

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	16 June 2016
Unique reference number	1211772
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Priory Education Services Ltd
Registered provider address	Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Katherine Bridon
Registered manager	Martin Heath
Inspector	Michele Hargan

Inspection date	16 June 2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
<p>This home has not yet had a full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>Young people are making good progress. The staff team has a thorough knowledge of each young person’s circumstances, needs and unique history. This individualises young people and fully respects their identity and cultural upbringing. Young people maintain links with key people in their lives, helping them to maintain a sense of belonging with their families and carers. Staff said, ‘The young person is building really good relationships with staff. This shows that they are beginning to trust us.’ A social worker said, ‘I have been amazed at how well things have worked out for the young person.’</p> <p>Staff expect young people to go to school, and established routines within the home promote this. Two young people attend full time, which is a significant improvement. Another young person is gradually re-entering education after previously having difficulties which resulted in regular absenteeism.</p> <p>Close working between the provider’s school staff and staff at the home help young people to manage any difficulties that arise during the school day. For example, young people with unsettled behaviour, resulting in time away from lessons, are quickly followed up by the school principal. As a result, concerns are resolved, helping the young person to re-establish their place within the school. A teacher said, ‘[Name] is making fantastic progress, they have participated in three school productions. This is a major step forward.’</p> <p>Young people take part in a variety of activities that interest them and which promote their social development. These include attending army cadets, marching bands, visits to places of interest and fishing trips. For some young people, this means maintaining their established interests, while for others, it introduces them to new experiences. A senior member of staff said, ‘[Name] loves to go fishing. A member of staff regularly takes them after school. This has really given them a lot of confidence.’</p> <p>Young people’s transitions into the home are well planned. These are underpinned by sound practical and emotional support for young people from staff. The</p>	

transitions reduce young people's anxieties and help them to settle quickly into their new environment. Effective joint working with other professionals also aids understanding of young people. For example, staff build relationships with young people prior to their admission. A young person said, 'Moving in was OK. It's fun at times. I came to have a look around. Here staff sit down and talk to you.' A relative said, 'I think the staff have been fantastic, in handling [Name]. I think they already have a bond with them. They are taking an interest in the things that they are interested in.'

Staff receive regular child protection training and know what to do if they are concerned about a young person's welfare. Training is due to take place to better inform staff how to prevent child sexual exploitation. While there are no current concerns regarding this, ensuring that staff are knowledgeable about this possibility helps to safeguard young people.

Young people do not go missing. Staff respond seriously to any indication of this, and know what to do in the event that a young person's whereabouts are unknown. Protocols in place with the local police assist staff and enhance young people's welfare.

Staff sometimes use physical interventions to promote the safety of young people and others. The manager reviews staff's detailed records to consider the impact on young people. This helps to identify any potential themes or concerns both in the young people's behaviours and in staff practice. Additionally, it ensures that restraints are only used as a last resort. The routine offer of medical assistance following physical interventions respects young people's rights and reassures them that staff can keep them safe. Staff are skilled at retaining positive relationships with young people following any such intervention. This helps young people to understand better what adults do to resolve difficult feelings positively, helping to build trust. A young person said, 'I have only been restrained when I have tried to attack staff, I know this wasn't a good thing to do.' However, staff do not routinely speak to other young people in the home that may witness restraints. This means opportunities for these young people to access support are not forthcoming.

Young people live in a large, detached home situated in substantial grounds. The internal decor is light and airy, very comfortable, homely and clean. Young people have their own bedroom that is furnished to a high standard and includes an en-suite bathroom. This level of provision sends an important message to young people about their value and worth and promotes a sense of belonging.

The quality of the care provided to young people is effectively scrutinised. The reports resulting from these independent visits demonstrate a serious commitment by the registered provider to continuous improvement.

Young people know how to complain. Staff help those who may struggle to communicate any worries or concerns they may have, empowering young people to express themselves.

Staff feel valued and well supported by the manager. They participate in weekly staff meetings and receive regular supervision, both of which focus on how best to help young people and keep them safe. A member of staff said, 'We talk about young people and the targets we set, we make sure that they are realistic.'

Staff have a good understanding of young people's overarching needs. This promotes good outcomes and progress. Staff undertake a range of training, but there are some shortfalls in specific areas, particularly in their understanding of how trauma effects young people's development. Consequently, staff are not always aware of what young people are communicating about their experiences through their behaviour. This leads to missed opportunities to help young people to make links between their feelings, thoughts and behaviours. This oversight potentially hinders young people's emotional development.

Staff training and checks on competency to carry out specific, delegated healthcare tasks are not sufficiently demonstrated. While there are no current concerns about the way that this type of care is delivered to young people, these shortfalls, along with a lack of written guidance, undermine systems designed to ensure that there are safe procedures and staff accountability.

The statement of purpose, in particular the home's admission criteria, does not fully reflect the extent of the needs of the young people accommodated. This means that those who place children and young people are not fully informed about what staff do, in practice, to meet young people's needs.

Information about this children’s home

The home is owned by a private provider and is approved to provide accommodation for up to six young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

What does the children’s home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children’s Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and ‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due Date
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safe keeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home. (Regulation 23(1))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that a policy and procedure is in place for staff guidance, regarding how their competency is assessed and reviewed by an appropriately designated and qualified health professional, who can delegate the administration of insulin to staff.</p>	<p>26 August 2016</p>

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that each child’s day-to-day health and well-being needs are met. Staff should work to make the children’s home an environment that supports children’s physical, mental and emotional

health, in line with the approach set out in the home's statement of purpose. In particular, ensure that this document is updated as necessary to reflect the range of health needs of young people that the home currently meets. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

- In a restraint situation, staff should use their professional judgement, supported by their knowledge of each child's risk assessment, an understanding of the needs of the child (as set out in their relevant plans) and an understanding of the risks the child faces. Professional judgements may need to be taken quickly, and staff training and supervision of practice should support this. In particular, that the staff receive training about the impact of trauma on attachment behaviour. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.53)

- The context in which restraint is used should also recognise that, as a result of past experiences, children will have a unique understanding of their circumstances, which will affect their response to restraint by adults responsible for their care. In particular, ensure that all young people present at the time of the restraint are offered an opportunity to talk about the impact that this has had on them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations and quality standards', page 58, paragraph 9.54).

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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