

Penwortham Priory Academy

Crow Hills Road, Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire PR1 0JE

Inspection dates

5–6 July 2017

Overall effectiveness	Requires improvement
Effectiveness of leadership and management	Requires improvement
Quality of teaching, learning and assessment	Requires improvement
Personal development, behaviour and welfare	Requires improvement
Outcomes for pupils	Requires improvement
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Requires improvement

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a school that requires improvement

- The headteacher has high expectations but wider leadership across the school is not consistently strong.
- Leaders do not monitor and evaluate the use of the pupil premium funding effectively. As a result, outcomes, attendance and exclusions for these pupils are not improving quickly enough.
- Subject leadership is not always effective. Consequently, the quality of teaching is too variable and is not improving quickly or consistently enough in geography, history and science.
- Pupils' achievement has improved in some subjects, but still requires improvement. Outcomes in geography, history and science are improving, but are not yet consistently good.
- Teachers do not ensure that pupils are given work that challenges them regularly.
- The welfare needs of pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities are not always met, because leaders have not yet established enough links with external agencies.
- Pupils' attendance, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, is low.
- Leaders, including governors, do not monitor, evaluate and review improvement plans regularly or effectively enough. Consequently, improvements are not as rapid and secure as they should be.

The school has the following strengths

- Outcomes in English and mathematics and across a range of other subjects are good.
- Leaders and governors have effectively tackled some of the weaker aspects identified at the last inspection. Homework is valued by pupils and parents. Pupils' work is presented neatly. The performance of staff is managed effectively. Boys make progress in line with other pupils nationally.
- Pupils are effectively prepared for their next steps in employment, education and/or training.
- Leaders ensure that pupils are safe, healthy and happy. Pupils behave well. Pupils' education prepares them well for life in modern Britain fully and effectively.

Full report

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Improve the effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - having a sharper focus on the impact of pupil premium funding, and regularly monitoring, evaluating and reviewing plans to support disadvantaged pupils' outcomes, attendance and behaviour
 - tackling the inconsistencies in subject leadership and making sure that where there are strengths, they are shared effectively
 - developing and strengthening links with external agencies so that the welfare needs of pupils who have complex special educational needs and/or disabilities are fully met
 - ensuring that leaders monitor and review the progress of improvement plans more regularly and consistently.
- Improve the effectiveness of teaching, learning and assessment by ensuring that teachers routinely challenge pupils of all abilities with suitable work.
- Improve outcomes by ensuring that pupils make rapid and consistent progress in geography, history and science.
- Improve pupils' attendance rates, including disadvantaged pupils and those who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, so that they match national averages.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Requires improvement

- The headteacher provides purposeful and resilient leadership. There is an improved ethos and culture for learning since the last inspection which have led to improvements. However, these are not yet sufficiently rapid or secure enough for the school to be good.
- School leaders have an accurate understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Improvement plans focus on the aspects which require the most and immediate improvement, but these plans are not monitored and reviewed well enough. Therefore, improvements are too slow or not consistent.
- The way that leaders use the pupil premium funding is not fully effective and has not improved sufficiently since the last inspection. In 2016, the outcomes and the attendance of disadvantaged pupils were in the lowest 10% nationally. School leaders do not assess or review the impact of actions and interventions well enough. Despite some improvements this year across the school, disadvantaged pupils make less progress than other pupils nationally. Their attendance is also lower than that of other pupils nationally. Information provided by school leaders shows that disadvantaged pupils also have a higher rate of exclusions than others.
- Subject leadership requires improvement. In some areas, such as English and mathematics, leadership is strong and, because of this, teaching is regularly good or better. Pupils are suitably challenged in these subjects, including most-able pupils and boys, so they make strong progress. However, despite some improvement, school leaders recognise that this is not the case in other subjects, such as geography, history and science. In these areas, teachers do not consistently set enough challenge for pupils, so pupils do not make the progress that they should. Also, subject leaders and teachers do not use the training that they have received to support the learning of disadvantaged pupils effectively.
- School leaders have improved the standard of, and attitudes towards, homework since the last inspection. Pupils and parents are overwhelmingly positive about homework because it is set and marked regularly.
- Leaders have introduced the 'Priory Standard', which provides pupils with clear and high expectations of how they should present their work. This has led to consistent improvements in the standard of pupils' presentation of work since the last inspection.
- School leaders spend the Year 7 catch-up funding effectively. Pupils with low starting points in literacy and numeracy make good progress. For example, inspectors heard Year 7 pupils who have had extra support through the catch-up funding read well.
- Pupils' attendance is not monitored and reviewed effectively. Figures provided by school leaders show a decline in attendance this year.
- The range of subjects that pupils study is good and has led to improved outcomes for pupils. It has been reviewed by school leaders, who say that the subjects offered reflect pupils' interests, abilities and ambitions. Leaders have worked with employers to ensure that the subjects available support the local and national employment market. The subjects that are offered include academic and vocational opportunities at key stage 4. The opportunities to follow a range of academic qualifications for current

pupils has been extended.

- Pupils value the extra-curricular opportunities that are provided. These activities enrich the good personal development school leaders provide for pupils. Pupils like the wide range of activities which are offered each day. Extra-curricular activities include arts, performance, and sporting and academic opportunities.
- Leadership of careers education and information, advice and guidance is effective. In 2016, every Year 11 pupil moved on to education, employment or training. Pupils say that careers lessons are well planned and the support that they receive is impartial.
- The funding provided to support pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities is having a positive impact on outcomes. Their progress is in line with other pupils nationally over a range of subjects, including English and mathematics. However, in 2016, the attendance of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities was in the lowest 10% nationally and, despite an improvement this year, it remains low. Leaders have identified a requirement to further develop links with outside specialist support agencies, to support pupils who have complex special needs.
- Senior leaders have reviewed the performance management and pay progression of staff since the last inspection and it is now led and managed effectively. Leaders set and review targets, which include those relating to the progress of disadvantaged pupils. Staff and school leaders are eligible for pay progression only if these targets are met.
- Staff, including those that are newly or recently qualified, say that the training school leaders plan is effective and has supported improved teaching, learning and assessment. However, the training that has been provided to improve the learning and progress of disadvantaged pupils has not improved the teaching of these pupils consistently.
- The leadership of the curriculum to develop pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural knowledge, and fundamental British values is effective. Lessons are taught as part of a range of subjects that pupils study. These lessons are well planned so that pupils learn about and respect the views and cultures of others. Pupils say that racist and homophobic bullying is rare and that diversity is recognised and celebrated in school.

Governance of the school

- Governance has improved since the last inspection. Governance now has the capacity and confidence to support and challenge leaders effectively.
- Governors have undertaken training with the school improvement partner, so that they now have the skills to analyse information about the school independently. However, there is still room for further improvement, as shown by the weaknesses in ensuring that pupil premium funding is spent effectively
- Governors have undertaken training to help them identify more accurately the strengths and areas for improvement in teaching, learning and assessment. They visit the school regularly and use their first-hand knowledge effectively. Consequently, they know where teaching and leadership needs to improve further and recognise that pupils need to be challenged more consistently.
- Governors have supported senior leaders in restructuring the performance management system, so that it is now effective.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- School leaders maintain appropriate and accurate safeguarding records. There are systematic and appropriate procedures for checking the backgrounds of staff when they are appointed.
- Pupils are kept safe in school. They feel safe and are well looked after. Pupils are taught how to recognise and keep themselves safe from risks, such as radicalisation. They are trained effectively in e-safety. School leaders communicate and work well with parents, carers and other stakeholders. Pupils know who to report concerns to. Parents are confident that their children are safe and well looked after in school.
- Staff are trained in safeguarding regularly and effectively. Consequently, they know what to do if dealing with any child protection concerns. There is a strong culture of safeguarding at the school and, because of this, staff are vigilant in identifying potential risks, such as pupils at risk of sexual exploitation. School maintains appropriate and accurate safeguarding records.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Requires improvement

- Teaching has improved since the last inspection but requires further improvement because the quality of teaching and learning remains too variable. Pupils' achievement varies across subjects and year groups. Teaching is strong in some subjects, such as English and music, and has improved in mathematics. However, teaching is not yet consistently good.
- Teachers do not plan activities that challenge pupils often enough, including in geography, history and science. Consequently, the work set is sometimes too easy and pupils do not make good progress from their starting points. In subjects where teachers plan challenging activities regularly, such as English, pupils make good progress, including the most able pupils.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and, in the best lessons, they use this to plan lessons that challenge and engage pupils. Sometimes, teachers do not use their strong subject knowledge to set tasks or ask questions that stretch pupils' learning. In a minority of lessons, including some in key stage 3, pupils do not make sufficient progress because teachers lack the subject knowledge to set appropriate work.
- Teaching does not consistently meet the needs of disadvantaged pupils. Teachers do not always apply the training that they have received to support the learning of these pupils. Teachers and leaders do not monitor and assess the outcomes of disadvantaged pupils consistently to ensure that teaching promotes fast enough progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make good progress from their starting points, because the teachers and other adults who plan and support their learning usually do so effectively.
- Teachers' assessment of pupils' progress is regular and often effective. When this is the case, pupils are clear about the strengths and weaknesses of their work, including spelling, punctuation and grammar. They are given the time and support to reflect and improve upon it, in line with the expectations set by the school's senior leaders.

Consequently, they extend their learning and make further progress. Pupils make less progress where assessment is weaker or less consistent, such as in history and science.

- Pupils and parents say that homework is set regularly and is effective. Pupils like it because it is challenging, meaningful and is marked consistently.
- Teachers and teaching assistants do not plan together effectively and, consequently, the impact of the support provided by additional adults is not consistently effective. Senior leaders recognise this and have plans to train staff and restructure their support.
- Teachers ensure good standards of behaviour and attitudes to learning in most lessons. Pupils take care over the presentation of their work consistently, in line with standards set by school leaders.

Personal development, behaviour and welfare

Requires improvement

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is good.
- Pupils recognise the lessons and activities planned by school leaders to teach spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and fundamental British values as a strong feature of school life. The programme is monitored and evaluated by leaders effectively. Pupils explore themes, including democracy, justice, homophobia and Islamophobia. Pupils lay a war memorial wreath on Remembrance Day. Activities to reflect upon the terror attacks in Manchester, including a minute's silence, have been included recently. Pupils say that their learning supports a strong culture of diversity and tolerance at the school.
- Pupils and parents say that bullying is rare, including racist and homophobic bullying. They are confident that any incidents are spotted by staff or reported by pupils and dealt with quickly and effectively.
- Pupils feel safe and well supported. They say that leaders and other staff have the safety and welfare of pupils at their heart and that they have no hesitation in speaking with staff if they have concerns. Pupils are taught how to remain mentally and physically healthy, maintain a good diet and stay fit.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils requires improvement.
- Information shared by school leaders shows that pupils' absence has increased this year. The overall absence and persistent absence rates of disadvantaged pupils and pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities require particular improvement as they are well above the national averages.
- School leaders have been effective in reducing exclusions. They are well below the national average overall. However, the proportion of disadvantaged pupils who are excluded remains higher than others.
- Pupils are well behaved around school and at breaktimes and lunchtimes. School leaders say that they trust the pupils and, because of this, pupils are allowed to move freely to use facilities inside the school building and outside areas. These areas are

designed thoughtfully and maintained immaculately. Pupils treat the school environment with respect and do not leave litter lying around.

- Positive relationships between pupils, and between pupils and adults, are a strong feature of the school. Pupils are confident, articulate and well mannered. They are punctual to lessons.
- Pupils behave well in lessons generally and take pride in their work. The expectations for presentation shared through the 'Priory Standard' are consistent and effective.
- The attendance, behaviour and safeguarding of the small number of pupils who attend alternative provision are led and managed effectively. This contributes significantly to the progress that they make.

Outcomes for pupils

Requires improvement

- Outcomes in English and mathematics were in line with national averages in 2016 and the work and assessments of current pupils show that most are achieving similarly. Pupils from all starting points make progress in line with national averages in English, mathematics and across a range of other subjects.
- Outcomes for pupils in geography, history and science were low at the time of the last inspection. Pupils did not make enough progress. The leadership of these subjects has been restructured. Consequently, the work and assessments of current pupils in these subjects are beginning to show improved progress, with more pupils learning at a faster rate. However, outcomes in these subjects remain inconsistent and are not yet good.
- The most able pupils achieve outcomes in line with national averages in English, mathematics and across a range of other subjects. The progress that these pupils make in geography and history is not strong.
- Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils have not improved quickly enough since the previous inspection. In 2016, the progress of disadvantaged pupils across a broad range of subjects was in the bottom 10% nationally. Outcomes for current disadvantaged pupils are improving and differences are diminishing, but they remain low.
- Outcomes for boys have improved since the last inspection. In 2016, their achievement was in line with others nationally across a broad range of subjects, including English and mathematics. Boys at the school currently continue to make similar progress.
- Pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities make progress in line with other pupils nationally across a broad range of subjects, including English and mathematics. This includes those with high starting points.
- Pupils who enter Year 7 with attainment that is below average in English and mathematics make good progress in improving their skills. For example, inspectors listened to a group of pupils who entered Year 7 with low levels of reading. The pupils now read well. The extra help that these pupils receive is led and managed well and ensures that these pupils catch up to the level of other pupils.
- Outcomes of the small number of pupils who follow alternative provision are generally good. All of those who were in Year 11 in 2016 moved on to appropriate further education, employment or training.

- Pupils' outcomes in English and mathematics and their strengths in other subjects, such as music, help prepare them for their next steps well. Every Year 11 pupil in 2016 progressed to appropriate further education, employment or training.

School details

Unique reference number	138948
Local authority	Lancashire
Inspection number	10036775

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Secondary comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	618
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Kevin Burke
Headteacher	Matthew Eastham
Telephone number	01772 320250
Website	www.priory.lancs.sch.uk
Email address	m.eastham@priory.lancs.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	17–18 November 2015

Information about this school

- The school complies with Department for Education guidance on what academies should publish.
- The school meets the government's current floor standards, which set the minimum expectations for pupils' attainment and progress by the end of Year 11. The school does not meet the government's definition of a coasting school.
- The proportion of disadvantaged students and those supported by the pupil premium is in line with the national average.
- The number of pupils who have special educational needs and/or disabilities supported by the school is well below the national average. The number of pupils who have a statement of special educational needs or an education, health and care plan is above the national average.
- A small number of pupils attend alternative provision at Myerscough College, The Cove (Heysham), Shaftesbury House School and Preston College.

Information about this inspection

- Meetings took place with school leaders, teachers and members of the governing body.
- Discussions were held with pupils to gather their views on issues including safeguarding, bullying, behaviour, teaching and careers guidance.
- Inspectors examined a range of supporting documentation, such as the school's self-evaluation, the school's improvement plan, the school's assessment information, the school's pupil premium plan, minutes of governing body meetings, attendance and behaviour records and safeguarding documentation.
- Inspectors considered 291 responses to the Ofsted online pupil questionnaire, 121 responses to the Ofsted online parental questionnaire, Parent View, and 65 responses to the Ofsted online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors conducted learning walks and lesson observations across a range of subjects and year groups. They were accompanied by school leaders on some of these lesson observations.
- Inspectors scrutinised the work in pupils' books by undertaking a work analysis with school leaders.

Inspection team

Stephen Ruddy, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
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Craig Yates	Ofsted Inspector
Sheldon Logue	Ofsted Inspector

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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. www.gov.uk/pupil-premium-information-for-schools-and-alternative-provision-settings.

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