Inspection of Priory Telford

Upper Forge, Dale Road, Telford, Shropshire TF8 7DT

Inspection dates:	5–7 November 2019

Overall effectiveness	**Good**
The quality of education	**Good**
Behaviour and attitudes	**Good**
Personal development	**Good**
Leadership and management	**Good**
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Not previously inspected
Does the school meet the independent school standards?	**Yes**

What is it like to attend this school?

This is a small school where pupils feel 'safe and comfortable'. It has opened very recently. Pupils behave well because they know that the staff care for them and want them to do well. There is always someone sympathetic to talk to if they have any problems. On arrival at this school the anxieties from their previous schools begin to diminish. Pupils say that it is easier to work hard if you know everyone around you cares.

Pupils here enjoy their learning. This is because the teachers plan interesting and sometimes inspiring lessons for them. They visit a variety of places like the Museum of Slavery in Liverpool and the local library. They enjoy regular visits to the Ironbridge museum. The teachers assess what pupils know and can do when they first start in the school. They then plan personalised lessons for each pupil, based on that pupil's stage in learning and on their interests. This ensures that each pupil can enjoy an interesting programme of work that meets their needs. Consequently, pupils do well socially and academically.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

The school meets all the independent school standards. The headteacher's and lead teacher's commitment to improving the lives of their pupils is admirable. They know the school's strengths and what the school needs to do to improve. They are strongly supported by strategic leaders from Priory Education Services. They have created an open and collegiate atmosphere. As a result, all staff feel that their ideas will be welcome. All the staff in the school say: 'We love working here.' Leaders make sure that all staff in the school have training in the welfare, health and safety skills they need. This ensures that they know how to support pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Some teachers have years of experience and good subject knowledge in the subjects that they teach. However, some staff need more training, especially for teaching English at the higher GCSE levels.

Pupils do well because teachers create a personalised and well-ordered learning plan for each pupil that provides a broad and rich curriculum. They find exciting and motivating ways of teaching their subjects. They make good links between subjects. For example, science lessons make links with art appreciation. Also, following a history visit to the Museum of Slavery in Liverpool, pupils were able to write a diary about a slave who was able to gain his freedom. Pupils then produced a copy of this diary using their word-processing skills. During this process, pupils improved their use of language and vocabulary. Most of the teaching is motivating and interesting. However, pupils do not always remember key aspects of knowledge. This is because teachers do not revisit important aspects of their subjects often enough.

Lots of worthwhile experiences help pupils to develop personally and socially. For example, pupils have opportunities to raise money for charities such as Comic Relief. Pupils also volunteer to help in at The Dog's Trust that focuses on rehoming dogs.

Pupils learn about different religious festivals such as Diwali, Christmas, Eid and Yom Kippur. Leaders ensure that pupils prepare themselves for their future careers and that they learn about fundamental British values. Pupils are taught the importance of respecting others' differences in a range of subjects. However, teachers rely on this happening spontaneously in lessons. They have not planned well enough when each of the nine characteristics will be taught. This means that they do not ensure that all the characteristics are covered in enough depth.

Leaders have ensured that the requirements of paragraph 3 of schedule 10 of the Equality Act 2010 are met. They have a well-thought-out accessibility plan for pupils who have different kinds of disabilities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective. Leaders care strongly about their pupils' safety and well-being. All staff are vigilant about child protection. They know the specific risks that their pupils face. They explicitly teach pupils about the dangers of exploitation, radicalisation and extremism. Leaders invite the police into the school so that they can teach the pupils about how to manage risk, for example from knife crime. The school's safeguarding policy is displayed on the school website and meets the latest government requirements.

What does the school need to do to improve?

- All teachers know how to plan a series of lessons. They have good subject knowledge for most of the subjects that they teach. The teachers of English have adequate subject knowledge for teaching functional skills, but insufficient subject knowledge for teaching English to the most able pupils. Leaders should ensure that English teachers have professional development opportunities that increase their subject knowledge and skills for teaching GCSE English.
- Teachers plan and deliver motivating lessons that are mostly well sequenced to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in a logical order. However, teachers do not always ensure that key aspects of subjects are revisited as often as necessary to build secure understanding. Leaders' monitoring of teaching should therefore have a stronger focus on this aspect of learning.
- Pupils' understanding of the protected characteristics is developed in some appropriate and interesting ways. However, there are no clear plans as to when each of the protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010 are to be taught. Leaders should ensure that the schemes of work for personal, health, social and economic (PSHE) education and citizenship are sequenced to progressively develop pupils' understanding and acceptance of others' differences.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use Ofsted Parent View to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use Ofsted Parent View information when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further guidance on how to complain about a school.

If you're not happy with the inspection or the report, you can complain to Ofsted.

School details

Unique reference number	146350
DfE registration number	894/6012
Local authority	Telford & Wrekin
Inspection number	10112506
Type of school	Other independent special school
School category	Independent school
Age range of pupils	11 to 18
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Priory Education Services
Chair	Anthony Armstrong
Headteacher	James Wookey
Annual fees (day pupils)	£44,000 to £55,000
Telephone number	01952 433637
Website	www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk
Email address	JamesWookey@priorygroup.com
Date of previous inspection	Not previously inspected

Information about this school

- The school was registered by the DFE on 5 June 2019. This is the school's first standard inspection.
- The school operates from one site and does not use alternative provision.
- The school is located in a rural setting near to the historical Shropshire town of Ironbridge.
- The school caters for pupils with social, emotional and mental health difficulties. Pupils are admitted to the school as part of a care package with the Priory Group. All pupils are likely to have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not have a religious ethos.

Information about this inspection

We carried out this inspection under section 109(1) and (2) of the Education and Skills Act 2008. The purpose of the inspection is to advise the Secretary of State for Education about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

The school meets the independent school standards. These are the requirements set out in the schedule to the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014.

- The inspectors held meetings with the headteacher, the lead teacher, the operations director from Priory Education Services (who is the chair of governors) and the managing director for the north region. They also held meetings with individual teachers as well as with groups of teachers.
- The inspectors focused on English, mathematics, design and technology, information and communication technology and personal, social, health and economic education during this inspection. Other subjects were considered on the second day of the inspection. Inspectors held discussions with curriculum leaders, teachers and pupils. They visited lessons.
- The lead inspector toured the premises with the headteacher to ensure that they provide an appropriate environment for pupils.
- Inspectors examined several policies, schemes of work and plans as well as documents related to health and safety and safeguarding.
- The lead inspector held a meeting with the headteacher to discuss safeguarding procedures and scrutinised safeguarding documentation. She also spoke to the operations director for the Priory Group, who is the governor responsible for safeguarding. She spoke to all the staff about their knowledge of safeguarding procedures.
- The lead inspector considered findings from the Ofsted staff survey of views.
- The school is registered to provide education for sixth-form pupils. There were no

post-16 pupils on roll at the school during this inspection.

Inspection team

Mary Maybank, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Julie Griffiths	Ofsted Inspector

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