

Inspection of Priory Community School

Queensway, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset, BS22 6BP

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education	Good
Behaviour and attitudes	Good
Personal development	Good
Leadership and management	Good
Previous inspection grade	Outstanding

The principal of this school is Angelos Markoutsas. This school is part of The Priory Learning Trust which means other people in the trust also have responsibility for running the school. The trust is run by the chief executive officer, William Roberts and overseen by a board of trustees, chaired by Kate Dominy.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils like coming to Priory Community School. Pupils are generally kind, empathetic and respectful. One pupil's comment echoed that of many others, 'You can be whoever you want to be at this school'. Pupils feel safe and well cared for. They have strong relationships with staff and, if they have a concern, they are confident that staff will support them. Pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans receive effective support to enable them to flourish.

Through the curriculum, pupils develop their characters well. The personal, social and health education (PSHE) programme is well structured and supports pupils to learn about the world beyond school. Pupils are knowledgeable about the concept of consent and healthy relationships. The careers programme is mapped carefully from Year 7, so pupils develop strong knowledge about their next steps by Year 11.

Most pupils value the rich extra-curricular offer of sports and cultural clubs, such as yoga, football and music. Pupils visit places linked to their learning, such as Vatican City State for religious studies. The school provides tailored opportunities to meet both pupils' interests and their learning needs. For example, some pupils learn to repair bicycles.

Pupils develop strong leadership skills. Some pupils become pupil ambassadors and are great advocates of the school. Others are part of the eco committee who support environmental initiatives, such as planting trees around the school site.

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

Pupils learn a well-structured curriculum that supports them to build complex knowledge as they move through the school. Pupils regularly reflect on what they know, before moving onto more complex concepts. For example, pupils learn about a breadth of texts in English which supports their growing understanding of how writers craft their ideas.

Teachers have strong subject knowledge. The well-organised programme of professional development for all staff strengthens their teaching skills further. Pupils with complex special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) are very well supported by teaching that helps them to succeed. However, some pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, do not learn as well as their peers. This is because their literacy needs are not fully met in some subjects. Although the school teaches phonics and pupils listen to a range of texts, there is not a coherent approach to developing pupils' early reading skills, or their enjoyment of reading. Consequently, some pupils struggle to read, write and talk about what they have learned.

The school's approach to managing pupils' behaviour is effective. Staff adopt a positive and personalised approach. They prioritise the social and emotional well-being of pupils. Consequently, the behaviour of pupils is good. The impact of the school's work has led to a reduction in the high proportion of suspensions evident

historically. However, the school acknowledges that pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, do not attend well. Leaders use a breadth of co-ordinated strategies to improve the attendance of pupils. For example, leaders liaise closely with parents, carers and pupils to ensure that they recognise the correlation between school attendance and future life chances. However, it is too early to judge the impact of this approach.

Governance is very effective. The board of trustees and the academy council gather a plethora of information with which to hold the school to account and to provide support. Staff are overwhelmingly positive about working in the school. They are very positive about the support they have for their well-being and workload. They are very proud to work at the school.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

What does the school need to do to improve?

(Information for the school and appropriate authority)

- Some pupils, including disadvantaged pupils, struggle to learn the curriculum successfully and confidently. They struggle to read, write and talk about what they have learned. The school must ensure that staff support pupils with the reading, writing and talking requirements of their specific subjects so that all pupils achieve well.
- Some pupils, particularly disadvantaged pupils, do not attend school regularly. Consequently, these pupils do not learn effectively. The school must work closely with parents and carers to ensure that such pupils understand the link between school attendance and future life chances so attend regularly.

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' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need](#)

[of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	137300
Local authority	North Somerset
Inspection number	10318158
Type of school	Secondary Comprehensive
School category	Academy converter
Age range of pupils	11 to 16
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	1513
Appropriate authority	Board of trustees
Chair of trust	Katie Dominy
CEO	William Roberts
Principal	Angelos Markoutsas
Website	www.pcsa.org.uk
Date of previous inspection	6 November 2014

Information about this school

- Priory Community School is a member of the Priory Learning Trust.
- The proportion of pupils with education, health and care (EHC) plans is above the national average.
- The school uses two registered and one unregistered alternative provider.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 7 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical educational qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

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

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.

- Inspectors held discussions with the principal and members of the leadership team.
- An inspector held discussions with the chief executive officer, the director of secondary education for the trust, two members of the board of trustees and the governing body.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in English, modern foreign languages, geography, science and physical education. In each subject, inspectors met with senior and curriculum leaders, talked to pupils, visited lessons, spoke to teachers and looked at examples of pupils' work.
- Inspectors met with staff to consider their views.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors considered the views of parents and carers who responded to the confidential questionnaire, Ofsted Parent View. They evaluated the views of staff and pupils from the Ofsted online questionnaires.

Inspection team

Susan Aykin, lead inspector	His Majesty's Inspector
Teresa Hill	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Morgan	Ofsted Inspector
Matthew Shanks	Ofsted Inspector
Kelly Olive	His Majesty's Inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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