

The Priory Lodge School

Priory Lane, Roehampton, London SW15 5JJ

Inspection dates

27 February 2020

Overall outcome

The school meets all of the independent school standards that were checked during this inspection

Main inspection findings

Part 3. Welfare, health and safety of pupils

Paragraphs 7, 11, 14, 16 and 32(1)

- The school's culture of safeguarding is strong.
- The new headteacher has successfully raised the profile of safeguarding in the school and refined practices to ensure that pupils are kept as safe from harm as possible. Leaders are reflective and committed to continuously developing the school's work in this area.
- Leaders frequently deal with challenging and complex incidents. They do so professionally and with rigour. Leaders work proactively and collaboratively with the local authority; this has led to improved safeguarding practice.
- Staff have been suitably trained in line with the latest national and local guidance. The school now has effective processes for referring, managing and taking action following concerns.
- A suitable child protection policy is published on the school's website, and reflects the latest statutory guidance, including 'Keeping children safe in education' (September 2019). However, leaders need to pay more attention to detail in ensuring that their website is up to date, as the versions available at the start of the inspection named designated safeguarding leaders who have since left the school.
- The school's health and safety and risk assessment policies are implemented well. This inspection identified no concerns about the premises, staffing, physical intervention or the management of challenging behaviour.
- Leaders have worked effectively to reduce staff absence, and this remains an area of priority for the new headteacher. Although pupils told me how much absent teachers negatively affect their learning, there are no longer concerns about staff numbers, lack of supervision or staff being too 'stretched'.
- The independent school standards checked in this part continue to be met.

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The school now has both a full-time business manager and a premises manager. Together, they share responsibility for ensuring that the premises are safe and secure.
- This inspection confirms that this responsibility is being fulfilled and identified no concerns about the premises.
- Where issues which potentially place pupils at risk arise, such as pupils excitedly discovering they can operate the lift with a paperclip, leaders have taken swift, effective and proportionate action.
- The independent school standard checked in this part continues to be met.

Part 7. Manner in which complaints are handled

Paragraph 33

- The school's complaints policy continues to meet all the requirements. However, it is a one-size-fits-all organisational policy and is overly complex. The process could be made more accessible for parents.
- The school received multiple complaints in 2019. The documentation recording these complaints and any actions taken was not as thorough as it is now. However, evidence clearly shows that leaders responded to often very complex complaints in a suitable and timely way.
- The independent school standard in this part continues to be met.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34

- This inspection fell on the new headteacher's first day in post, after her short time as deputy and then acting headteacher. Following a period of significant turbulence, staff and pupils welcome her appointment. She, with the effective support of other senior colleagues, has already raised standards, expectations and morale. It is clear that the school is on a positive journey forward.
- The inspection identified concerns that are being actively addressed by the new headteacher, but it is early days. Staff absence is still too high, and pupils' attendance is too low. At the start of the inspection, the available policies online contradicted each other and included out-of-date information. The list of first aiders available in the school was inaccurate. The school had not ensured that information about its leaders is correct on its website, in its prospectus and on the Get information about schools (GIAS) website. Some documentation, such as the admission register and the single central register of vetting checks on staff, required minor amendments in order for them to be fully compliant. However, though leaders accept that they need to pay more attention to detail, they have taken effective action to resolve the areas of greatest priority. As a result, they have ensured all the independent school standards checked during this inspection – including the standard in this part – continue to be met.

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 that were checked during this inspection. Not all of the standards and associated requirements were checked during this inspection.

School details

Unique reference number	136110
DfE registration number	212/6041
Inspection number	10145303

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	Day special school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	5 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	59
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	18
Number of part-time pupils	0
Proprietor	Priory Education Services Ltd
Chair	Andy Cobley
Headteacher	Louise Reeks
Annual fees (day pupils)	£62,571 to £79,423
Telephone number	020 8392 4410
Website	www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk
Email address	thepriorylodeschool@priorygroup.com
Date of previous standard inspection	21–23 May 2019

Information about this school

- Priory Lodge School, part of the Priory Group, caters for pupils with education, health and care plans. The vast majority of pupils have autism spectrum disorder.
- The school no longer caters for inpatient pupils in the adjacent hospital. Since December 2019, The Priory Roehampton Hospital School has operated as a new, separate independent special school.

- The new substantive headteacher took up her position on the day of this inspection, following a short time as deputy headteacher and then acting headteacher.
- The school currently makes no use of alternative provision.
- Information on the Get information about schools (GIAS) website is inaccurate and incomplete. Proprietorial information is missing, and the headteacher's name is incorrect.
- The school's most recent inspection in May 2019 judged the school's overall effectiveness to be good, and all the independent school standards to be met.
- The school is compliant with its registration agreement with the Department for Education.

Information about this inspection

- I carried out this emergency 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 inspection was commissioned by the Department for Education in response to information which raised concerns about some aspects of the school's work.
- I conducted this inspection with no notice.
- I was asked to report against some of the requirements contained within Parts 3, 5, 7 and 8 of the independent school standards.
- I met with the school's new substantive headteacher, a senior representative of the proprietorial body and other senior leaders.
- I met with a group of pupils, a group of staff, the school's designated safeguarding leader and the person responsible for health and safety. I also spoke by telephone with a senior safeguarding leader in the local authority.
- I toured the premises, observed pupils at break, and reviewed key documents and policies, including those related to safeguarding, health and safety and risk assessment.
- There were no recent survey responses on Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

James Waite, lead inspector

Ofsted Inspector

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