

Chelmsford Hospital School

Stump Lane, Springfield Green, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 7SJ

Inspection dates

7–9 March 2017

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Outstanding
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Outstanding
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Outstanding
Outcomes for pupils	Outstanding
Sixth form provision	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is an outstanding school

- Leaders and governors are ensuring that all of the independent school standards are met.
- The school is rapidly developing, from an already high standard.
- Governors are not yet sharing the school's best practice with other schools.
- Teachers have the highest expectations for learning and behaviour, doing everything possible to re-engage pupils with learning quickly.
- Teachers make excellent use of assessment to set challenging targets for pupils.
- Progress towards pupils' targets is tracked, recorded and reviewed with each pupil. Consequently, pupils know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Staff promote pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development most effectively.
- Pupils rapidly improve their attendance, behaviour and attitudes to learning because welfare arrangements are outstanding.
- Pupils make rapid progress in learning during their relatively short stay in hospital because teamwork between teachers, support staff and health professionals is strong.
- Excellent guidance and support prepares pupils extremely well for the next stage of their education.
- Pupils' well-being and safety are given the utmost priority.

Compliance with regulatory requirements

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

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Sustain outstanding leadership by:
 - developing the school as a centre of excellence
 - disseminating the excellent practice in the school to other schools.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Outstanding

- The headteacher, deputy headteacher and governing body have been highly effective in rapidly developing the school in the short period of time since its registration. They have created a culture that enables staff and pupils to excel. Relationships between staff and pupils are excellent.
- Leaders' strong commitment to continuous improvement is reflected in the very well-conceived school development plan, which focuses on developing excellent provision and outcomes for pupils.
- Self-evaluation is rigorous, accurate and used well to drive improvement rapidly.
- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and direction, and enjoys the full support and commitment of staff in ensuring that the school continues to move from strength to strength.
- Staff morale is high, as reflected in the overwhelming strong positive responses in discussions and in the questionnaire returns, with comments such as: 'It is a real pleasure to work here.'
- The headteacher has the full confidence of parents and regularly seeks their views. In discussion, parents expressed extremely positive views of the school. They said communication was excellent and they highly praised the staff in enabling their children to overcome barriers to learning. One parent typically described the impact of the school on their child as 'life changing'.
- High priority is given to the feedback from parents, pupils and staff. The quality improvement lead, for example, at the suggestions of pupils, reviewed the homework booklet and renamed it as the 'Keep Busy Challenge', and developed a detailed 'Career Action Planner' as an aid to transition from school.
- Leaders review all policies thoroughly to make sure they are up to date, implemented effectively and readily available to parents, schools and local authorities.
- Excellent leadership of teaching has ensured continuous developments in the quality of teaching, particularly within the past two terms. Teaching is regularly and rigorously monitored to show the impact on pupils' learning. The quality improvement lead and the headteacher moderate and secure the emerging picture of teaching, and identify strengths and any areas for development.
- Teachers benefit greatly from reviewing their own practice as part of the school's strong system of appraisal. Excellent support and training provide good opportunities to improve teachers' practice.
- The school promotes equality of opportunity exceptionally well by successfully implementing a three-year plan to improve accessibility to the curriculum.
- Leaders have developed an excellent curriculum that inspires pupils to learn. The curriculum includes a 'return to learning nurture programme' to motivate pupils who arrive disengaged from learning on admission to hospital. The staff give priority to support the curriculum provided by pupils' home school. The curriculum for each pupil is

summarised in a weekly personalised curriculum.

- Weekly sessions by a visiting physical education specialist and by the occupational therapist promote pupils' physical development and well-being extremely well.
- The curriculum promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development exceptionally well, through a strong programme of personal, social, health and economic education.
- Staff are highly trained and skilled in developing units of work to raise pupils' awareness of radicalisation and extremism. The units of work encourage debate, prepare pupils positively for life in modern Britain and promote fundamental British values extremely well.
- The curriculum has a strong focus on preparing pupils for discharge from hospital and transition to their home school or college through close work with parents and health professionals, and high-quality careers guidance.
- There are thorough and highly effective assessment systems to record formal academic progress and to measure the impact of pupils' mental health on pupils' capacity to learn. Leaders review the assessment outcomes with staff every half term and use the information to set precise priorities so that pupils make rapid and secure progress.
- The school has secured substantial improvement in the progress of disadvantaged pupils by providing a bespoke curriculum to meet their individual needs.

Governance

- The governing body provides strong strategic support for the school, holding leaders strictly to account for all aspects of their work.
- The quality improvement lead monitors the provision rigorously, including scrutiny of the school procedures for vetting the suitability of staff and the accuracy of the single central record of employment checks.
- Governors carefully consider the weekly, half-termly and bi-annual reports presented to them by the headteacher. They have an accurate view of the quality of provision, especially teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
- Governors share the strengths of the school with the three partner schools within the group but are not yet disseminating the school's outstanding features across other schools.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff are vigilant in checking pupils' safety and well-being.
- The designated officer for safeguarding ensures that all staff are thoroughly trained in safeguarding and child protection.
- Staff know what to look for to identify any pupil who may be at risk of harm, abuse or exploitation. Any concerns are reported appropriately and confidently.
- Staff work closely with health professionals to support pupils.

- Pupils' views are taken seriously by staff and acted on.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Outstanding

- The quality of teaching has moved rapidly from good to outstanding over the past two terms and, as a result, pupils are making excellent progress from their different starting points.
- Teachers use their thorough knowledge of pupils' prior learning and behaviour to set the highest expectations to help them re-engage with learning quickly. Staff accept no excuses for any pupil's refusal to learn and consistently re-focus pupils on the learning task in hand. As a result pupils re-engage in learning quickly and thrive in lessons.
- Teachers maximise the use of teaching time so pupils work hard and focus throughout on the activities. Staff challenge pupils to explain what they understand about what they are learning. Throughout lessons, teachers provide detailed feedback consistent with the school's policy. As a result, pupils have a very clear view of how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Teachers and teaching assistants work closely with therapists and health professionals to support and monitor the learning and well-being of pupils, including students in the sixth form.
- Staff make excellent use of well-chosen resources, such as computers and laptops for research, to support pupils' learning and captivate their interests. Pupils who have been identified with a handwriting difficulty are provided with a course in touch typing and learn to use the keyboard efficiently to support their writing.
- Staff embed reading, writing, speaking and listening very effectively across the curriculum. In a topic on diversity, celebrating the life of Martin Luther King, literacy was promoted well in pupils' writing of a thought-provoking speech about the equal recognition of people with mental health issues and physical illnesses, 'We Have a Dream'. Pupils read their work confidently to a local Member of Parliament.
- Teaching promotes numeracy and problem-solving skills well. In a design competition to see which pair of pupils could make the strongest tower to support a hard-boiled egg using spaghetti and marshmallows, pupils were encouraged to apply their knowledge of shapes and to look at the structures of tall buildings. Pupils designed the tower efficiently and then successfully tested it out.
- Teachers provide challenging homework in line with the school's policy, which pupils record in their 'Keep Busy Booklets' and the tasks enable them to consolidate their learning.
- Parents are provided with regular, timely reports on how well their children are doing and are given clear guidance on how to support their children on discharge from hospital.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Outstanding

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- Pupils make rapid progress in their personal development as they quickly gain in

confidence and develop a positive self-image as a result of the high-quality attention by staff on their well-being.

- Each pupil is assigned a key tutor who nurtures, supports and encourages them to re-engage with learning. Pupils deepen their realisation of the importance of education in preparing them for their future lives on discharge from hospital.
- Key tutors set reintegration targets, which are regularly reviewed with pupils. Staff facilitate pupils' reintegration to the home school or transfer to new provision, based on high-quality, weekly careers advice. The overwhelming majority of pupils reintegrate successfully with their home school or transfer to other provision on discharge from hospital.
- Pupils deepen their awareness of diversity and British values through 'World Studies' topics. They are encouraged to treat all people from different cultures and religions with equal respect, which they do. They reflect on mental health issues that might act as barriers to learning, and examine issues of injustice in their topic work on fairness and equal treatment for all.
- Pupils are safe, and say that they feel safe in school. Topics on safety in physical education and online safety are included in each pupil's timetable. Pupils consistently adopt safe practices and understand how to keep safe in different situations, including the use of the internet. Parents are confident that their children are safe in school.
- Pupils develop a deep understanding of different types of bullying through, for example, well-thought-out topics on individuals' differences. They say there is no bullying in school and their parents agree. There are no recorded incidents of bullying or prejudice of any kind.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Staff consistently implement the school's behaviour policy with its carefully planned system of rewards and sanctions extremely well. As a result, pupils make rapid progress in their behaviour in a very short space of time.
- The school's 'fresh start' system is extremely effective in restoring good behaviour. Pupils hold the weekly formal awards and celebration programme in high regard and respond very positively to the code of conduct.
- There is a zero tolerance for unauthorised absence and pupils rarely miss a day in school. The rate of unauthorised absence has rapidly decreased in the past two terms. Pupils' attendance greatly improves from low to broadly average attendance, often within a few weeks, because good attendance is actively promoted on the ward through a strong culture of recovery and re-engagement in learning. Education and health staff continually discuss attendance and timetables with pupils and ward leaders.

Outcomes for pupils

Outstanding

- Pupils make rapid and sustained progress across a wide range of subjects because they quickly re-engage with learning. Pupils often make at least good progress within 12 weeks

of admission.

- When they leave hospital, pupils are well placed to maintain their motivation to learn and enthusiasm to apply the skills learned, including the knowledge and skills for GCSE examinations.
- Students in the sixth form make outstanding progress in preparing for transition to college or work, and all move successfully on to their chosen destinations.
- There are no significant differences in the progress of different groups of pupils, including children looked after and the most able pupils because staff provide individual programmes of work with clearly targeted support to meet each pupil's individual needs well.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make rapid progress towards the targets on their individual learning plans. Staff take full account of the provision specified on their education, health and care plans when planning individual programmes.

Sixth form provision

Outstanding

- Outstanding leadership is ensuring that teaching is outstanding and students are extremely well prepared for life beyond school, especially their smooth transfer to college or apprenticeships.
- Leaders are highly effective in providing specialist teaching to support students following AS- and A-level courses.
- Students are making rapid progress in their chosen vocational courses, such as level 2 courses in beauty and computing.
- High-quality teaching challenges and supports students to make rapid progress in each area of their individual curriculum plan. The plans enable students to quickly catch up as they overcome their barriers to learning.
- Leaders make excellent use of assessment to provide each student with a highly individualised curriculum plan that includes options on careers, enterprise, physical education and online safety.
- All students, including those who are not engaged in education or training when admitted to the school, greatly benefit from impartial careers advice. This advice supports students to make clear and realistic plans for the future. The strong emphasis on careers and enterprise is leading to successful transition from school to further education or training.
- Students who have not achieved a GCSE grade C in mathematics or English are provided with effective support to resit these examinations.
- Students make outstanding progress in their personal development and behaviour and many assist in the induction and mentoring of younger pupils.

School details

Unique reference number	142537
DfE registration number	881/6065
Inspection number	10026075

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 School
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	17
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	6
Proprietor	Priory Education Services Limited
Chair	John Steward
Headteacher	Patricia Wilson
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,250
Telephone number	01245 345345
Website	www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk
Email address	PatriciaWilson@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- Chelmsford Hospital School is based at the Priory Hospital in Chelmsford. It is attached to a ward in the hospital's child and adolescent mental health services unit, which provides psychiatric assessment and treatment for 11- to 18-year-olds.
- The school is registered to provide full-time education for 17 pupils aged 11 to 18 years with social, emotional and mental health needs.

- The hospital and school are owned and run by the Priory Group.
- The school opened on 1 January 2015, providing education for inpatient pupils. It was registered as a school on 3 February 2016 following a pre-registration inspection on 19 January 2016.
- Some pupils have an education, health and care plan arising from their social, emotional and mental health difficulties.
- Some pupils are looked after by the local authority. The school does not receive additional funding for the pupils looked after.
- The length of time pupils are resident in hospital is usually between 28 and 135 days. Pupils attend school for a period of 14 weeks on average before they are discharged from hospital. Most pupils are dual registered with their home school.
- The pupils' home school local authorities fund the majority of the hospital places. Funding for education is not received for many pupils, particularly those at post-16. No pupil is denied education provision. The school requests precise details of the provision each local authority intends to effect for non-funded pupils during their hospital admission. The school is required to record and report on the arrangements for every pupil's reintegration pathway upon their discharge.
- The school operates from 9.10am until 3.30pm each day with pupils' attendance and tuition tailored around their health and treatment needs. Some aspects of the curriculum are delivered by health professionals and are undertaken outside of the normal school day.
- There is no separate sixth form provision as all pupils are taught in two classrooms and have individual learning programmes.
- Since registration, there has been a change of headteacher, who is responsible for two other units: one based at the Priory Hospital, North London and the other at the Ticehurst in East Sussex. The unit has a full-time head of school to manage the school on a day-to-day basis.
- This is the school's first Ofsted inspection since registration.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector visited lessons and activities to look at the impact of teaching and assessment on pupils' learning and progress.
- The inspector looked at pupils' work and the school's information about the progress pupils are making.
- The inspector held discussions with the clinical director, the headteacher, all education staff, the quality improvement leader who serves on the governing body, and the director of quality assurance for education and children's services for the Priory Group.
- The inspector held informal discussions with pupils and telephone discussions with five parents. There were no responses from parents on Parent View.
- The inspector took account of the school's recent survey of parents and pupils, and the questionnaire returns completed by all staff.
- The inspector looked at the school premises and accommodation and scrutinised a range of documentation, including: the schemes of work and weekly teaching plans; the school's policies and procedures, such as those for safeguarding pupils; records of behaviour and attendance; and information provided to parents.

Inspection team

Declan McCarthy, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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