Self-evaluation form: 2026 2027

Priory School Orchard Avenue Slough SL1 6HE	Number of pupils on roll: 549 (September 2026)	Current Ofsted Judgement: Good in all areas, November 2024
Tel: 01628 600300	Website: www.prioryschool.com	Chair of Governors: Caroline Masih
DFE number: 871/5201 URN Number: 110089	Headteacher: Hannah Foster	

Overall Effectiveness

Priory School is a highly inclusive, values-led community where pupils are supported to thrive academically, socially and personally. Strong leadership, high-quality relationships and a trauma-informed, relational approach create calm, purposeful learning environments in which pupils feel safe, valued and included. The school's values of Curiosity, Hope, Opportunity and Trust are reflected consistently through the behaviours of kindness, courage and determination and underpin school life.

The school serves an increasingly complex community, with a high proportion of pupils identified as having SEND, including pupils with significant and complex needs. Despite this, pupils make positive progress from their starting points and the school remains ambitious for all learners. Outcomes in 2026 demonstrate particular strengths in mathematical fluency, with Year 4 Multiplication Tables Check outcomes above national, and improving foundations in phonics. However, statutory outcomes are not yet consistently strong across all areas. Writing remains a significant priority. Headline attainment gaps for disadvantaged pupils remain significant; however, increasingly forensic analysis demonstrates the importance of intersecting barriers, particularly SEND and attendance. Improving outcomes for pupils experiencing multiple barriers remains a key priority.

Inclusive practice continues to strengthen through the Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn approach. Adaptive teaching, communication strategies, sensory support and targeted intervention are increasingly embedded across the school, enabling pupils with SEND and other vulnerabilities to access ambitious learning alongside their peers. Personal development, behaviour and relationships remain significant strengths, supported by a rich programme of PSHRE, oracy and inclusive enrichment.

Attendance remains a significant improvement priority. DfE analysis for Years 1–6 shows attendance of 93.3% in 2025–26, compared with 93.4% in 2024–25. Persistent absence increased from 19.9% to 20.3%, reinforcing the need for sustained action to improve attendance.

Within the same analysis, attendance for pupils eligible for free school meals was 90.8%, compared with 94.1% for other pupils. Attendance for pupils with SEN improved from 91.6% to 92.2%. Leaders use this information alongside individual circumstances to identify barriers, target support and challenge avoidable absence.

Overall, Priory School provides a good standard of education within a highly inclusive context. The school's strengths in inclusion, personal development, behaviour and relational practice are clear, while self-evaluation accurately identifies where stronger outcomes are now needed. Leaders are focused on ensuring that improvements in curriculum, teaching and inclusive practice translate more consistently into improved achievement and attendance for all pupils.

DRAFT

Growing determined, courageous, kind individuals proud to be Priory children.

School Context

Priory School, situated on the border of Buckinghamshire and Slough, serves a richly diverse and increasingly complex community. The school is located within an area of significant deprivation, with many pupils entering Nursery and Reception below age-related expectations.

Approximately 37% of pupils speak English as an additional language, around 25% are eligible for Pupil Premium, and 37% of pupils are identified as having SEND, including 18% with an EHCP – significantly above national averages.

These factors shape the school's highly inclusive approach and its commitment to ensuring all pupils access ambitious learning, personalised support and meaningful opportunities to thrive.

Our School Vision

Growing determined, courageous, kind individuals proud to be Priory children

Our School Values

Curiosity
Hope
Opportunity
Trust

These values are lived through the behaviours we actively develop, model and celebrate across the school community:

- **Kindness** – showing empathy, compassion and respect towards others
- **Determination** – working hard, persevering through challenge and aspiring highly
- **Courage** – embracing opportunities, experiences and new learning with confidence

Together, these values and behaviours underpin our inclusive ethos and shape the way pupils learn, interact and contribute positively to school life.

Opportunities for All

Priory School is a highly inclusive school committed to ensuring every pupil can access a mainstream curriculum within a nurturing and supportive environment. Through adaptive provision, specialist support and a rich range of wider opportunities, pupils are supported to achieve their full potential academically, socially and personally.

Ofsted November 2024: What does the school need to do to improve further and what progress has been made?

Teachers do not always check how well that pupils understand concepts before moving on to new ideas. This means that some teachers do not adapt learning to address gaps in pupils' understanding. The school must ensure that all staff have the expertise that they need to routinely identify and close gaps in learning, so pupils know and remember more over time.

Sometimes, teachers do not always make appropriate adjustments that enable pupils with SEND to access learning in mainstream provision. This means some pupils with SEND do not learn as well as they could. The school must ensure that

staff have the training they need so they know how to implement strategies in the classroom that help pupils with SEND achieve well.

Review of progress

Since the inspection, the school has focused sharply on strengthening adaptive teaching, responsive assessment and inclusive classroom practice. Professional development, instructional coaching, curriculum review and monitoring have been aligned closely to the two areas identified for improvement.

The school has refined and re-focused its inclusive practice through a more intentional Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn approach. While these principles have long underpinned practice at Priory, leaders have worked to articulate them more clearly and ensure they are increasingly understood and applied across all phases and areas of provision.

Staff understanding of regulation, communication, adaptive teaching and inclusive classroom practice has strengthened. Training, coaching and monitoring have focused particularly on checking pupils' understanding, identifying misconceptions, adapting teaching responsively and ensuring pupils with SEND receive appropriate adjustments to enable them to access ambitious learning alongside their peers.

Monitoring demonstrates improved consistency in the use of scaffolds, communication strategies, classroom adjustments and responsive assessment. Curriculum redesign has also strengthened opportunities for formative assessment through the identification of core questions and planned checks for understanding.

Leaders recognise that this work is not yet complete. Some variability remains in how consistently teachers use assessment to adapt teaching and how effectively inclusive strategies are applied across all classrooms. Securing consistently strong adaptive teaching and inclusive practice therefore remains a key priority for 2026–27.

Strategic Priorities for 2026-27

The detailed actions, success criteria, responsibilities and monitoring arrangements for these priorities are set out in the School Development Plan.

Inclusive practice and outcomes

Deepen the Ready framework, establish the SEMH Hub, strengthen SENCO capacity and demonstrate progress from individual starting points.

Curriculum, teaching and writing

Implement the enquiry-based curriculum, establish a coherent whole-school approach to writing, and strengthen responsive assessment and adaptive teaching.

Achievement and attendance

Improve writing outcomes, particularly for pupils with SEND and disadvantaged pupils, and improve attendance and reduce avoidable persistent absence.

Leadership and professional learning

Strengthen leadership at all levels, differentiate professional development, extend the sharing of effective practice and carefully develop Priory's outreach capacity.

Communication, pupil voice and early foundations

Strengthen oracy, pupil participation, communication, early literacy and preparation for successful transition into Year 1.

Graded evaluation areas

Safeguarding		
Grading	Met ☒	Not met ☐

Comments:

Safeguarding is effective and embedded within the culture of the school. Strong systems and procedures ensure pupils are safe, supported and well cared for. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and demonstrate a clear understanding of their statutory responsibilities, including the identification and reporting of concerns. Safeguarding processes are robust, well monitored and understood by all staff.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead, supported by deputy DSLs and governors, maintains a strong safeguarding culture across the school. Regular reporting and scrutiny provide appropriate challenge and oversight. Pupils report feeling safe in school, and relationships between staff and pupils are strong and trusting. Parents also express high levels of confidence in the school's safeguarding culture and pastoral care.

The school's trauma-informed and relationship-based approach supports pupils effectively, particularly those with SEND, SEMH and vulnerable backgrounds. Safeguarding is further strengthened through effective attendance procedures, multi-agency working and early help support.

Areas for continued development:

- Continue to strengthen staff expertise in responding to increasingly complex safeguarding and mental health needs.
- Maintain high levels of vigilance and safeguarding training across all staff groups.

Inclusion					
Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☒	Expected standard ☐	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

Comments:

Inclusivity is central to the ethos, culture and daily practice of Priory School. A highly inclusive whole-school approach has been developed around the principles of pupils being Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn. While these principles have long underpinned practice at Priory, there has been a deliberate re-focus on developing them more intentionally and consistently across all phases and areas of provision. This graduated and relational approach seeks to identify and reduce barriers to learning so that all pupils can access the curriculum and wider school life successfully.

The school serves a highly complex and diverse community, with 37% of pupils identified as having SEND and 18% holding an EHCP, alongside approximately 37% speaking English as an Additional Language and significant levels of speech, language and communication need. Provision reflects this context through a strategic whole-school approach to inclusion which supports all pupils, not only those with identified SEND.

Ready to Regulate

There is strong recognition across the school that pupils need to be emotionally regulated in order to engage successfully with learning. Staff have developed their understanding of behaviour as communication and use trauma-informed and relational approaches to support regulation. Movement, sensory support and active learning form an important part of provision, particularly for pupils who require additional support to regulate and engage.

Classroom environments are increasingly sensory-sensitive and staff use a growing range of universal regulation strategies throughout the school day. Continuous provision within Key Stage 1 has been developed to support regulation,

independence, communication and learning through purposeful play. Sensory circuits, movement breaks, nurture support and targeted intervention further support pupils to develop self-regulation and readiness for learning.

In response to the increasing complexity of SEMH need within the school, leaders are developing a dedicated SEMH Hub during 2026–27. This represents a significant investment in strengthening the school's graduated response to pupils whose emotional and regulation needs create substantial barriers to successful participation in learning. The Hub will provide targeted, responsive support while maintaining a clear focus on successful inclusion, connection with the classroom and pupils' increasing independence. It will complement, rather than replace, strong universal Ready to Regulate practice across the school.

The next stage of development is therefore to deepen staff expertise in co-regulation, sensory needs and universal regulation approaches while establishing the SEMH Hub as an effective element of the school's graduated provision. Leaders will evaluate its impact through pupils' regulation, engagement, participation in learning, successful inclusion and reduced need for crisis response, rather than through provision or attendance at the Hub alone.

Ready to Communicate

Communication is a central element of the school's inclusive practice. Ongoing professional development has strengthened staff expertise in supporting speech, language and communication needs and reflects the linguistic diversity of the school community. There is clear recognition that communication, vocabulary development and language acquisition are essential foundations for learning, inclusion and successful writing.

Strategies including explicit vocabulary instruction, stem sentences, Colourful Semantics, visual supports, modelling and scaffolded talk have been introduced and are increasingly used across the school. Oracy is also becoming more explicit within curriculum planning. These approaches are strengthening communication-rich classroom environments and supporting pupils to develop confidence in speaking, listening and articulating their understanding.

Ready to Learn

Pupils are supported to access ambitious learning through adaptive teaching, scaffolding, targeted intervention and appropriate classroom adjustments. Professional development and coaching have strengthened staff understanding of how to identify barriers and adapt provision for pupils with SEND, EAL and other vulnerabilities. Intervention systems provide targeted support in areas including speech and language, SEMH, phonics, cognition and learning.

Monitoring demonstrates improved consistency in classroom adaptations, scaffolding, communication strategies and responsive assessment. Pupils with SEND are fully included in the wider life of the school, including enrichment and curriculum experiences, and strong relationships support pupils' engagement, wellbeing and sense of belonging.

The impact of this inclusive approach is evident in calm learning environments, low levels of exclusion, positive relationships and the participation of pupils with complex needs in the curriculum and wider school life. Statutory outcomes must be considered within the context of the school's highly inclusive cohort; however, leaders recognise the need to secure stronger outcomes and demonstrate progress more consistently, particularly for pupils experiencing intersecting barriers including SEND and disadvantage.

Leadership capacity for SEND has been strengthened for 2026–27 through investment in an expanded SENCO team. This reflects the scale and complexity of need across the school and provides increased capacity for early identification, strategic oversight, support for classroom practice, partnership with families and professionals, and evaluation of the impact of provision. The purpose of this increased specialist capacity is not to locate responsibility for pupils with SEND solely with the SENCO team, but to strengthen the expertise and confidence of all staff so that high-quality inclusive practice is increasingly embedded within the universal offer. The strengthened team will also support leaders to evaluate more precisely the progress pupils make from their individual starting points and the impact of adaptations, intervention and specialist provision.

While inclusion is a significant strength of Priory School, leaders recognise that some variability remains in how consistently adaptive strategies and classroom adjustments are applied. Continued professional development, coaching and monitoring will therefore focus on translating increasingly strong inclusive practice into consistently strong learning and outcomes across all classrooms.

Areas for continued development:

- Deepen and embed Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn as Priory's universal inclusive offer, securing greater consistency across classrooms and phases.
- Develop staff expertise in co-regulation, sensory needs, communication and adaptive teaching so that barriers are identified early and appropriate universal adaptations are made consistently.
- Establish and evaluate the SEMH Hub as part of a graduated response to need, ensuring targeted provision strengthens pupils' regulation, engagement, successful participation in learning and increasing independence.
- Use strengthened SENCO capacity to develop classroom practice, early identification and the quality and evaluation of provision, while ensuring responsibility for inclusion remains shared by all staff.
- Strengthen the evaluation of progress and outcomes for pupils with SEND from their individual starting points, particularly those experiencing intersecting barriers including disadvantage and poor attendance.

Curriculum and teaching

Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☐	Expected standard ☒	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

Comments:

The curriculum at Priory School is broad, ambitious and increasingly responsive to the needs of its diverse and highly inclusive community. Curriculum planning is carefully sequenced to develop knowledge and skills progressively over time, while the school's values of Curiosity, Hope, Opportunity and Trust provide meaningful opportunities for pupils to connect learning to themselves, their communities and the wider world.

Teaching is typically effective and monitoring, learning walks and book scrutiny demonstrate calm, purposeful and inclusive classrooms. Strong relationships and established routines support pupils to engage positively with learning. Since the November 2024 inspection, there has been a sustained focus on responsive assessment and adaptive teaching. Professional development, coaching and monitoring have strengthened staff understanding of checking for understanding, identifying misconceptions and adapting teaching to meet pupils' needs. Practice has improved, although leaders recognise that some variability remains in how consistently this is applied across classrooms.

Reading and early literacy remain central to the curriculum. Daily phonics teaching, targeted keep-up and catch-up support and a continued focus on early language development provide increasingly secure foundations. In 2026, 72% of Year 1 pupils achieved the expected standard in phonics, rising to 81% when disapplied pupils are removed. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils also narrowed considerably to six percentage points, providing encouraging evidence of the impact of increasingly targeted provision.

Writing has been a significant focus during 2025–26. Work has deliberately concentrated on strengthening the foundations required for successful writing, particularly in Early Years and Key Stage 1 and for pupils who struggle with transcription and composition. Professional development in the foundations of writing, Move to Write, pre-writing and Colourful Semantics has strengthened staff knowledge and confidence. Greater emphasis is now placed on communication, vocabulary, fine motor development, oral rehearsal and transcription before extended written outcomes are expected.

While monitoring demonstrates improving classroom practice, this work has not yet translated sufficiently into statutory writing outcomes. At the end of Key Stage 2, 55% of pupils achieved the expected standard in writing, rising to 65% when disapplied pupils are removed from the data, compared with 73% nationally. Outcomes at the higher standard were 2%, compared with 13% nationally. Writing therefore remains a significant curriculum priority, with the development of clear progression in writing intended to build on the foundations established during 2025–26.

Mathematics demonstrates stronger evidence of impact from curriculum development. Arithmetic fluency has been strengthened through daily practice, intervention and the introduction of Mastering Number in Reception and Key Stage 1. In the 2026 Multiplication Tables Check, 52% of pupils achieved full marks, compared with 27% in 2025 and 44% nationally. At Key Stage 2, 65% achieved the expected standard in mathematics, rising to 76% when disapplied pupils are removed from data, while 29% achieved the higher standard compared with 27% nationally. Further curriculum

development will focus on extending this fluency into increasingly strong reasoning, problem solving and mathematical application.

Subject leadership continues to develop. Subject leaders increasingly use monitoring, pupil outcomes and curriculum review to evaluate implementation and identify priorities. Current wider curriculum development is focused on an enquiry-based approach, initially within Science, History, Geography and RE, alongside greater clarity about the core knowledge, vocabulary and concepts pupils should know, remember and apply. Diversity, sustainability and inclusion are being considered explicitly within this work.

Headline attainment gaps for disadvantaged pupils remain significant; however, increasingly precise analysis demonstrates the importance of understanding the interaction between disadvantage, SEND and attendance. A key challenge is therefore to ensure that curriculum and teaching translate into strong outcomes for pupils experiencing multiple barriers. This will require increasingly precise use of assessment, adaptive teaching and carefully evaluated intervention so that support responds to individual need and its impact on achievement can be demonstrated.

Areas for continued development:

- Implement and embed the enquiry-based curriculum, initially through Science, History, Geography and RE, ensuring learning is connected, purposeful and memorable.
- Clarify and embed the core knowledge, vocabulary and concepts pupils should know, remember and apply over time.
- Develop and embed a coherent whole-school writing progression, including explicit progression in handwriting and transcription, sentence-level composition and increasingly independent writing, so that strengthened foundations translate into improved outcomes
- Further strengthen responsive assessment and adaptive teaching, ensuring staff consistently check understanding and respond swiftly to misconceptions and gaps.
- Use increasingly precise assessment and analysis to improve outcomes for disadvantaged pupils, particularly those experiencing intersecting barriers including SEND and poor attendance.
- Build on improvements in mathematical fluency by strengthening reasoning, problem solving and application.

Achievement

Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☐	Expected standard ☒	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

(With significant strengths in inclusive achievement and progress from starting points)

Comments:

Achievement at Priory School must be evaluated within the context of the school's highly inclusive intake and the significant complexity of need within each cohort. The school is ambitious for every pupil and is committed to enabling pupils to achieve as highly as possible from their individual starting points. For a significant proportion of pupils with complex SEND, however, age-related expectations and statutory assessments are not appropriate measures of their achievement. These pupils follow personalised pathways and their progress is evaluated against appropriately ambitious individual starting points and outcomes.

The complexity of Priory's Year 6 cohort has increased significantly over time. In 2019, 22% of the cohort were identified as having SEND, with 9% holding an EHCP. By 2025, this had risen to 45% SEND and 20% EHCPs, alongside increasing numbers of pupils with complex needs accessing mainstream classrooms and specialist provision through Orchard and

Woodlands. In 2026, this level of complexity remained exceptionally high, with 39% of the Year 6 cohort identified as having SEND and 23% holding an EHCP.

Importantly, despite this substantial increase in complexity, headline attainment has remained comparatively stable over time. This provides important context when evaluating achievement at Priory: while the proportion of pupils working significantly below age-related expectations or unable to access statutory assessment has increased, there has not been a corresponding decline in overall attainment. This reflects the school's continued ambition for all pupils and the impact of increasingly inclusive and adaptive provision.

The Changing Context of Priory School

Year	SEND	EHCP	Reading	Writing	Maths	Combined
2019	22%	9%	65%	64%	65%	53%
2022	30%	14%	63%	48%	53%	41%
2023	28%	11%	68%	62%	70%	54%
2024	32%	15%	67%	65%	64%	53%
2025	45%	20%	67%	58%	67%	48%
2026	39%	23%	63%	55%	65%	51%

Priory does not seek to reduce the impact of this complexity through restricted access or exclusion from the school community. Pupils with complex SEND are fully included within Priory and access mainstream learning and wider school life alongside specialist provision through Orchard and Woodlands where appropriate. Consequently, the proportion of pupils disapplied from statutory assessment is significantly higher than nationally and has a substantial impact on headline attainment measures. Leaders therefore analyse statutory outcomes both for the whole cohort and, where appropriate, omitting pupils who were unable to access the statutory assessment, while maintaining high expectations for the progress and achievement of every pupil.

2026 statutory outcomes

At the end of Key Stage 2, headline attainment was 63% in reading, 55% in writing and 65% in mathematics, with 51% achieving the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. When pupils disapplied from statutory assessment are removed from the data, outcomes rise to 76% in reading, 65% in writing, 76% in mathematics and 60% combined. This demonstrates the significant impact that the school's highly inclusive cohort has on headline statutory attainment while also enabling leaders to identify accurately where further improvement is required.

There are areas of notable strength. In mathematics, attainment for pupils able to access statutory assessment was broadly in line with national outcomes, while 29% of the whole cohort achieved the higher standard compared with 27% nationally. This builds on strong improvements in mathematical fluency: 52% of Year 4 pupils achieved full marks in the Multiplication Tables Check, compared with 27% in 2025 and 44% nationally. In reading, 29% achieved the higher standard, close to the national figure of 30%.

Early literacy outcomes provide further evidence of improving foundations. In Year 1 phonics, 72% of the whole cohort achieved the expected standard, rising to 81% when disapplied pupils are omitted. The gap between disadvantaged and non-disadvantaged pupils narrowed considerably to six percentage points, compared with 22 percentage points in 2025.

Writing remains a significant area for improvement. At the end of Key Stage 2, 55% of the whole cohort achieved the expected standard, rising to 65% when disapplied pupils are removed from the data, compared with 73% nationally. Only 2% achieved the higher standard compared with 13% nationally. Leaders recognise that the significant work undertaken

during 2025–26 to strengthen the foundations of writing has not yet translated sufficiently into improved statutory outcomes. Writing therefore remains a key priority.

Achievement of disadvantaged pupils

Headline outcomes for disadvantaged pupils remain below those of their non-disadvantaged peers. At Key Stage 2, 41% of pupils eligible for Pupil Premium achieved the expected standard in reading compared with 73% of non-PP pupils; in mathematics this was 41% compared with 76%; and in writing 35% compared with 63%. Combined reading, writing and mathematics outcomes were 32% for PP pupils compared with 59% for their peers.

However, leaders' analysis demonstrates that these headline gaps need to be understood in the context of significant overlapping need. Within the 2026 Year 6 cohort, 32 pupils were identified as FSM; 13 had an EHCP and a further 6 were identified as having SEND. Therefore, 19 of the 32 disadvantaged pupils (59%) also had identified SEND, including 41% of the disadvantaged cohort with an EHCP.

Further analysis shows a different pattern of attainment for disadvantaged pupils without identified SEND. Within this group of 13 pupils, 69% achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined. Achievement also extended beyond the expected standard: 31% achieved greater depth in mathematics and 31% in reading.

Although these results relate to a small cohort and should be interpreted cautiously, they demonstrate the strong outcomes achieved by many disadvantaged pupils without identified SEND. They also highlight why leaders analyse overlapping needs when evaluating headline attainment gaps. This informs targeted support and appropriately ambitious expectations for every pupil, including those experiencing both disadvantage and SEND.

This analysis provides strong evidence that the headline disadvantaged attainment gap is significantly influenced by the intersection between disadvantage and SEND within the cohort. It also demonstrates that disadvantaged pupils without SEND can and do achieve strongly at Priory, including at the higher standard.

Leaders do not use this context to lower expectations for disadvantaged pupils or pupils with SEND. Instead, it informs a more precise approach to evaluation and improvement. Disadvantaged pupils without SEND are expected to achieve strongly against age-related expectations, while the achievement of disadvantaged pupils with SEND must also be evaluated through progress from individual starting points and appropriately ambitious outcomes. Leaders will continue to analyse the interaction between disadvantage, SEND and attendance to ensure that provision responds accurately to the barriers experienced by individual pupils.

Achievement of pupils with SEND

The achievement of pupils with SEND is evaluated from individual starting points and in relation to the ambitious outcomes identified for them, rather than through statutory attainment measures alone. Many pupils have complex communication, cognition, developmental, physical or SEMH needs and are working significantly below age-related expectations. Progress for these pupils may therefore be demonstrated through gains in communication, regulation, independence, engagement and curriculum knowledge as well as academic attainment.

The Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn approach, alongside personalised provision and targeted intervention, supports pupils to overcome barriers and engage successfully in learning. Leaders recognise the need to continue strengthening the evidence of progress from starting points so that the impact of provision for pupils with SEND can be demonstrated clearly alongside statutory attainment data.

Overall evaluation

Achievement is appropriately judged as Expected Standard. Headline statutory outcomes remain below national figures in a number of areas; however, these outcomes must be evaluated within the context of Priory's exceptionally inclusive cohort and the significant proportion of pupils with complex SEND who are working below age-related expectations or are unable to access statutory assessment.

Analysis over time demonstrates that, despite a substantial increase in the complexity of need within the school, headline attainment has remained comparatively stable. When pupils unable to access statutory assessment are excluded from the

data, outcomes are substantially stronger, with particular strengths evident in mathematical fluency, higher attainment in mathematics and improving foundations in early literacy.

Writing remains a significant area for improvement and leaders recognise that the work undertaken to strengthen the foundations of writing has not yet translated sufficiently into statutory outcomes.

Headline outcomes for disadvantaged pupils show significant gaps; however, more detailed cohort analysis demonstrates the importance of considering the intersection between disadvantage and SEND. In the 2026 Year 6 cohort, 69% of disadvantaged pupils without SEND achieved the expected standard in reading, writing and mathematics combined, with a number also achieving greater depth in reading and mathematics. This provides evidence that disadvantage alone is not resulting in weak attainment and reinforces the need for leaders to evaluate the achievement of pupils according to their individual and intersecting barriers.

Leaders have an accurate and increasingly forensic understanding of achievement across the school. Priorities for 2026–27 are to improve writing outcomes, ensure pupils with SEND make strong and demonstrable progress from their individual starting points, and continue to analyse the interaction between SEND, disadvantage and attendance so that support is precisely targeted and its impact evaluated.

Attendance and behaviour

Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☐	Expected standard ☒	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

Comments:

Behaviour

Behaviour is a significant strength of Priory School. Pupils typically behave well, learning environments are calm and purposeful, and relationships between pupils and adults are notably strong. The school's vision of developing determined, courageous and kind individuals, together with the values of Curiosity, Hope, Opportunity and Trust, provides a consistent framework for expectations, relationships and behaviour across the school.

The school's trauma-informed and relational approach is central to this positive culture. Significant professional development has strengthened staff understanding of behaviour as communication and supports increasingly consistent, empathetic and restorative responses. Pupils are explicitly supported to develop emotional understanding, regulation and responsibility for their behaviour. This is particularly important within Priory's highly inclusive context and enables pupils with SEND, SEMH and other additional needs to be successfully included within the school community.

Staff apply behaviour systems consistently and pupils understand expectations. Low-level disruption is limited and classrooms are typically calm and focused. Transitions around the school are orderly and behaviour during less structured periods, including lunchtimes, is positive. Where difficulties occur, restorative approaches enable pupils to reflect, repair relationships and return successfully to learning.

The impact of this approach is reflected in low levels of exclusion despite the significant level of SEND and SEMH need within the school. Most behavioural incidents are managed successfully through strong relationships, pastoral support, regulation strategies, nurture provision and targeted intervention. Pupils report feeling safe, respected and supported, and the strength of relationships contributes significantly to pupils' engagement and sense of belonging.

Attendance

Attendance is a significant area for improvement. Whole-school attendance declined during 2025–26 and remains below national and local benchmarks. Overall attendance was 92.1%, compared with 92.8% in 2024–25. Persistent absence also remains too high and leaders recognise that improving attendance must be a key whole-school priority.

Leaders have developed an increasingly detailed understanding of the factors contributing to absence. As with achievement, headline attendance data needs to be analysed carefully within Priory's highly inclusive context. A significant proportion of pupils have complex SEND, medical and developmental needs which can affect their ability to attend consistently. Leaders therefore distinguish between absence associated with significant medical or complex need and absence which is avoidable or requires further challenge and support.

Disadvantaged pupils are particularly vulnerable to poor attendance. Attendance for pupils identified as FSM was 90.2%, with persistent absence at 34.2%. Leaders recognise the intersection between disadvantage, SEND and attendance and are increasingly analysing these characteristics together in order to identify pupils experiencing multiple barriers to successful attendance.

The school's attendance strategy combines high expectations and appropriate challenge with relational and pastoral support. Attendance is monitored closely and families are supported through early intervention, family support, breakfast provision, pastoral and nurture approaches and multi-agency working where appropriate. Patterns of absence are analysed so that support can be increasingly targeted to individual circumstances.

Leaders recognise that current attendance outcomes are not good enough. The priority for 2026-27 is to reduce avoidable absence and persistent absence through earlier identification, increasingly precise analysis and targeted intervention, while ensuring that pupils experiencing significant medical, SEND or other complex barriers receive appropriate and individualised support.

The table below presents the DfE Years 1-6 attendance analysis, enabling comparison with similar schools:

Measure	Priory 2024-25	Similar schools	Priory 2025 - 2026
Overall attendance Y1-6	93.4%	94.9% median	93.3%
Persistent absence Y1-6	19.9%	12.4% median	20.3%
FSM attendance	91.1%	92.3% median	90.8%
Non-FSM attendance	94.2%	96.0% median	94.1%
SEN attendance	91.6%	92.5% median	92.2%
Non-SEN attendance	94.5%	95.7% median	94%

Attendance improved during 2024-25; however, this improvement was not sustained consistently during 2025-26. DfE Years 1-6 analysis shows overall attendance remaining broadly static at 93.3%, compared with 93.4% in 2024-25, while persistent absence increased from 19.9% to 20.3%. Attendance for pupils with SEN improved to 92.2%, while attendance for disadvantaged pupils remains a particular concern at 90.8%.

Areas for continued development:

Attendance

Improve attendance for disadvantaged and vulnerable pupils through earlier identification, targeted family support and increasingly precise analysis of the intersecting barriers of disadvantage, SEND and persistent absence.

- Further reduce avoidable persistent absence while maintaining appropriate, individualised support for pupils with significant medical and SEND needs.
- Evaluate the impact of attendance strategies more systematically, identifying and building on the approaches that contributed to improved attendance in 2024-25 and ensuring improvements are sustained.

Behaviour

Continue to embed restorative and relational approaches consistently across all areas of school life.

- Strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop independence, self-regulation and responsibility through the school's values-led approach.

Personal development and wellbeing

Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☒	Expected standard ☐	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

Comments:

Personal development is a significant strength of Priory School. The school's values of Curiosity, Hope, Opportunity and Trust, together with the behaviours of kindness, courage and determination, provide a strong foundation for pupils' personal, social and emotional development. These values are understood by pupils and are reflected in relationships, curriculum experiences and the wider life of the school.

The PSHRE curriculum is carefully structured to support pupils' understanding of relationships, health and wellbeing, citizenship and life in modern Britain. This is complemented by assemblies, enrichment, leadership opportunities and wider experiences which enable pupils to develop confidence, resilience and an understanding of themselves and others. Pupils are taught to recognise and celebrate difference and are supported to develop respectful attitudes towards people from different backgrounds, cultures and communities.

The school's inclusive and relational approach makes a significant contribution to pupils' wellbeing. Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn supports pupils to understand their emotions, develop strategies for self-regulation and become increasingly independent and confident learners. Pastoral, nurture and targeted SEMH provision provide additional support for pupils experiencing emotional or social difficulties, while strong relationships with trusted adults enable pupils to seek help when they need it.

Pupils benefit from a broad range of opportunities beyond the academic curriculum. Educational visits, residential experiences, sporting opportunities, clubs, performances and community activities enrich pupils' experiences and help develop confidence, independence and a sense of belonging. Leaders are committed to ensuring that pupils with SEND and those experiencing disadvantage are able to participate fully in these opportunities.

The strength of the school's relationships and pastoral culture was particularly evident during 2025–26, when the community experienced two significant and deeply distressing events. The school responded with care and sensitivity, supporting affected pupils, families and staff while maintaining continuity, stability and reassurance across the wider school community. Staff drew on trusted relationships, trauma-informed practice and specialist support to help children process difficult experiences in ways appropriate to their age and individual needs. These experiences demonstrated the importance of the school's relational approach and its capacity to respond compassionately in a crisis. Leaders recognise that recovery takes time and continue to review support in response to the needs of those affected.

Pupil voice demonstrates that pupils feel safe, valued and listened to. Opportunities to contribute to school life and take increasing responsibility support pupils in developing confidence and agency. Leaders continue to strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop independence, leadership and responsibility so that they are well prepared for the next stage of their education and for life beyond Priory.

Areas for continued development:

- Further strengthen opportunities for pupils to develop leadership, independence and responsibility across the school.
- Continue to develop pupils' understanding of diversity, equality and life in modern Britain through the curriculum and wider school experiences.

- Ensure enrichment and wider opportunities remain accessible to all pupils, particularly those with SEND and those experiencing disadvantage.
- Continue to develop pupils' emotional literacy, self-regulation and resilience through the Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn approach.

Leadership and governance

Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☐	Expected standard ☒	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

Comments:

Leadership at Priory is ambitious, reflective and firmly rooted in the school's inclusive values. Leaders have a clear understanding of the school's context and the increasingly complex needs of its pupils. The vision of enabling all pupils to thrive academically, socially and personally is translated into coherent priorities for curriculum development, inclusion, teaching and professional learning.

The introduction of phase leadership has strengthened communication, collaboration and consistency across year groups. Leaders have sought to protect leadership time through coordinated timetabling, supported by weekly phase meetings. The next stage is to deepen phase leaders' oversight of pupil needs, staff development and provision across both year groups. Coaching and support will reflect the different needs of each phase, strengthening leadership capacity and staff confidence in responding consistently to behaviour and supporting pupils' learning.

Self-evaluation is increasingly evidence-informed and appropriately critical. Leaders use monitoring, assessment information, pupil outcomes and staff and pupil voice to evaluate the impact of improvement work rather than focusing solely on whether actions have been completed. Evaluation of the 2025–26 School Development Plan demonstrates clear improvements in inclusive practice, staff expertise, mathematical fluency and the foundations of writing, while also identifying where improvements in practice have not yet translated consistently into pupil outcomes. This has informed priorities for 2026–27, particularly writing, attendance, adaptive teaching and improving outcomes for pupils experiencing intersecting barriers.

Professional development is a significant feature of the school's improvement strategy. Training, instructional coaching and opportunities to share effective practice are aligned closely with identified priorities. During 2025–26, professional development strengthened staff expertise in adaptive teaching, regulation, communication, writing foundations and mathematics. A revised approach to sharing good practice was introduced during the summer term, with Key Stage 1 showcasing phonics, Mastering Number and continuous provision to colleagues. This more structured model will be extended across EYFS, Orchard, Key Stage 2 and Woodlands during 2026–27.

Curriculum leadership continues to strengthen. Subject leaders are increasingly confident in evaluating curriculum implementation through monitoring, pupil outcomes and professional dialogue. Leaders have identified the need to move beyond coverage towards greater clarity about the core knowledge, vocabulary and concepts pupils should know, remember and apply. The development of an enquiry-based approach, initially within Science, History, Geography and RE, reflects this next stage of curriculum improvement.

Leadership of inclusion is a significant strength. Leaders have developed a coherent whole-school approach through Ready to Regulate, Ready to Communicate and Ready to Learn, supported by specialist provision through Orchard and Woodlands. In response to the increasing scale and complexity of SEND and SEMH need, leaders have invested strategically in increased SENCO capacity and the development of a dedicated SEMH Hub for 2026–27. This increased capacity is intended to strengthen early identification, staff expertise, the quality of universal and targeted provision, partnership with families and professionals, and leaders' ability to evaluate the impact of support.

As this increased capacity and expertise becomes further embedded, leaders intend to develop Priory's outreach role, sharing effective inclusive practice and specialist expertise with other schools.

Leaders are clear that specialist capacity must strengthen, rather than replace, inclusive classroom practice. Responsibility for inclusion is therefore shared across the school, with the SENCO team providing expertise, challenge and support to enable staff to identify barriers and respond effectively. Leaders recognise that some variability remains in adaptive classroom practice and that further work is required to demonstrate consistently the progress made by pupils with complex SEND from their individual starting points.

Governors understand the school's context and provide appropriate support and challenge to leaders. They receive information about school improvement priorities, safeguarding, curriculum, outcomes, SEND and attendance and use this to hold leaders to account. The increasingly detailed analysis of achievement and attendance, including the interaction between SEND, disadvantage and attendance, will support governors in scrutinising the impact of provision and improvement actions more precisely.

Leaders are realistic about the challenges facing the school. Attendance and persistent absence require significant improvement, writing outcomes are not yet strong enough, and greater consistency is required in adaptive teaching and responsive assessment. These areas are clearly identified within self-evaluation and improvement planning. At the same time, leaders have sustained significant strengths in inclusion, behaviour, personal development and the culture of the school while responding to increasing complexity of need.

Areas for continued development:

- Continue to embed the phase leadership model, strengthening phase leaders' knowledge and influence across both year groups and developing the capacity of year leaders and teachers to manage behaviour consistently without unnecessary reliance on SLT.
- Continue to strengthen subject leadership and leaders' evaluation of curriculum impact.
- Further develop the use of precise analysis to evaluate outcomes for pupils experiencing intersecting barriers, particularly SEND, disadvantage and poor attendance.
- Extend the revised model of sharing effective practice across Priory and begin to develop the school's capacity to share inclusive expertise and specialist practice through an outreach offer to other schools.
- Develop a differentiated programme of professional learning, coaching and support which responds to staff starting points and builds consistently strong expertise in teaching, adaptive practice and inclusion.

Early Years

Grading	Exceptional ☐	Strong standard ☒	Expected standard ☐	Needs attention ☐	Urgent Improvement ☐

Comments:

Children in the Early Years make positive progress from often low starting points within a highly inclusive and increasingly complex cohort. Provision is rooted in strong relationships, communication and child development, ensuring children feel safe, engaged and increasingly ready to regulate, communicate and learn. The Early Years environment reflects the school's wider inclusive ethos and provides a nurturing, language-rich and developmentally appropriate foundation for learning.

Provision is carefully designed to respond to a significant range of need, including SEND, speech and language difficulties and developmental delay. Staff prioritise communication, regulation and early literacy through high-quality interactions, purposeful continuous provision, structured play, targeted speech and language support and carefully sequenced phonics teaching. Professional development during 2025–26 strengthened staff understanding of play, communication, interaction, pre-writing development and the foundations required for successful writing.

Relational practice is a significant strength. Staff know children well and use warm, responsive interactions to support confidence, communication and emotional security. Sensory-sensitive environments, movement and purposeful play support regulation and engagement. Continuous provision is increasingly intentional in developing independence, curiosity,

communication and early learning and provides opportunities for adults to model, scaffold and extend children's thinking and language.

Early identification and intervention are strong. Children benefit from timely identification of emerging needs and fluid access to specialist support, including the school's resource-base provision where appropriate. Staff work closely with families and external professionals to ensure support is responsive and coordinated, and transition between Nursery, Reception and Year 1 is carefully planned around individual developmental and learning needs.

2026 outcomes reflect the complexity of the cohort while also identifying areas requiring further development. Overall, 61% of children achieved a Good Level of Development, compared with 66% in 2025 and 73% nationally. When children with an EHCP are excluded, GLD rises to 74%. Within areas particularly relevant to the school's current priorities, 67% achieved the expected level in Communication and Language and 66% in Literacy. Outcomes for disadvantaged pupils remain lower, with 53% achieving GLD compared with 63% of non-disadvantaged pupils.

These outcomes reinforce the importance of continuing to strengthen communication, early literacy and writing foundations while recognising that age-related outcomes do not fully reflect the progress made by children with significant developmental and complex SEND. Leaders will continue to evaluate both attainment and progress from individual starting points so that the impact of provision is understood accurately for all children.

The foundations of writing have been a particular focus. Staff understanding of the cognitive, physical, communication and language demands involved in writing has strengthened through training in pre-writing development, Move to Write and related approaches. Greater emphasis is placed on fine motor development, communication, oral rehearsal, purposeful mark-making and transcription. This work provides the foundation for the development of a clearer whole-school writing progression during 2026–27.

Transition arrangements between Nursery, Reception and Year 1 support continuity of provision and learning. Increased collaboration across EYFS and Key Stage 1, including the development of continuous provision and shared understanding of early child development, is supporting a more coherent approach to meeting children's developmental needs as they move through the school.

Areas for continued development:

- Continue to strengthen early writing through a consistent progression from communication, physical development, oral rehearsal and purposeful mark-making into transcription and composition.
- Implement a consistent handwriting scheme from EYFS, building on strengthened pre-writing and physical development to secure appropriate pencil grip, letter formation and transcription skills.
- Further develop whole-cohort speech, language and communication strategies, ensuring approaches are used consistently throughout provision.
- Continue to refine high-quality continuous provision so that it develops regulation, independence, communication, purposeful play and increasingly ambitious learning.
- Strengthen the evaluation of progress from individual starting points, particularly for children with SEND and developmental delay, alongside analysis of EYFSP outcomes.