



**ISI** Independent  
Schools  
Inspectorate

**Report for an Additional Inspection**

**Priory School**

**July 2022**

## School's details

<b>School</b>	Priory School			
<b>DfE number</b>	330/6002			
<b>Early Years registration number</b>	EY289773			
<b>Registered charity number</b>	518009			
<b>Address</b>	Priory School Sir Harry's Road Edgbaston Birmingham West Midlands B15 2UR			
<b>Telephone number</b>	0121 4404103			
<b>Email address</b>	enquiries@prioryschool.net			
<b>Headmaster</b>	Mr Jonathan Cramb			
<b>Chair of governors</b>	Ms Heather Somerfield			
<b>Age range</b>	6 months to 18 years			
<b>Number of pupils on roll</b>	410			
	<b>EYFS</b>	81	<b>Prep</b>	116
	<b>Seniors</b>	188	<b>Sixth Form</b>	25
<b>Date of visit</b>	6 July 2022			

## 1. Introduction

### Characteristics of the school

- 1.1 Priory School Edgbaston is an independent Catholic co-educational day school. The school was founded as a girls' school in 1936 by the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus and became fully co-educational in 2011. In 1986 the school became a company limited by public guarantee and a registered charity and overseen by a governing council. The school occupies a single site in Edgbaston. It has an Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) department, for pupils aged 6 months to 5 years; a prep school for pupils aged 5 to 11 years; and a senior school for pupils aged 11 to 18 years. The school has identified 27 pupils as having special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND). Two pupils in the school have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. There are 13 pupils who speak English as an additional language (EAL). The school's previous inspection by ISI was of focused compliance and educational quality in May 2019. There was an Early Years registered setting inspection by Ofsted in November 2019.

### Purpose of the visit

- 1.2 This was an unannounced additional inspection at the request of the Department for Education (DfE) which focused on the school's compliance with the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 (ISSRs) and the requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework.

Regulations which were the focus of the visit	Team judgements
Part 1, paragraphs 2 (curriculum), 2A (relationships and sex education) and 3 (teaching)	<b>Met</b>
Part 2, paragraph 5 (spiritual, moral, social and cultural development)	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 7 (safeguarding); EYFS 3.4, 3.7 and 3.9	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 9 (behaviour); EYFS 3.53 and 3.54	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 10 (bullying); EYFS 3.53	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 11 (health and safety); EYFS 3.55	<b>Met</b>
Part 3, paragraph 14 (supervision of pupils); EYFS 3.28 to 3.31, 3.33, 3.36 and 3.37	<b>Met</b>
Part 5, paragraph 25 (maintenance of premises and accommodation); EYFS 3.63	<b>Met</b>
Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c) (provision of information)	<b>Met</b>
Part 7, paragraph 33 (complaints procedure); EYFS 3.75 and 3.76	<b>Met</b>
Part 8, paragraph 34 (leadership and management)	<b>Met</b>

## 2. Inspection findings

### Quality of education provided – curriculum, relationships and sex education and teaching [ISSR Part 1, paragraphs 2, 2A and 3]

- 2.1 The school meets the standards.
- 2.2 The curriculum is suitably documented, supported by appropriate plans and schemes of work for teaching and covers the required breadth and depth of material. Curriculum arrangements include effective provision to meet the individual needs of all pupils, including those with SEND. Teaching ensures that these are implemented appropriately. Teaching enables pupils to make good progress. Behaviour management in lessons is effective. The school has an effective plan for pupils' personal, social and health and economic education (PSHEE). This includes guidance on dangerous substances including smoking. The scheme of work includes all of the requirements of statutory guidance for relationships education in the prep school and relationships and sex education (RSE) in the senior school. The recently revised policy for RSE is available to parents on the school's website. In drawing up the policy and scheme of work the school has consulted pupils, parents and staff taking their views into consideration. The school's arrangements were suitably revised following issues identified in various media regarding sexual harassment. The programme is designed so that topics are revisited in subsequent years in order to build up deeper understanding. The PSHEE programme is taught as part of the regular timetable through form time, collapsed timetable days in the autumn term using diocesan resources and assemblies throughout the year. A suitable framework operates to assess current pupils' performance.

### Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils [ISSR Part 2, paragraph 5]

- 2.3 The school meets the standard.
- 2.4 The school's PSHEE programme ensures that all pupils receive suitable guidance to support their personal development. There is a suitable focus on citizenship and the promotion of fundamental British values throughout the school. The school encourages respect, tolerance and empathy towards the needs of others, encompassing those with protected characteristics including race, gender and sexual identity. This was evident in positive interactions observed between pupils and between staff and pupils. During discussion, pupils articulated their understanding that rules are necessary to ensure equality and fairness within society. Visitors to the school and a range of themed opportunities across the diverse school community to explore sustainability and current affairs engender pupils' effective understanding of different cultures and the needs of a diverse world. Pupils develop age-appropriate democratic knowledge through classroom debates and school parliament elections.

### Welfare, health and safety of pupils – safeguarding [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 7; EYFS 3.4, 3.7 and 3.9]

#### Safeguarding policy

- 2.5 The school meets the requirements.
- 2.6 The school has an appropriate policy for safeguarding which provides suitable arrangements to safeguard and promote the welfare of pupils at the school.

#### Safeguarding implementation

- 2.7 The school meets the standard and the requirements.

- 2.8 Scrutiny of records, discussions with pupils and staff indicate that appropriate safeguards are in place and that the school implements its safeguarding policy effectively, including in the EYFS. Pupils state confidently that they know how to stay safe, including online. They are confident that they can talk to staff if they are worried or concerned, will receive a response and that action will be taken when they express concerns.
- 2.9 Those responsible for safeguarding hold senior positions within the school and are suitably knowledgeable and appropriately trained, including for multi-agency working. Key information is shared regularly between safeguarding, pastoral and healthcare staff, taking into account each individual's physical, psychological and learning needs and wishes. This information is used to agree appropriate action, including the drawing-up and implementation of individual support plans. Such action includes appropriate steps to deal with incidents of inappropriate sexual behaviour, including sexual harassment and/or sexual violence. There is effective liaison with external agencies including referral to Child and Adolescent Health Services (CAMHS) and the local authority designated officer (LADO) for safeguarding. Training for other staff and governors is conducted regularly and includes informal updates. Staff are knowledgeable about changes in recent legislation including the management of children's mental well-being, contextual safeguarding, child-on-child abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence. They understand the principles underpinning the staff code of conduct and the procedures for making a referral, including the importance of low-level reporting and whistleblowing. The school takes appropriate action if any perceived breach of the staff code of conduct occurs and understands its responsibility to refer to relevant statutory bodies once investigations by external agencies are completed.
- 2.10 The governor responsible for safeguarding meets regularly with the designated safeguarding lead (DSL) and deputies in order to maintain effective oversight of safeguarding policies and their implementation. Reports are given regularly to the governing board by the safeguarding governor and the DSL. These highlight appropriate details of any safeguarding incidents and governors review these effectively. This ensures that governors have an appropriate level of understanding and are able to provide effective scrutiny and oversight. In addition to continuous monitoring, a suitable annual review of safeguarding is undertaken in line with guidance from the local authority.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – behaviour [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 9; EYFS 3.53 and 3.54]**

- 2.11 The school meets the standard and the requirements.
- 2.12 A suitable written behaviour policy is implemented effectively and clearly sets out the sanctions to be adopted in the event of pupils' misbehaviour. These include appropriate sanctions for any drug misuse, smoking or vaping, or for bringing an offensive weapon into school. Sanctions are implemented with due regard for any particular behavioural disability or needs. An appropriate record is maintained of positive and negative notifications as well as sanctions for serious misbehaviour. The school's provision reinforces a culture where it is made clear that sexual harassment and online sexual abuse are not tolerated. The school's electronic system enables staff to record all behaviour issues. Inspection scrutiny of these records shows there is a clear oversight of recorded incidents of poor behaviour resulting in appropriate interventions. The records are regularly monitored by senior management to identify patterns. Pupils during discussion commented that they are fully aware of the school rules and sanctions system. They perceive the system to be fairly administered. Inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils are polite, courteous and conduct themselves in a responsible manner. They commented that relationships with their peers are almost always harmonious.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – bullying [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 10; EYFS 3.53]**

- 2.13 The school meets the standard and the requirements.

2.14 The school gives suitable guidance to pupils about bullying and appropriate training to staff. Pupils understand the different types of bullying, know when and how to seek help, and that they should report any bullying they observe. Similarly, staff receive effective training about bullying. When pupils report concerns, these are attended to promptly, with support given to both the victim and the perpetrator. These measures include appropriate action where bullying includes name calling, physical assault or sexualised bullying. The school provides suitable care for any pupils whose mental health may be affected by bullying. Staff are aware of the seriousness of bullying and the need to refer to the DSL any incidents they consider serious. The school logs all bullying incidents in a central record kept by the school senior leaders. The central log is reviewed regularly to identify any trends, with appropriate action taken to address these. Pupils who spoke to inspectors said that bullying is rare, but that they were confident that if any incidents take place staff are prompt to intervene and help sort them out.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – health and safety [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 11; EYFS 3.55]**

2.15 The school meets the standard and the requirements.

2.16 The school has an appropriate policy in place for health and safety which is reviewed and updated regularly and implemented consistently. All aspects of health and safety are monitored regularly by leadership and governance. The roles and responsibilities of staff and governors are stated clearly and there is appropriate delegation of duties and training. Maintenance staff know the site well and are aware of potential risks and hazards. The maintenance online call system is used effectively by maintenance staff in order to prioritise work schedules and respond to emergencies without delay.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils – supervision of pupils [ISSR Part 3, paragraph 14; EYFS 3.28 to 3.31, 3.33, 3.36 and 3.37]**

2.17 The school meets the standard and the requirements.

2.18 The school has a suitable policy for supervising pupils. Guidance for staff is given when they are inducted and is ongoing in regular updates. Staff have clear job descriptions detailing their duties with regard to supervision. Comprehensive duty rotas cover all areas of the school, including in the EYFS where ratios of staff to children are suitable. Arrangements for different times of day take into account the age, number and needs of pupils and the locations and activities involved. These are all implemented effectively. Monitoring by senior staff ensures that supervision is effective, and that cover is put in place without delay if it is required.

### **Premises and accommodation – maintenance [ISSR Part 5, paragraph 25; EYFS 3.63]**

2.19 The school meets the standard and the requirements.

2.20 Suitable policies and procedures are in place to ensure that the school premises and accommodation and facilities are maintained to a standard where the health, safety and welfare of pupils is ensured as far as possible. Cleaning arrangements are suitable in classroom accommodation and toilets.

### **Provision of information [ISSR Part 6, paragraph 32(1)(c)]**

2.21 The school meets the requirements for providing information relating to safeguarding to parents. Particulars of the arrangements for safeguarding are published on the school's website/provided to parents on request.

**Manner in which complaints are handled [ISSR Part 7, paragraph 33; EYFS 3.75 and 3.76]**

- 2.22 The school meets the standard and the requirements.
- 2.23 Parental complaints, if any, are handled effectively through a three-stage process, (informal, formal and a hearing before a panel of three, one of whom is independent of the school). Each stage has clear time scales, and at the third stage the panel can make findings and recommendations which are communicated to the complainant. Records are kept appropriately, including of any action taken, whether or not a complaint is successful. Scrutiny of records shows that the handling of complaints since the previous inspection has followed the school's policy.

**Quality of leadership and management [ISSR Part 8, paragraph 34]**

- 2.24 The school meets the standard.
- 2.25 The proprietor ensures that the leadership and management demonstrate good skills and knowledge, and fulfil their responsibilities effectively, so that the other standards are consistently met, and they actively promote the well-being of the pupils. Monitoring of leadership and the delivery of the school's curriculum and welfare provision is effective. Leaders have taken effective steps to develop a school culture within which pupils feel they can speak to an adult if they are worried about something. This was confirmed by pupils who spoke to the inspectors.

### **3. Regulatory action points**

- 3.1 For the regulations which were the focus of this visit, the school meets all of the requirements of the Education (Independent School Standards) Regulations 2014 and requirements of the Early Years Statutory Framework, and no further action is required as a result of this visit.



## **4. Summary of evidence**

- 4.1 The inspectors held discussions with the head, senior leaders and other members of staff and with the chair of the governing council. They visited different areas of the school, observed lessons and talked with groups of pupils. They scrutinised a range of documentation, records and policies.