils.
- Teachers promote literacy and numeracy in most lessons and help pupils to understand the wider use of English and mathematics as a preparation for adult life.
- Teachers share their planning with teaching assistants who fully understand and deliver helpful support to pupils. This includes academic and personal development. As a result, teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress.
- The sixth-form curriculum provides good opportunities for these pupils to consolidate their learning and to progress towards 'C' grades in mathematics and English, alongside vocational courses.
- A small number of older pupils follow part-time courses at a college near to their home. The school and college both provide excellent support and ensure that the young person knows the named person who can provide help. There is highly effective communication between the college and school on matters of attendance, punctuality and learning outcomes, resulting in a safe and productive experience for the pupils.
- Teachers and pupils are aware of pupils' current standards and progress. Pupils know their targets and how to achieve them.
- The school is preparing for the transition to assessment without levels and much planning is already in place. Pupils will be introduced to the new system gradually. Training for all staff is planned for the beginning of the spring term.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare is good

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding. It is driven by dedicated and caring staff. Relationships between staff and pupils are based on high levels of mutual respect.
- The school's therapy programme has made an outstanding contribution to pupils' physical and emotional well-being.
- Pupils appreciate the opportunities to sit with adults and discuss their concerns.
- Pupils understand the meaning of staying safe and say that the school looks after them very well. There is a box where pupils can post anonymous concerns about safeguarding. They say that these concerns are acted upon.
- Pupils say that there has been a small amount of bullying but that the issues were effectively resolved.
- The school provides appropriate levels of supervision when pupils are arriving and leaving school, and at break and lunchtime. This supervision is based on mutual cooperation and creates a calm atmosphere.
- All staff are trained in safeguarding and have read *Keeping children safe in education*. Two teachers and all administrative staff have received enhanced training. There are three adult champions: one for bullying, one for child sexual exploitation and one for 'Prevent'. The headteacher is a member of the local safeguarding board.
- All interview panels include at least one person trained in safer recruitment.
- Attendance is improving significantly but remains below average. There is no persistent absence.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is good.
- The school's successful work in therapy has resulted in pupils' growing self-confidence and self-awareness and has helped to reduce significantly the amount of sanctions and interventions that have been necessary to be used by staff.
- Classrooms provide a calm learning environment where there is very little disruption. Pupils have the opportunity to learn without being distracted.
- However, there are occasions when pupils are calm and well-behaved but do not display an enthusiasm for learning.

Outcomes for pupils are good

- Pupils' achievement is good and they meet the school's aims.
- The school focuses successfully on closing the gap in achievement for pupils who often arrive at the school with attainment that is well below the national expectation for age and have been further disadvantaged by time out of school.
- Pupils make good progress. Key Stage 2 pupils make the most progress in both English and mathematics, and most exceed national expectations. A recent change in the structure of the curriculum led to a temporary slow-down but the latest assessment information shows that the levels of achievement have been restored and continue on an upward trend.
- All Key Stage 3 pupils achieve or exceed nationally expected progress in mathematics. However, outcomes in English are below expectations for over half the pupils, although there is evidence of a significant increase in reading ages.
- Almost two-thirds make above expected progress in mathematics and all pupils who have been at the school for more than two years are closing the gap. However, half of the older pupils make less than expected progress in English, although some have spent a relatively short time at Hurworth House.
- Older pupils and pupils in the sixth form can follow a vocational pathway, which includes off-site work-related education either at a college or a work experience placement.
- Disadvantaged pupils make at least the expected levels of progress.
- In the last two years, there have been no pupils who have left the school who have not gone on to education, employment or training (NEETs).

Sixth form provision**is good**

- Pupils enter the sixth form with well below average prior attainment. In some cases, these pupils may have only spent a relatively short time at Hurworth House.
- Pupils meet the school's aims for their personal development. They grow in confidence and in their communication skills to enable them to take the next steps in their education.
- From their prior achievement levels, pupils make good individual progress, especially in mathematics and English.
- Each pupil has an individual timetable. Where appropriate, this includes provision towards achieving GCSE C grade in English and/or mathematics.
- Pupils benefit from an enrichment programme supporting personal, social, study and employability skills. They receive helpful and impartial careers advice.
- Learners develop social and support skills by acting in a mentor role for younger pupils.
- Although the sixth form is at an early stage of development, the leadership and management of the sixth form is good. In particular, there is work-related curriculum provision which equips pupils for the next stage of their lives. Leaders' own enthusiasm is reflected in the pupils' attitudes and helps them to make good progress.
- Leaders ensure that pupils develop as enthusiastic learners. They develop supportive relationships with off-site providers and ensure that teaching at school and at college enables them to progress.

School details

Unique reference number	137511
Inspection number	10006132
DfE registration number	841/6006

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	Independent
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	7–19 years
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Boys
Number of pupils on the school roll	38
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	3
Number of part time pupils	2
Proprietor	Priory Education Services Ltd
Chair	Trevor Wilson-Smith
Headteacher	Claire Blackett
Annual fees (day pupils)	£45,000 to £73,500
Telephone number	01325 729080
Website	www.priorygroup.com
Email address	sharon.pearson@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	24–25 April 2012

Information about this school

- Hurworth House is a special day school for 40 boys and girls aged seven to 19 years who have complex learning difficulties including emotional, social and mental health disabilities and autistic spectrum disorders.
- The school is part of the Priory Group, a national provider of specialist education and care, and is located in the village of Hurworth-on-Tees near Darlington in the north east of England. It is registered to take up to 40 pupils.
- One pupil attends part-time off-site provision at Bishop Auckland College. One sixth form pupil attends part-time off-site provision at Prior Pursglove College in Guisborough.
- The school opened in September 2011 and there are 38 pupils currently on roll, all of whom have a statement of special educational needs or an education and health care plan.
- The school places an emphasis on intensive therapeutic programmes tailored to meet pupils' individual needs in the areas of psychology, speech and language, art and music.
- Five of the pupils are looked after by their local authority.
- The school's aim is to: 'ensure that all of our young people develop a positive outlook on life; that they achieve, thrive and learn by engaging in appropriate and stimulating learning opportunities within a challenging educational environment.'
- The school was last inspected in April 2012. It received an emergency inspection in May 2014.

Information about this inspection

- The inspection was carried out with one day's notice.
- The inspector checked the school's compliance with the independent school standards, including scrutinising school policies and other documentation.
- The inspector observed learning across a range of subjects and classes. In one of these observations, he was accompanied by the headteacher.
- The inspector analysed the school's records of pupils' achievements and behaviour, and scrutinised samples of pupils' work during lesson observations.
- The inspector spoke to pupils, staff, the headteacher and a governor who is also a representative of the proprietor.
- He visited a college where a pupil is placed for off-site activities.
- There were insufficient responses to Ofsted's online survey on the Parent View website to generate a report.

Inspection team

Peter McKenzie, lead inspector

Ofsted inspector

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making a complaint about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/publications/complaints-about-ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.



You can use Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school. Ofsted will use the information parents and carers provide when deciding which schools to inspect and when and as part of the inspection.

You can also use Parent View to find out what other parents and carers think about schools in England. You can visit www.parentview.ofsted.gov.uk, or look for the link on the main Ofsted website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 4234
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2015

