



# Priory Community School

Inspection Report - Amended

**Unique Reference Number** 109316  
**Local Authority** North Somerset  
**Inspection number** 288353  
**Inspection dates** 3-4 October 2006  
**Reporting inspector** John English

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

<b>Type of school</b>	Comprehensive	<b>School address</b>	Queensway
<b>School category</b>	Community		Weston-super-Mare
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	12-16		BS22 6BP
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed	<b>Telephone number</b>	01934 511411
<b>Number on roll (school)</b>	1182	<b>Fax number</b>	01934 520199
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body	<b>Chair</b>	John Coppack
		<b>Headteacher</b>	Ron Richards
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	1 May 2001		

<b>Age group</b>	<b>Inspection dates</b>	<b>Inspection number</b>
12-16	3-4 October 2006	288353

## **Amended Report Addendum**

Report updated to resolve formatting inconsistency

---

© Crown copyright 2006

Website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the Education Act 2005, the school must provide a copy of this report free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## Introduction

The inspection was carried out by five Additional Inspectors and one child care inspector.

## Description of the school

Priory Community School, which is larger than average, has been a technology college since 1998. Attainment on entry is now broadly average but was below average when older students entered the school. The proportion of students eligible for free school meals is below average. Although the proportion of pupils with learning difficulties and disabilities is below average, the proportion with a statement is high. There are very few students from minority ethnic backgrounds. The school has a hearing impaired base with two students, and a behaviour support base. The school manages an after school child care club.

## Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

## Overall effectiveness of the school

### Grade: 2

Priory Community School is a good school which puts an emphasis on encouraging enjoyment in learning. It is well led by a strong, recently restructured and enhanced leadership team, who are proving successful in lifting the self-confidence of staff and students so that they believe that their school offers a quality of education which at least matches that of any other provider in the area. The result is a well-rounded institution, whose facilities, quality of provision and standards are rising all the time.

Most students enjoy coming to school. They say that most lessons are fun and interesting, or as more succinctly expressed by a Year 8 student, 'school is wicked'. They feel that they achieve well because of the support they get from teachers and other adults in the school. Their high level of participation in games lessons and sporting clubs ensures that most are fit. This is not as well matched by their eating habits, although they are aware of the requirements for healthy eating. Most feel safe at school and free from unwelcome behaviour by other pupils. Where the school learns of any such instances it deals well with them. Many parents remarked that their children are treated with respect by the teachers and this helps them to respond positively, so that behaviour in general is good. Students appreciate the range of additional activities, visits and clubs, and many of them have also developed a strong sense of how they can repay this provision by making a contribution of their own, for example, through the school council and charity work. The pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of other cultures and backgrounds.

Standards are broadly average, and the students' overall achievement is good given their starting points when they entered the school. They make good progress, as they have good attitudes to work and the teaching enables them to approach learning in different ways, for example through effective use of information and communication technology (ICT), and through learning how to assess their own work and how to improve it. However, standards vary somewhat between different subjects, as a result of some inconsistencies in teaching. The senior leadership has already made improvements in tackling these inconsistencies through its rigorous monitoring and support procedures. There is a good curriculum with a wide variety of different pathways to meet differing needs in Years 10 and 11, including appropriate work-related courses outside school.

The school provides good value for money. The leadership has been energetic in obtaining financial resources to improve the buildings and equipment, which has raised the morale of everyone and contributed to improved behaviour and rising standards. Governors work well to support the school, although they are not yet provided with enough information on the impact of their policies, particularly those concerned with the students' personal development, to make

secure revisions of these policies when they review them. Most parents who responded to the inspection survey are very happy with the provision at the school. The school makes an outstanding contribution to work it does in partnership with other institutions, particularly the local education partnership, primary schools and local colleges. The

school's technology college status has played an effective role in developing these partnerships and enhancing the curriculum, although standards in technology and related subjects have not yet caught up with the best in the school. Many parents remarked on the quality of the induction processes for new pupils run jointly with the primary schools. The capacity for improvement is very good because the senior leaders are rigorous in their management of the school, developing an effective culture of self-review and improvement.

### **What the school should do to improve further**

- 
- Raise standards so that all subjects achieve the levels of the most successful ones, by ensuring that teaching is consistently good across the curriculum.
- Provide the governors with more information on the impact of their policies to enable effective review of these policies.

## **Achievement and standards**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' achievement overall is good and standards are broadly average. Their attainment on entry to the school is now broadly average although there are fewer higher attainers than in most schools. Standards on entry have risen, and at the time the current Year 9 and Year 11 entered the school were below average. They are set challenging targets, with most achieving and some exceeding them. Most students, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, make good progress from Years 7 to 11.

By the end of Year 9, standards are broadly average. Students achieved well in the national tests taken in 2005, doing particularly well in English, as expected in science, but below the level expected in mathematics. However, results in both mathematics and science improved considerably in 2006. Standards in the GCSE examinations have risen steadily over the past three years, and by 2006 were broadly in line with the national average. A very high proportion gains at least five or more grades A\*– G. Some subjects such as English and art achieve better results than others, for example mathematics and some technical subjects, but the differences are lessening. Although it has not always been the case, the achievement of the boys now matches that of the girls.

## **Personal development and well-being**

### **Grade: 2**

Students' personal development and well-being are good. They are responsible and confident young people who show high levels of enjoyment in learning and school life. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school campus is generally good and they treat each other and their teachers with respect and

courtesy. Overall, the students' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. They are proud of their school and their moral and social awareness is good. Cultural development is satisfactory, with some good features in the way that it is encouraged through the wide range of opportunities offered to raise awareness of cultural diversity in citizenship and religious education lessons. Students' spiritual development is satisfactory. Students are fully aware of how to live healthy lives, with a very high proportion regularly taking part in sporting and other physical activities. They feel safe in school and recognise that bullying is rare and when it occurs is dealt with effectively. Attendance is broadly average. Students contribute to the community well through charity work and strong links with local colleges and workplaces. They make good progress in developing a range of suitable skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being, particularly teamworking and leadership skills.

## **Quality of provision**

### **Teaching and learning**

#### **Grade: 2**

Teaching is good. Many lessons feature a good range of activities and opportunities for group and pair work, and are exciting and enjoyable for students. Planning for the transition to learning from primary school into Year 7 is particularly effective. Some good use of ICT helps to raise the quality of learning. In many lessons, all students, including those with learning difficulties or disabilities and the gifted and talented, benefit from the close match between tasks, resources and learning needs. There are still some inconsistencies in teaching where teachers do not encourage independent learning, set too slow a pace or rely too much on worksheets or information sheets. Teachers have good subject knowledge, which supports skilled questioning and whole class discussions and enhances the learning. Assessment and marking procedures are effective, and good use is made of detailed assessment information to encourage students and to identify any at risk of underachieving. A common, effective feature of most lessons is the attention given to ensure that students understand the purposes of the lesson, and through detailed review at the end, come to a better understanding of what they need to do to improve.

### **Curriculum and other activities**

#### **Grade: 2**

The curriculum caters well for students' differing goals and ambitions. Links with employers and local colleges have enabled the school to extend the range of academic and vocational programmes available and these are having positive benefits in terms of students' achievement and their enjoyment. Academic and social needs are catered for effectively and students are well placed for success, whether in employment or further education. The curriculum broadly meets requirements although the ICT component is not rigorously 'mapped' across the curriculum to ensure that all students in Years 10 and 11 experience the full range of experiences outlined in the National Curriculum.

The regular programme of enrichment activities and workshops, with inputs from local employers and educators, is well planned and effective in supporting students' wider interests and educational needs. These and other extra-curricular events are well attended, particularly sports meetings, visits to galleries and concerts and residential trips to centres in this country and abroad.

## **Care, guidance and support**

### **Grade: 2**

The care, guidance and support provided for students are good. Procedures for tracking their academic progress are rigorous and used consistently across the school. Information about students' progress leads to appropriate interventions aimed at those who are underachieving. Students with learning difficulties are extremely well supported. Students whose progress may be adversely affected by their inappropriate behaviour also receive good support in the behaviour support base. The number of fixed term exclusions is falling, and there have been no permanent exclusions for the last two years.

Suitable child protection and risk assessment procedures are in place and staff are fully conversant with these. Any students at risk are identified early and effective arrangements are made for their support. The school works very closely with external agencies and has its own effective student reception facility to ensure students' safety and well-being.

## **Leadership and management**

### **Grade: 2**

Leadership and management are good. Strong, purposeful and well respected leadership is provided by the headteacher, the senior team and many middle leaders. The school's vision and plans for its further development ensure a sharp focus on raising achievement. Effective line management arrangements and a thorough programme of professional development are leading to steady improvements in the quality of other middle leaders, and are having a positive impact in the improved quality of teaching and learning. The school's capacity to improve further is strong.

Senior and middle leaders monitor the quality of provision systematically. They act resolutely to improve quality where any shortcomings are found. Careful management of resources ensures that the school gives good value for money. Priority is given to ensuring that learning benefits from an attractive and well maintained school environment.

Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Although policies are regularly reviewed, there is insufficient attention given to checking the impact of these policies. The school's status as a specialist technology college has led to strong and imaginative enrichment of the curriculum and to very effective liaison with partner primary schools, but has yet to ensure that technical subjects match the best standards in other subjects.

**Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Complaints about school inspection', which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).**

## Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	<b>School Overall</b>
---	-----------------------

### Overall effectiveness

<b>How effective, efficient and inclusive is the provision of education, integrated care and any extended services in meeting the needs of learners?</b>	2
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well-being?	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	2
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	2
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes

### Achievement and standards

<b>How well do learners achieve?</b>	2
The standards <sup>1</sup> reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	2
How well learners with learning difficulties and disabilities make progress	1

### Personal development and well-being

<b>How good is the overall personal development and well-being of the learners?</b>	2
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The attendance of learners	3
How well learners enjoy their education	2
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	2
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	2
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	2

### The quality of provision

<b>How effective are teaching and learning in meeting the full range of the learners' needs?</b>	2
<b>How well do the curriculum and other activities meet the range of needs and interests of learners?</b>	2
<b>How well are learners cared for, guided and supported?</b>	2

<sup>1</sup> Grade 1 - Exceptionally and consistently high; Grade 2 - Generally above average with none significantly below average; Grade 3 - Broadly average to below average; Grade 4 - Exceptionally low.

## Leadership and management

<b>How effective are leadership and management in raising achievement and supporting all learners?</b>	2
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	2
How effectively performance is monitored, evaluated and improved to meet challenging targets	2
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled so that all learners achieve as well as they can	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	2
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	3
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

## Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

Dear Students

Priory Community School, Queens Way, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, BS22 6BP

Thank you for making our visit to your school so interesting and for helping us to find out about the ways in which you learn. We think that you are achieving well and that teachers and students work well together. Your headteacher and his staff have ambitious plans for the school. Technology college status is making a real difference to the curriculum, and the building programme is giving you a really good environment in which to learn, in many subject areas. You are justifiably proud of your school and told us that it is 'brilliant' in lots of ways.

Most of you make good progress. Boys and girls achieve equally well as do those who need extra help with their learning. Behaviour is usually good and you contribute well to the school and local community; we were particularly impressed by the work of the school council for example in designing the car park to ensure your safety. Teaching is good; most lessons are well planned and resources are good. You tell us that lessons are often enjoyable and that you particularly value the contribution of ICT and computers in developing your learning. You are able to study a good range of subjects in Years 10 and 11 and the introduction of drama lessons is clearly very popular as is the interesting range of clubs, trips and visits. The school cares for you very well, keeps you safe and helps you to live healthy lives. You know your targets, are encouraged to do well and are given good advice about choices of subjects and careers.

Your headteacher, his staff and the governors know the school well and ensure that it is led and managed in a very effective way. Some areas need to improve further; standards are average but all subjects need to be as good as the best. Your governing body supports the school well, but they need a bit more information about how all their policies affect you so that they can make sure they are up to date and relevant. However, we believe that your school is a good school with some strong features. With your help it has the potential to be even more successful.

With best wishes for your future success

Yours sincerely

John English Lead Inspector