

Tadley Court School

Tadley Common Road, Tadley, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG26 3TB

Inspection dates

13 October 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

Paragraph 7

- The school's written safeguarding policy is accessible via the website. It meets the requirements of current statutory guidance. It provides a suitable point of reference for staff and parents, supported by other relevant sources of information. The proprietor body provides useful support to the school in checking that safeguarding arrangements are fit for purpose.
- Leaders clearly understand the context of their school. They recognise the potential additional risks and challenges around keeping pupils safe from harm, linked to their particular needs. Leaders' vigilant approach is reflected in the detailed training that staff receive to keep their safeguarding knowledge up to date.
- Leaders respond promptly and thoroughly to safeguarding concerns that arise. They keep meticulous records of their actions. They sensibly seek advice from relevant experts beyond the school where helpful. This enables them to check that their actions are appropriate and to identify any learning points for their future work.

Paragraph 9

- Written policies about behaviour reflect the school's ethos and leaders' understanding of pupils' additional needs. Positive behaviours are promoted through support plans that identify pupils' potential triggers and ways to manage them. This approach helps staff to pre-empt or respond quickly to incidents, supported by each other and by leaders.
- Leaders keep detailed records of behavioural incidents that occur. They consider any implications for pupils' future learning and therapy, as well as for staff training and support. Proprietor body representatives review any serious incidents as part of their monitoring process, working with leaders to consider and address any emerging patterns.

Paragraph 11

- The school's health and safety arrangements are appropriate. Relevant written policies are fit for purpose. School leaders and the proprietor body make sure policy transfers effectively into practice, through helpful and timely monitoring activities. They keep careful records of this work, using it to direct any relevant future actions needed. For example, their recent review in light of COVID-19 (coronavirus) has led them to make changes to cleaning regimes and how staff and pupils move around the site.

Paragraph 14

- Pupils are supervised well by the adults who care for them. The number of adults in each part of the school is enough to meet pupils' needs safely.
- No member of staff is permitted to work with a pupil unless another adult is close by, so that help is on hand if it is needed. Staff report feeling confident that colleagues and leaders would come to their assistance promptly if needed.
- The school is currently divided into five 'bubbles' to help reduce infection risks linked to COVID-19. Leaders have employed extra staff to help manage this, because staff are not currently able to move between bubbles as they might otherwise do.

Paragraph 16

- Risk assessment is central to the school's work. As for other policies, leaders have adopted the proprietor body's over-arching policy, which is used in all Priory schools. The headteacher takes confidence from this helpful framework, while checking to make sure it is relevant to Tadley Court.
- Written risk assessments are in place for pupils, the activities they engage in and the places where they happen, whether on or off site. Documents show a thoughtful, pupil-centred approach to identifying and mitigating against relevant risks. Documents are kept constantly under review, adapting to pupils' changing needs and circumstances.
- The paragraphs reviewed from this part of the independent school standards are judged to be met. Other standards within this part were not required to be checked during this inspection

Part 5. Premises of and accommodation at schools

Paragraph 25

- The headteacher notes extensive refurbishment work that has been carried out on the school site over the past year. One of the buildings was demolished and rebuilt to provide a purpose-built space for pupils in the primary phase. Decor and furniture in other parts of the site were also refreshed. Leaders have plans to improve some of the outside spaces in the near future.
- Throughout the site, facilities are fit for purpose. Buildings are in a good state of repair and are suitably light, bright and clean. Classrooms, sensory rooms and break-out spaces provide for pupils' varied needs in a safe and accessible way. Buildings and 'bubble zones' have secure boundaries, while allowing for safe exit when required, such as in the event of a fire.

- Pupils can access relevant resources to support their learning and therapy needs. Interactive whiteboards were installed in classrooms during the recent refurbishment work. Adults and pupils have access to computers within their classrooms.
- The school meets this paragraph of the independent school standards. Other paragraphs in this part were not required to be checked as part of this inspection.

Part 8. Quality of leadership in and management of schools

Paragraph 34(1)

- The headteacher is knowledgeable about the school and the pupils it serves. The deputy headteacher, who joined the school in July 2020, brings useful experience from his previous work. Together, leaders' shared expertise equips them well for their roles. The effectiveness of their work is reflected in the smooth running of the school and the care shown to pupils by the staff.
- Leaders actively seek opportunities to share and develop their knowledge in a range of useful ways. They liaise with leaders from the on-site children's homes and from other Priory schools. They use these discussions to gain reassurance about their leadership decisions and to learn from others' expertise. This helps to support improvements in the school.
- Leaders routinely check the quality of the school's work, keeping the independent school standards clearly in mind. The proprietor body provides a useful external eye, with planned visits to check certain elements of the school's work, such as safeguarding and health and safety. Priory's operational director, acting in a governance role, holds the headteacher successfully to account through ongoing reviews of different aspects of the school.
- This part of the independent school standards is judged 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	131531
DfE registration number	850/6085
Inspection number	10161524

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 special school
School status	Independent special school
Age range of pupils	4 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in the sixth form	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	61
Of which, number on roll in sixth form	15
Proprietor	Priory Education Services Limited
Chair	Chris Strong
Headteacher	Lesley Walkden
Annual fees (day pupils)	£74,000
Telephone number	01189 817 720
Website	www.priorychildrensservices.co.uk/find-a-location/tadley-court-school-hampshire
Email address	receptiontadleycourt@priorygroup.com
Date of previous standard inspection	14–16 November 2017

Information about this school

- Tadley Court is an independent special school for pupils with autistic spectrum disorder. Many have associated behavioural and/or learning difficulties. Almost all pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school is owned by Priory Children's Services, which forms part of the Priory Group. Priory operates 26 schools across the country, all for pupils with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff employed by Priory Children's

Services provide a governance role to the school as part of a company-wide monitoring structure.

- The school operates from a single site with extensive grounds. Since the last inspection, the site has undergone significant building work, including the construction of a new building which houses the primary phase of the school.
- Approximately half of the pupils live in children's homes that are owned and run by the Priory Group. Three of these six homes are situated on the school site.
- The Department for Education (DfE) gave permission for the school to extend the age range catered for from September 2019. The school now accommodates pupils aged four to 19, although there are currently none in the Reception year.

Information about this inspection

- This was an emergency inspection commissioned by the DfE. It was in response to concerns that had been raised with the DfE about safeguarding, the management of pupils' behaviour, the deployment of staff and the state of the school's premises. The effectiveness of leadership and management was also considered. The actual complaint was not investigated as part of this inspection.
- This inspection was carried out without notice. I telephoned the school shortly before arriving on site, to check the school's arrangements for minimising risks to pupils and adults as a result of the current COVID-19 pandemic.
- I met with the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Together, we toured the site to look at the upkeep of the school's premises and how pupils were being supervised. I reviewed documents provided by the headteacher and those available on the school's website. I spoke with three members of support staff and a representative of the proprietor body.

Inspection team

Kathryn Moles, lead inspector

Her Majesty's Inspector

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