

# Priory Sports and Technology College, Penwortham

## Inspection report

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119739
<b>Local Authority</b>	Lancashire
<b>Inspection number</b>	339519
<b>Inspection dates</b>	17–18 May 2010
<b>Reporting inspector</b>	Michael McLachlan

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

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<b>Type of school</b>	Secondary
<b>School category</b>	Community
<b>Age range of pupils</b>	11–16
<b>Gender of pupils</b>	Mixed
<b>Number of pupils on the school roll</b>	812
<b>Appropriate authority</b>	The governing body
<b>Chair</b>	Mr Geoff Chetwood
<b>Headteacher</b>	Mr James Hourigan
<b>Date of previous school inspection</b>	30 November 2006
<b>School address</b>	Crow Hills Road Penwortham Preston PR1 0JE
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## Introduction

This inspection was carried out by five additional inspectors. Forty one lessons were observed and 38 teachers seen. Meetings were held with groups of students, governors and staff. Inspectors observed the school's work, and looked at students' academic and pastoral records, the school development plan and self-evaluation form, safeguarding and other policy documents, staff and students' questionnaires, curricular information, the minutes of the governing body and other meetings, documents to support bids for national awards and a wide range of students' work in lessons. Two hundred and forty parents and carers questionnaires were received and examined.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at the following:

- the attainment, learning and progress of students, particularly for girls and in English and mathematics
- the students' involvement in all aspects of the school's provision
- the developments in teaching and learning introduced since the last inspection and the impact this has had on improving attainment and progress across the school and particularly in English and mathematics
- the school's care and guidance systems, particularly for the most vulnerable students and for those from minority ethnic groups
- the impact made by leadership at all levels in improving examination results, particularly in English and mathematics and in ensuring that all students make good progress.

## Information about the school

The school is smaller than average and has a higher than average proportion of boys compared to girls. The proportion of students known to be eligible for free school meals is smaller than average. The proportion of students from minority ethnic groups is similar to the national average and those whose first language is not believed to be English is above average. The proportion of students with special educational needs and/or disabilities is below average and the number with a statement of special educational needs is broadly average. The school is a High Performing Specialist School for Sports and Technology. It has received a number of national awards including most recently, the Healthy Schools Award (2009), BECTA Award (2010) (this is an Information and Communication Technology award) and the Investing in Community Engagement Award (2010).

**Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate**

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

## Inspection judgements

**Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?**

**2**

**The school's capacity for sustained improvement**

**2**

### Main findings

Priory Sports and Technology College is a good and effective school that meets the needs of its students well. Outstanding care and guidance combined with a good curriculum, which meets the needs of individual students well, ensures virtually all students are able to move on to further study, work or training. Achievement is good. Students are generally keen to learn and work hard in lessons. They know their targets in each subject and what they need to do to improve. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Students say they feel safe and enjoy school and this is reflected by their good attendance and good take up of all the school offers. Overall, attainment is now above average and improvements are well evidenced in English and mathematics. All other outcomes for students are good. Their contribution to the school and the wider community is good and the growing multicultural school community has enabled all to develop a greater understanding of the wider world around them.

Good teaching is characterised by effective lesson planning, which consistently identifies the stages of learning at the start of each lesson, enabling the vast majority of students to make good progress. In satisfactory lessons, there is insufficient challenge, particularly for the most able, and the pace of their learning is slow. In a number of lessons students lack the speaking skills and the confidence to be able to explain what they have learned, particularly to the whole class.

The curriculum is very well matched to students' interests and aspirations and is being developed well to support younger students' independent and creative learning skills. Care and guidance systems are very effective in meeting the needs of all students, particularly those who are vulnerable and the increasing numbers from other cultures. Excellent computer information systems keep staff and students and their parents and carers very well informed about academic and personal progress.

Leaders at all levels have risen to the challenge to improve the school. Higher aspirations are now set through more challenging targets and more intensive monitoring and support for students and departments by the governors and senior managers. This intense scrutiny is having a significant impact on attainment and progress, particularly in Years 10 and 11. However, this level of rigour in monitoring and intervention is not yet consistently or systematically applied across all year groups. The schools' specialist status for Sports and Technology has been used very effectively to increase resources, broaden the curriculum and forge many effective partnerships. The headteacher with the full support of governors, his senior team and staff have raised the bar for the school in recent years following a dip in examination performance. The school's self-evaluation is accurate and has led to good action planning to address weaknesses. The governing body knows the school well and has robustly challenged

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underperformance. Consequently, the improvement seen across the board since the last inspection, combined with the raised aspirations across the school community show the school has a good capacity to improve further.

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

- Within the next twelve months.
- Secure the improvements made in attainment, learning and progress by using the effective systems established to monitor and support students in Years 10 and 11 systematically and consistently in all year groups.
- Improve teaching and students' learning by ensuring that the work set challenges the most able from the start of lessons and that students are given more opportunity to develop their oral skills in order to confidently explain what they have learned.

## Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

**2**

Learning and progress seen in lessons was good. Overall students work enthusiastically, particularly when activities are practical and challenging. Relationships with each other and with teachers are good so they work well in teams. Younger students are very well aware of their new 'personal learning targets' and are able to identify when they are becoming effective 'independent enquirers', 'creative thinkers', 'team workers' and 'self managers'. However, oral skills for many students are weak, so they lack confidence in describing what they have learned.

Following a dip in examination outcomes, lower results in English and mathematics combined with below average progress for some girls, the school established a robust action plan to tackle this underachievement. Evidence seen during the inspection, in addition to results already achieved in modular examinations and in coursework, show that this strategy has been very successful. Attainment is now above average and this represents good learning and progress for all students and also for those with special educational needs and/or disabilities, given their starting points when joining secondary school. Girls' performance is now back on track and in line with their challenging targets. Students' behaviour and rates of attendance are good. A very large majority of students say they feel safe and students interviewed in school were confident that there were adults and their peer mentors to turn to if needed and that incidents of bullying were dealt with effectively. Students contribute well to the school through the many positions of responsibility, for example, the school council, prefects, peer mentors, bus monitors and Junior Sports Leaders. Take-up of school meals is high, and a large majority of students understand health related issues and many are involved in the range of sporting activity in and outside school, although a small minority feel the school does not help them to be more healthy.

*These are the grades for pupils' outcomes*

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<b>Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attainment <sup>1</sup>	2
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	2
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	2
<b>The extent to which pupils feel safe</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Pupils' behaviour</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: Pupils' attendance <sup>1</sup>	2
<b>The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development</b>	<b>2</b>

## How effective is the provision?

Teaching is good, a substantial improvement since the last inspection. Over two thirds of lessons seen were good or better, with a quarter outstanding. The outstanding and good lessons are characterised by excellent planning and detailed descriptions for students of the lesson objectives and the success criteria needed to show understanding and progress. Students respond with enthusiasm and enjoyment, readily challenging themselves or each other to confirm what they have learned and understood. An excellent example of this was seen in a physical education revision session in preparation for an imminent examination. Over 60 students were working in partnership with their teacher, in pairs, coaching each other in how to evidence high grade answers. Where teaching was less effective, the more able students had to work through basic material before starting more challenging work which significantly slowed their progress. The use of assessment to support learning is well developed across all departments so that students know and understand their targets and the steps needed to improve.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and is enriched in Years 7 to 9 through the focus on developing students' learning and thinking skills in each subject. The school works hard to ensure that students are able to follow personalised courses in Years 10 and 11, including vocational options with a range of partners. For example, a Year 9 student was delighted by the opportunity provided for her to take a vocational course involving working with horses next year while still maintaining her GCSE options. The personal,

<sup>1</sup> The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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social and health education programme is good and students value the way this is delivered through the 'super learning' days. Curricular and extra-curricular activities are significantly enhanced through the specialist college provision and the students' take-up of the wide range of opportunities in and outside school is good.

Care and guidance systems are extremely effective in ensuring the most vulnerable, and the growing numbers of students from many ethnic minority groups, are able to thrive in school. The improving outcomes at GCSE and the very high numbers of students moving on to employment and training are testimony to the excellent work in this area. Very strong partnerships with a wide range of support agencies have been established. The school has taken a robust stance against examples of 'gang' culture which impinge on its work and that of other students and is leading work locally in addressing this issue. The school has very effective and sophisticated personal and academic tracking systems accessible by parents and carers on the school's website.

*These are the grades for the quality of provision*

<b>The quality of teaching</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	2
<b>The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of care, guidance and support</b>	<b>1</b>

**How effective are leadership and management?**

Good leadership at all levels has been effective in challenging recent underperformance. All leaders are keen to improve. There has been a concerted effort to improve the quality of teaching and the use of assessment. In-service support has been good and there is now a good level of consistency in practice across departments. Similarly, aspirations have been raised by setting more ambitious and challenging targets for students and departments and by rigorously tracking progress and targeting interventions to ensure these are reached. While good plans are in hand, insufficient use has yet been made of these strategies in all year groups to ensure that these improvements are sustained.

The school's work on community cohesion is good, and the experiences of the different ethnic groups in the school are used effectively to enable all students to develop greater appreciation of each other. The school effectively promotes equality of opportunity for this widening range of cultures and has now successfully addressed the inequalities in performance by girls and in mathematics and English. Safeguarding procedures and practice are good and exceed the required guidance. The additional specialist college funds have been used very effectively to promote learning and improve the school buildings. The school provides good value for money.

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*These are the grades for leadership and management*

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement</b>	<b>2</b>
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	2
<b>The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money</b>	<b>2</b>

## Views of parents and carers

The views of parents and carers are very positive and show high levels of satisfaction with what the school provides. There was a very large majority of positive agreement with all the questions and particularly in the area of safeguarding. A number of parents wrote to express their particular satisfaction with the school and all it had done for their children.

The main concerns raised by very small minority in each case where in relation to: how the school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour; how the school helps parents to support their child's learning; and how the school helps their child to have a healthy lifestyle.

Some parents and carers wrote to express concerns particularly in relation to the management of behaviour. A small number of parents expressed a view that they would like to meet subject leaders at parents' meetings and would also like more support on how to help with their children's learning.

These issues were shared with the school. Inspectors judged that overall the school's work in each of these areas is good, but the results of this survey give the school an opportunity to consider how it deals with each of these issues in order to increase levels of satisfaction further.



## Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at Priory Sports and Technology College, Penwortham to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 240 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 812 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	82	34	140	58	11	5	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	85	35	140	58	6	3	1	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	93	39	128	53	14	6	2	1
My child is making enough progress at this school	77	32	147	61	10	4	2	1
The teaching is good at this school	66	28	155	65	8	3	2	1
The school helps me to support my child's learning	49	20	149	62	29	12	3	1
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	46	19	162	68	23	10	3	1
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	70	29	147	61	6	3	2	1
The school meets my child's particular needs	61	25	157	65	14	6	3	1
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	64	27	127	53	26	11	7	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	45	19	155	65	14	6	6	3
The school is led and managed effectively	62	26	157	65	12	5	2	1
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	93	39	129	54	11	5	3	1

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

## Glossary

### What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

### Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	51	45	0	4
Primary schools	6	41	42	10
Secondary schools	8	34	44	14
Sixth forms	10	37	50	3
Special schools	32	38	25	5
Pupil referral units	12	43	31	14
All schools	9	40	40	10

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above is for the period 1 September to 31 December 2009 and is the most recently published data available (see [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn term 2009 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

## Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.</li> <li>■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.</li> <li>■ The quality of teaching.</li> <li>■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupil's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.</li> <li>■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.</li> </ul>
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

**This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.**



19 May 2010

Dear Students

Inspection of Priory Sports and Technology College, Penwortham, Preston, PR1 0JE

Thank you for making us feel so welcome when we inspected your school. You go to a good school that enables you to get good examination results and develop good personal qualities so you can successfully move on to college or to work and training. We think you are taught well, particularly when the work set for you is challenging and you get a quick start in lessons on tasks you find practical and interesting. We saw some outstanding work from you and your teachers when this happened. You told us that you thought the courses and the choices you had, particularly in Years 10 and 11, were good and the school worked hard to match these to your interests where possible. We also thought that your school provides you with outstanding care, particularly when you need additional support. Your school is well led and leaders have done particularly good work in raising aspirations by challenging you and themselves to get even better examination results.

Thanks to all of you who completed the questionnaire. It was clear that you had many positive things to say about the school. A very large majority of you felt safe, well supported and knew how well you were doing in lessons. A small, but nevertheless important, number of you said you thought behaviour was not always good, although we thought you behaved well when we were with you. A number of you also suggested that you did not think the school helped you enough to be healthy. Given the way you appear to relish taking on responsibilities, you may wish to get your school council and peer mentors to help your fellow students and your teachers plan how to deal with your concerns

In order for the school to be come even better we have suggested that the school should extend the good work started in Year 11 to improve your rate of progress to other year groups. We also suggested that teachers should make sure that you are given work at the right level at the start of your lessons and support you in becoming more confident in being able to talk about, and explain, what you have learned to others. The team would like to wish you all the best for you future.

Yours sincerely

Michael McLachlan

Lead inspector

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