



Arolygiaeth Ei Mawrhydi dros Addysg a Hyfforddiant yng Nghymru  
Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education and Training in Wales

**Annual monitoring inspection report on  
Priory Talocher School**

**Date of inspection: January 2018**

**by**

**Estyn, Her Majesty's Inspectorate for Education  
and Training in Wales**

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## Context

Priory Talocher is an independent special school for pupils with social, emotional and behavioural difficulties (SEBD) and associated needs. It is administered by Priory Education Services. This is part of the wider Priory Group, which has over 30 schools and specialist colleges across England and Wales.

The school is a purpose built, day education school on the outskirts of Monmouth. The accommodation includes new classrooms, a sports hall and a pastoral and therapy suite. The school is registered for up to 55 pupils aged 7 to 19 years. There are currently 40 pupils on roll, of whom 34 are boys and six are girls. All pupils have statements of special educational needs (SEN) or education and health care plans (EHCP). Eleven pupils are looked after by their local authority.

## Main findings

### Strengths

The learning environment has been enhanced recently by new classrooms, a new library and new specific areas for pastoral and therapeutic support. Younger pupils benefit from a well-designed outdoor space that offers the opportunity for outdoor learning and recreation. The site is generally secure, with designated areas for younger and older pupils.

The school analyses the outcomes of lesson observations robustly. The information gathered is discussed at senior leadership team meetings and trends and patterns are identified. These are used well to share best practice and to support teachers with their professional development.

The school has improved the curriculum for younger pupils to provide valuable and meaningful learning experiences. For example, younger pupils have the opportunity to spend one day per week off site at a farm where they develop their social, emotional and communication skills through interesting project-based work.

### Areas for development

The school has recently introduced new reading assessments. This means that all pupils now have a broader range of baseline assessments on entry to the school. The school has started to use this information to provide suitable reading programmes for all pupils. However, it is too early to measure the impact of these initiatives on pupil outcomes and progress.

The school has started to address the recommendations made by Estyn at the last monitoring visit regarding the quality of targets in individual education plans (IEPs) and the procedures for recording serious incidents. However, these areas require strengthening and should remain as priorities for improvement.

Overall, staff manage the behaviour of pupils very well. However, the number of combination locks and different keys needed to open gates and doors around the site restricts the speed at which staff can respond to specific incidents.

### **Recommendations**

R1 Make sure the impact of reading programmes is monitored and evaluated to inform improvement planning

R2 Implement a manageable system for recording serious incidents and additional measures of control

R3 Ensure that literacy and numeracy targets on IEPs are short, measurable and specific to the individual pupil

R4 Ensure that literacy and numeracy targets for older pupils are shared effectively to ensure a consistent approach to pupils' skills development across the curriculum

R5 Review the appropriateness of site security locks to make sure staff can move swiftly between areas

## **Progress in addressing recommendations from previous note of visit or inspection report**

### **Recommendation 1: Improve pupils' standards in literacy**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

Available data is starting to show improvements in pupils' literacy. The school has recently appointed a literacy lead. However, planning for the development of pupils' literacy across the curriculum is at a very early stage of development.

### **Recommendation 2: Ensure that the timetable at key stage 2 reflects the work in practice and provides pupils with a broad enough range of experiences**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has reviewed and revised the timetables for key stage 2. These now fully reflect the broad range of learning experiences for the younger pupils. These pupils have good access to enrichment and nurture activities including a purpose built outdoor learning area.

### **Recommendation 3: Develop a range of age and stage appropriate reading resources, particularly for pupils at key stage 2**

This recommendation has been largely addressed.

The school has a new library that provides a purposeful space for pupils to engage with reading materials. Classrooms have an increased range of books and the school has introduced new reading schemes that aim to develop pupils' reading skills over time.

### **Recommendation 4: Ensure that targets in pupils' individual education plans are more specific and measurable.**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has reviewed how well teachers complete and use IEPs. As a result, the school has carried out informative staff training. There is now a consistent, standard format for IEPs for all pupils. Teachers set behaviour targets for pupils that are appropriate and measurable.

However, literacy and numeracy targets on pupils' IEPs are too general and are not specific enough to the individual pupil. This means that teachers cannot easily measure progress. In addition, targets for older pupils are not shared effectively between staff to ensure a consistent approach to skills development across the curriculum.

### **Recommendation 5: Review the recording systems of serious incidents and additional measures of control**

This recommendation has been partly addressed.

The school has reviewed the current recording system for serious incidents. This review has established that a new simplified system is required. However, implementation of a new system is too slow.

## **Compliance with the standards for registration**

### **Standard 1: The quality of education provided by the school**

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Standard 2: The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Standard 3: Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Standard 4: The suitability of proprietors and staff**

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Standard 5: Premises of and boarding accommodation at schools**

On this visit, Estyn did not inspect Standard 5.

### **Standard 6: The provision of information**

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

### **Standard 7: The manner in which complaints are to be handled**

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the regulatory requirements for this standard.

## Recommendation regarding registration

When considering this school's registration the National Assembly for Wales may wish to have regard to the following recommendation:

On the basis of this visit, there is no evidence to indicate that the school does not meet the requirements of the Independent School Standards (Wales) Regulations 2003.

Inspectors' judgements on this annual monitoring inspection should not prejudice the findings of a future full Section 163 inspection.

## School information

<b>School</b>	Priory Talocher School
<b>School number</b>	6796014
<b>Purpose of visit</b>	Annual monitoring inspection
<b>Date of visit</b>	17/01/2018
<b>Proprietor</b>	Priory Education Services
<b>Staff</b>	1 x headteacher; 1 x deputy headteacher; 1 x head of lower school, 1 x assistant head; 9 x teachers; 13 x pastoral and learning support. 2 x business support: 2 x admin; 1 x chef; 1 x kitchen assistant; 1.5 x maintenance
<b>Number of pupils</b>	40
<b>Provision</b>	Day
<b>Type of special educational need (SEN) catered for by the school</b>	Social, emotional and/or mental health needs
<b>Last Section 163 inspection</b>	03/06/2013
<b>Last annual monitoring inspection</b>	17/10/2016
<b>Last CSSIW inspection</b>	Insert text