

# Inspection of Priory School

Fawcett Road, Southsea, Hampshire PO4 0DL

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Inspection dates: 22 and 23 November 2022

<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>Good</b>
The quality of education	<b>Good</b>
Behaviour and attitudes	<b>Good</b>
Personal development	<b>Outstanding</b>
Leadership and management	<b>Outstanding</b>
Previous inspection grade	Good

## **What is it like to attend this school?**

Pupils experience a personal development curriculum which is exceptional. This includes a vast array of clubs, visits and residential trips. Leaders have thought carefully about what to offer to ensure that it enriches the lives of all pupils.

These wider opportunities have been well designed by staff to tie into the work that pupils do in class. This work is challenging and reflects the high ambitions that staff have for pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), are well supported by the school. Leaders ensure that pupils are well known and that their needs are carefully identified and then acted upon.

Leaders take effective steps to make sure that pupils are well cared for in school. Pupils have access to a new well-being suite, which supports their mental health through the work of experienced professionals. Pupils at the school feel safe and most are happy. However, some pupils are not as kind or thoughtful as they should be. Leaders are already working on changing the behaviour of these pupils. Bullying is rare and it is taken seriously when it occurs. Lessons are usually calm and focused. Pupils can concentrate on their work and achieve well.

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

Leaders have thought carefully about the design of their curriculum. Although key stage 3 is condensed, leaders have ensured that it is ambitious and goes beyond the national curriculum. Pupils have access to a wide range of options at key stage 4. The extra time here is used to make sure that what is taught goes beyond the exam specifications as well as to continue giving access to a broad wider curriculum. All pupils have access to the English baccalaureate and the numbers choosing these subjects are rising each year.

Teachers use assessments well. They use them to identify where pupils are not making enough progress and then put in place effective support to help them catch up. The use of assessment also means that the identification of pupils with SEND is strong. Pupils who struggle to read are identified early and plans to help them are rigorous. As a result, pupils quickly grow in confidence with reading.

Most pupils are achieving well. However, despite recent improvements, pupils from disadvantaged backgrounds are not achieving as well as they could. Leaders are already putting in place targeted help for these pupils. There is also well-planned support for pupils with SEND. Leaders work with teachers to make sure that needs are well understood and catered for.

Poor behaviour rarely disrupts lessons. This is because leaders have put in place effective systems, so that pupils behave well. Leaders have also prepared a comprehensive curriculum to teach pupils about issues, such as respect and tolerance. However, some pupils use unkind language. Leaders are addressing this

but more needs to be done to make sure that pupils are consistently considerate towards each other. Attendance at the school is generally good but some pupils are missing too much of their education. Leaders have put in place measures to tackle this, and the situation is already improving.

There is an excellent programme for personal development. While this includes a well-selected array of extracurricular opportunities it goes beyond this. Leaders have ensured that pupils are exceptionally well prepared for life by putting together an exemplary curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education as well as for citizenship. Pupils also receive timely and high-quality careers guidance and advice on next steps in their education. Leaders have made sure that they meet the requirements of the Baker Clause. Through all of this, leaders have checked that the most disadvantaged students get the best of what is on offer.

The school is extremely well led and managed. Teachers are well supported by leaders, and they benefit from well-planned training that meets the needs of their pupils. The school and the trust work closely together and this strengthens what the school offers their pupils. School governors and trustees know the school well and consistently challenge leaders to keep making improvements.

## **Safeguarding**

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is a strong culture of safeguarding in the school. Staff are well trained in identifying pupils who might be at risk and are proactive in reporting any concerns. These are quickly followed up on by leaders who involve external agencies when needed to make sure that pupils receive the right help.

Leaders make sure that pupils are taught about how to keep themselves safe, including how to keep safe online and issues of consent. They adapt these plans to reflect local needs. Pupils know where to go if they do not feel safe or want to talk and feel confident in doing so.

## **What does the school need to do to improve?**

### **(Information for the school and appropriate authority)**

- Some pupils use derogatory language to other pupils, or they behave unkindly towards them. This leaves some pupils feeling unhappy. Leaders need to address this culture of unkindness, so it is eradicated from the whole school
- Pupils from more disadvantaged backgrounds are not making the progress that matches the ambitions that leaders have for them. As a result, these pupils do not achieve as highly and so have fewer opportunities in the future. Leaders need to accurately identify the barriers that these pupils face and then put in place effective mitigation, so that they can achieve in line with their peers.

## 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 information from Ofsted Parent View 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.

## Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

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.

## School details

<b>Unique reference number</b>	141175
<b>Local authority</b>	Portsmouth
<b>Inspection number</b>	10211034
<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Academy sponsor-led
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11 to 16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	1230
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	Board of trustees
<b>Chair of trust</b>	Raymond Morton
<b>Headteacher</b>	Stewart Vaughan
<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.priorysouthsea.org">www.priorysouthsea.org</a>
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	23 and 24 November 2016, under section 5 of the Education Act 2005

## Information about this school

- Priory School is part of Bohunt Education Trust.
- The school currently uses a registered alternative provider for 15 pupils.
- The school meets the requirements of the Baker Clause, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

## Information about this inspection

The inspectors carried out this graded inspection under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.

- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other members of the leadership team, including the special educational needs coordinator. The lead inspector met with trustees, members of the local governing body and representatives of the trust.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives into these subjects: design technology, English, geography, history, mathematics and science. For each deep dive, inspectors discussed the curriculum with subject leaders, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors evaluated the effectiveness of the safeguarding arrangements in the school by speaking with leaders, staff and pupils. The lead inspector met with the designated safeguarding leader to examine their knowledge and their practices. During these meetings, the lead inspector scrutinised records and sampled case files to explore how the school identifies and supports pupils at risk of harm. A team inspector examined the school's work to recruit and check on the suitability of staff.
- The views of parents were taken into account by considering the responses to the Ofsted Parent View survey and the accompanying comments.
- The views of staff were considered by talking to a wide range of people, including early careers teachers, and through an online staff questionnaire.
- Inspectors spoke to pupils formally and informally, in groups and around the school. They also met with representatives of the student leadership team.

### **Inspection team**

Mark Enser, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Adrian Percival	Ofsted Inspector
Anne Cullum	Ofsted Inspector
Wendy Martin	Ofsted Inspector
Marian Feeley	His Majesty's Inspector

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