

Priory Blandford CAMHS School

Shottsford House, Heddington Drive, Fairfield Bungalows, Blandford Forum, Dorset DT11 7HX

Inspection dates

11–13 June 2019

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

Summary of key findings for parents and pupils

This is a good school

- Since the pre-registration inspection, leaders have taken effective action to ensure that all independent school standards (ISS) are met.
- Leaders have a strong vision for the school. They ensure that the school's nurturing ethos pervades so that pupils' personal development, care and well-being are outstanding.
- School staff communicate highly effectively with on-site healthcare professionals. The integrated health and education plans ensure that pupils are well supported in the range of activities across the school day.
- Leaders, including governors, have an accurate view of the school. This enables them to take effective action in promptly identifying and addressing any weaknesses.
- Leaders use the curriculum flexibly to meet pupils' individual needs, including developing personal interests and careers and preparing well for the next stage in their lives.
- Leaders promote an effective, caring and structured environment to ensure that pupils are kept safe and achieve well.
- Teachers' well-established expectations and routines support pupils well. These ensure there is a calm, orderly and purposeful atmosphere in lessons.
- Teachers plan individual daily work for each pupil. This targeted approach enables pupils to progress well. However, sometimes pupils are not challenged sufficiently to do the very best they can, particularly the most able.
- Leaders' strategy to get the very best reading outcomes is not yet fully established. Consequently, pupils' enjoyment and experiences of reading are sometimes reduced.
- Leaders' effective processes and systems ensure clear accountability within the school. However, the monitoring of teaching, learning and assessment sometimes lacks the focus on pupils' achievement that would ensure pupils make the best possible progress.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural (SMSC) development is strong. However, the teaching of world faiths and other religions is not consistently planned well enough for pupils to gain a deep insight into this aspect.

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?

- Further improve the quality of teaching and learning, by ensuring that teachers:
 - use assessment information to plan work that consistently stretches and challenges pupils in lessons, particularly those who are most able
 - implement and evaluate a high-quality reading strategy to promote pupils' love of reading.
- Further strengthen leadership and management, by:
 - improving the quality of monitoring and evaluation, to be focused on pupils' achievement and overcoming pupils' barriers to learning
 - evaluating the schemes of work and planning for delivering the highest quality of religious education.

Inspection judgements

Effectiveness of leadership and management

Good

- Leaders have taken effective action since the pre-registration inspection in July 2018 to ensure that all of the ISS are fully met.
- Leaders promote the school's aims and vision with conviction. Their beliefs and values are well communicated to instil high expectations for the pupils. The new headteacher has settled into her role admirably. Her calm determination provides focus and direction so that pupils succeed.
- Other leaders, including the chair of governors, the quality improvement leader (QIL) and the executive headteacher work well together. They understand their roles and are fastidious in holding the headteacher to account through well-established systems. As a result, leaders swiftly identify and address any weaknesses. The school development plan is comprehensive and fully meets the school's priorities.
- Leaders ensure that the curriculum is flexible, with the scope to meet pupils' individual needs and interests. Learning activities are carefully considered, even on a day-to-day basis, to take full account of pupils' health needs and any associated risks. As a result, pupils enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum that helps to prepare them for their next steps in life.
- Similarly, careers advice and guidance (including for post-16 students) are carefully considered in order to be impartial, informative and personalised. For example, pupils can follow their own interests and staff ensure that, where appropriate, pupils can complete assessments and/or work placements to pursue career interests or follow examination courses.
- Leaders check the quality of teaching and learning continually as part of the Priory Group's wider monitoring and evaluation review (MER) cycle. The headteacher has also recently introduced new systems for checking pupils' progress. These activities identify pertinent strengths and weaknesses. However, some activities are not focused well enough on pupils' achievement. As a result, pupils' progress is not as strong as it could be for some pupils to overcome particular academic barriers.
- Leaders ensure that the school's priority in caring for pupils is keenly reflected in the quality of its SMSC work. This includes the development of pupils' understanding and their awareness of British values. Pupils talk confidently about rights and responsibilities in society, as well as any consequences of their actions. In this school, where pupils are also hospital patients, they have a good understanding of communal responsibilities and what it means to follow rules and make positive contributions.
- However, leaders do not ensure that developing an understanding and awareness of world faiths and religions are consistently prominent. This means that pupils do not explore all aspects of religion and spirituality to the same high standard as other aspects of the SMSC curriculum.
- In addition, the school's reading strategy is underdeveloped. Leaders do not have a systematic approach to the teaching of reading with clearly agreed expectations for how this promotes the very best literacy and reading standards possible.

Governance

- The leadership structure throughout the Priory Group and across the organisation is clearly understood by all. Governors involved in the running of the school have clearly delegated roles and responsibilities. This enables them to hold leaders and teachers firmly to account, as well as being held to account themselves by other senior officers.
- The governing body consists of a chair of the governing board, the QIL and the executive headteacher. Governors are meticulous in their duties and have a detailed knowledge of the school. Consequently, they make well-informed strategic decisions to provide high-quality support and challenge.
- Governors work closely with the headteacher. They ensure that staff's professional development and training needs are fully met, including through appropriate appraisal. For example, the new headteacher is being well supported through evaluation visits from the QIL as well as a 'buddy' (mentor) headteacher in another Priory Group school.
- Governors share the same aspirations and commitment as the headteacher. This is a small but focused and knowledgeable group, working effectively to secure positive outcomes for pupils.

Safeguarding

- The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.
- Staff work very effectively with the pupils and other professional colleagues on site to keep pupils safe. Staff's dedication and commitment to safeguarding are exemplary. As a result, there is a strong culture of safeguarding and a determination to keep the pupils as safe as possible at all times.
- The headteacher attends handover meetings with nurses and other hospital staff every morning. This ensures that the education team is fully briefed and prepared to work with every pupil each day.
- Staff interact and integrate seamlessly with hospital staff and healthcare professionals throughout the school day, including at lunchtimes. Daily risk assessments are reviewed continually to ensure that pupils are eligible and safe to undertake educational activities, including permission for off-site education which is authorised by, among others, the consultant psychiatrist.
- Staff supervision levels are high. This is always in accordance with hospital guidance, policy and direction from senior clinicians and medics. As a result, staff can react quickly to any incidents at any time during the school day.
- Processes for safeguarding and protecting pupils are effective. School staff are well trained and have a good understanding of what to do to keep pupils safe, including how they must respond in the event of an emergency or disclosure. The headteacher, who is also the designated safeguarding lead (DSL), has responded quickly to make referrals to external agencies as needed.
- Leaders work effectively with other site and security staff to ensure that the school's premises and accommodation are safe. These are well maintained, including the outdoors, so that pupils can enjoy space for relaxation and recreation, as well as education.

- Policies and procedures to keep pupils safe are adhered to rigorously. As a result, pupils say that they feel safe and trust staff to look after them. There are positive relationships between the pupils and education and healthcare staff that continue into lessons and are seen around the school at other times.

Quality of teaching, learning and assessment

Good

- The education staff know the pupils well. They build positive relationships in lessons so that pupils settle quickly and are willing to learn.
- Teachers are enthusiastic and work diligently to meet the different needs of pupils in the school. Their expertise in working with pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is the bedrock of their success. Teachers are well trained and communicate effectively with pupils, such as those with autism spectrum disorder, to ensure that pupils succeed personally, socially, emotionally and academically.
- Teachers have well-established expectations and routines for managing the school day. These are well understood by pupils, including a 'wake up' on the ward. This promotes a calm, orderly and purposeful start to the day and a positive atmosphere in lessons.
- Teachers set individual work for pupils at the start of each day. Individual learning plans (ILPs) enable teachers to plan sequences of work to capitalise on pupils' interests. For example, pupils have set up their own science experiments for observing the growth of plants, and write their own creative stories. As a result, pupils take an interest and make progress in lessons and over time.
- Teachers successfully use a range of techniques or strategies to involve pupils in valuable learning experiences. For example, planned 'enterprise' sessions ensure that pupils develop confidence, communication, speaking and listening, as well as mathematical skills, to complete baking, presenting and selling cakes for charity. Pupils enjoy the various activities and the wider social and emotional benefits of these.
- Teachers also ensure that, where appropriate, post-16 students are well supported to work towards assessments and accreditations for national awards. Students recognise the value in this and work diligently towards these expectations or standards, for example in acquiring skills and experience for working with animals.
- However, there are times when teachers do not set work that is sufficiently challenging for pupils. Assessment information is not used most effectively to add to prior knowledge and ensure the strongest and sustained progress. For example, there are times when limited challenge in mathematics holds some pupils back.
- The teaching of reading is not promoted with the zeal or priority that it should have. For example, there is no clarity about shared reading, class reads, and how to use the book stock (or whether or how books are levelled in the classroom). Reading is not assessed robustly. As a result, some pupils lack interest or are ambivalent when it comes to reading.

Personal development and welfare

- The school's work to promote pupils' personal development and welfare is outstanding.
- School staff work extensively with other on-site professionals, for example, doctors, nurses, occupational therapists and speech and language therapists (SALTs) to implement high-quality personalised care plans and risk assessments. These are continually checked, evaluated and adapted so that pupils are kept safe and thrive in different contexts.
- Pupils feel safe and valued. Staff ensure that their emotional well-being and mental health are under constant review. Daily risks are monitored carefully to ensure that pupils access a range of activities to support their personal development, behaviour and welfare.
- Education staff integrate seamlessly with healthcare colleagues throughout the school day. This ensures that pupils receive exemplary care, guidance and support to help them in social contexts. For example, the SALT works closely with education staff in running cognitive skills sessions so that pupils consider different social scenarios and understand the consequences of actions.
- Pupils gain confidence to work together to face challenges and solve problems. For example, during the enterprise activities, pupils successfully complete a range of tasks as a team. As a result, pupils rapidly gain confidence in social situations and overcome many personal barriers.
- In group situations, such as in team meetings, pupils show respect for each other's views and listen carefully. They observe the class rules and behaviour charter so that sessions run amicably and successfully. Furthermore, they show a deep understanding of the significance of any 'rules' relating to their admission to hospital.

Behaviour

- The behaviour of pupils is outstanding.
- Leaders and staff work towards their motto of 'return to learn' for all. Their vision that every pupil can get well, achieve and be a successful citizen is at the heart of their ethos and decision making. Leaders ensure that pupils are ready for the next stage in their lives when they are discharged or leave the school.
- Pupils enjoy school. The attendance of every pupil has improved significantly. Leaders are tenacious and ensure that a highly personalised approach encourages all pupils to keep learning, even if, for example, staff 'take the learning' onto the wards.
- Bullying is rare. However, on a few occasions, there are times when pupils' behaviour can be disruptive or upsetting for others. When this happens, staff deal swiftly, effectively and proportionately to support pupils. Pupils have confidence that such matters are speedily resolved and dealt with well.
- At times, during lessons, when work is not challenging enough, pupils can lose interest. This prevents them from making the best possible progress, or results in pupils presenting work of a lower standard than that of which they are capable.

Outcomes for pupils

Good

- Owing to the nature of the cohorts and admissions to the school, it is not possible to make any comparisons with national data and examination benchmarks.
- Effective use of ILPs and targets supports pupils to make good progress, particularly in the social, emotional and behavioural aspects of their learning.
- There is no discernible difference between pupils who have been in care before being admitted to the hospital and other pupils. Vulnerable pupils, including those with SEND and complex medical needs, are well supported to make strong progress in speaking, communicating, reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils are gaining different skills, knowledge and understanding in subjects other than English and mathematics. For example, pupils have made bird feeders in design and technology as well as making ongoing scientific observations through their experiments. In addition, pupils have access to technology to improve their computing skills. As a result, pupils are transferring skills and making strong connections in their learning in a variety of ways.
- All pupils who leave the school continue into positive placements and are well prepared for the next stage in their recovery, learning and development. Upon their discharge from the hospital and when they leave the school, most pupils successfully transfer to residential special schools, colleges or home education. Managed moves to other provision, including psychiatric intensive care units (PICUs), are secured through the handling of expert specialist mental health teams.
- Post-16 students are supported to make progress in their career choices and through relevant course work assessments and work placements. For example, students with specific vocational interests are helped to gain functional skills and experiences for local college courses. In addition, all students are taught basic skills to begin being equipped for interviews and employability. This is tracked and recorded through a series of assessment criteria while pupils are in the school.
- At times, if pupils are not challenged well enough, their progress stalls, particularly for the most able pupils. The need for increasing challenge has been identified by leaders and is part of the current school development plan.
- Pupils' handwriting and presentation skills across the curriculum are variable. Lower expectations in subjects other than English reduce the quality of work and standards that are consistently produced. Pupils recognise this through their own evaluations when they self-assess their work.
- Pupils' enjoyment and experience of reading are too limited for a few pupils. This means pupils are not making the best possible progress towards individual aims or targets in this aspect of their literacy development.

School details

Unique reference number	145858
DfE registration number	838/6041
Inspection number	10077778

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
Number of pupils on the school roll	6
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Partnerships in Care Ltd
Chair	Andy Cobley
Headteacher	Louise Reeks
Annual fees (day pupils)	£33,250
Telephone number	02380 283633
Website	Not applicable
Email address	LouiseReeks@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The Blandford Priory CAMHS School is a subsidiary of the Priory Group. It is part of a cluster of seven schools in the group's southern division.
- The school caters exclusively for pupils who have been admitted to the hospital with complex mental health diagnoses.
- The new headteacher has been in post since January 2019. The executive headteacher is also new to post, having commenced in May 2019.
- The school does not have its own website at this time.

- The school uses the Priory Group network as well as other local schools and colleges to draft in additional expertise, as required, for pupils.
- This school has not been subject to a full inspection previously. However, it had a pre-registration inspection in July 2018. This deemed the school likely to meet the ISS in all parts.

Information about this inspection

- The inspector observed pupils in a range of situations in lessons. In addition, inspectors looked at pupils' work and information kept by the school about pupils' learning.
- The inspector held discussions with pupils, staff and leaders throughout the inspection, including the headteacher, class teacher and learning support assistant.
- The inspector spoke with the managing director from the Priory Group. He also spoke with the chair of the governing body and held meetings with the QIL and executive headteacher. As part of the inspection, key documents were scrutinised, including the school development plan, summary self-evaluation, programmes of study and the headteacher's and governors' summary reports.
- The inspector scrutinised documentation relating to safeguarding, behaviour, exclusions and attendance. School policies and documentation, including risk assessments and care plans, were also examined. In addition, the inspector checked the condition of the premises in line with the government's requirements through the ISS.
- Inspectors took account of the views of all members of staff who completed Ofsted's questionnaire for staff, and considered the views of parents and carers expressed through Parent View. He also met directly with parents through a face-to-face meeting.

Inspection team

Stewart Gale, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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