

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	6/10/2016
Unique reference number	1236278
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Priory Education Services Limited
Registered provider address	Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Clive Coombs
Registered manager	Adam Court
Inspector	Norma Welsby

Inspection date	6/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

1236278

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home is well managed by a qualified and motivated registered manager. The staff team members are working well together; they have enjoyed helping to set up a new home and feel well supported by the manager. Staff have been effective in helping young people settle into their new home.
- Three of the four young people and most of the staff team have previously lived and worked together in another setting prior to moving to their new accommodation. They know each other well and have embraced their new opportunities very positively. Young people are benefitting from living in an attractive and comfortable domestic environment that is suitably located for them to access a good range of community facilities.
- Young people are making good progress. Their behaviour is positively managed and they do not participate in risk-taking activities. Young people receive personalised child-centred care. Staff ensure that their diverse needs are responded to effectively. All young people are regularly attending either school or college and are making good progress. Outside of school, they have regular opportunities to pursue hobbies and enjoy a range of social activities, including spending time with their families.
- The registered manager and staff have made good progress in many areas. They are focused on providing a child-centred service and they are keen to make further improvements to benefit young people.
- During this inspection, six requirements were made and several other matters were discussed, which will contribute to the home's development.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person/s meet/s the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the '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>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard,</p> <p>(2) the registered person must ensure</p> <p>(c) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded.</p> <p>In particular, children should be protected from accessing the road that runs immediately across the end of the home's driveway, by the use of a garden gate.</p>	07/10/2016
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard,</p> <p>(1) the registered person must ensure that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, as outlined in the statutory guidance for children who run away or go missing from home or care (Department for Education, 2014), all young people must have an independent return-home interview.</p>	31/10/2016
<p>14: The care planning standard</p> <p>In order to meet the care planning standard,</p> <p>(2) the registered person must ensure</p> <p>(b)(iii) that arrangements are in place to plan for and help each child to prepare to leave the home in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority.</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that a young person has a pathway plan.</p>	31/10/2016
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>In order to meet this requirement, the registered person must</p>	30/11/2016

<p>ensure that staff have appropriate experience, qualifications and skills. (Regulation 32(3)(b))</p> <p>In particular, they must ensure that specialist and refresher training is provided in a timely way.</p>	
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>In order to meet this requirement, the registered person must ensure that staff achieve the level 3 diploma for residential childcare within two years of their start date or by 1 April 2016. (Regulation 32(4)(a) and (5)(a)(b))</p>	31/10/2017
<p>34: Policies for the protection of children</p> <p>In order to meet this requirement, the registered manager must prepare and implement a policy ('the missing child policy') setting out the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of persons working at the home, in relation to a child who is, or has been, absent. (Regulation 34(4)(b))</p> <p>In particular, each child must have a detailed protocol, which gives staff specific guidance on what they are expected to do, with timescales, to try to find the child.</p>	31/10/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for four young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or a learning disability. It is owned by a large, national company that also provides education. The property is a large domestic house, appropriately situated in extensive grounds and with good access to community facilities.

Recent inspection history

This is the first inspection of this children's home following its registration in June 2016.

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Children and young people have been given good support to help them settle into their new home. They are enjoying living in this home. Each young person expressed how much they like the home. They are benefiting from its spacious and light environment and its attractive gardens. During the summer, they have enjoyed playing on their trampoline and having space to run around. There are plans in place to create a vegetable garden and to use the produce to make wholesome meals. Young people enjoy cooking and are learning skills that will benefit them as they mature into young adults and live more independent lives.</p> <p>All children and young people have a detailed and good-quality placement plan. They are being supported to develop skills and confidence. They are helped to develop a positive self-view and to build emotional resilience. Young people are encouraged to develop a wide range of skills and to work towards greater independence as they become older. One young person is doing exceptionally well in this area, but is still awaiting a pathway plan from his placing authority, which the manager is pursuing. Each of the children and young people has opportunities to maintain established hobbies and to develop new interests. They are treated with respect and dignity, and their sense of identity is promoted. Young people have access to advocates. During this inspection, it was agreed that the manager would explore the possibility of accessing an advocate who speaks the same first language as one young person. This would enhance their potential to speak confidently and provide further opportunities to celebrate their cultural heritage.</p> <p>Children and young people have trusted and secure relationships with adults who are working at the home. Staff know them well and are able to respond effectively to meet their diverse needs. Daily routines, such as returning home from school, are positive, as staff are nurturing in their approach and spend time with each individual. Children and young people feel that staff are interested in them and they communicate well together. Young people know how to raise concerns and feel confident that they will be listened to. One young person has expressed concern about noise disturbance from the first-floor lounge, which he hears from his ground-floor bedroom. This is being addressed by the manager who is confident that the situation can be much improved.</p> <p>All children and young people are attending full-time education, either in the company school or at a local sixth-form college, and are doing well. Staff maintain good links, for example by attending meetings, and are keen to support individuals in whatever way they can. However, currently, educational targets are not easily understood in a way that helps carers, acting as good parents, to best support young people to achieve. Following a discussion, it was agreed that the manager</p>	

would pursue this so that staff are clearer about the ways in which they can provide young people with opportunities to reinforce their learning outside of the classroom.

Staff are effective in supporting children and young people to have regular contact with their families, both in person and by telephone. When concerns arise about such arrangements, staff take prompt action in the best interest of the young person. Parents consulted during this inspection are positive about the quality of care that the home provides. One parent said about her son, 'I could not be happier. He is very calm and happy and he is a different child all together.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>The manager and staff have a good awareness of their responsibilities to protect children and young people and have established good practices in many areas. For example, they made a prompt referral to the local authority when a concern arose and subsequently took effective in-house action, when advised to do so. There are, however, some shortfalls, thoroughly discussed during this inspection, that need addressing in order to attain a good judgement in this area.</p> <p>One area of concern is in respect of the location of the home and, specifically, the driveway that directly joins the road, without a dividing public footpath. Although it is a fairly quiet country road, this is identified as a risk in the home's records. It is also identified that the use of the garden gate considerably minimises this risk. However, during the inspection, the gate was not being closed, which potentially puts children and young people at risk of harm. There may be a need to relocate the gate, to make it easier to use it routinely, and the manager is going to look into this. In the meantime, it was agreed that the gate would be shut when children and young people are at home.</p> <p>Staff receive a wide range of training that supports their safe and effective working practices. Most staff have up-to-date training in these areas, including safeguarding and behaviour management, but one newly appointed member of staff, formerly a member of the bank team within the company, has yet to receive training in these areas. The manager was pursuing this as a matter of priority and, in the meantime, has issued clear instructions to the member of staff.</p> <p>Behaviour is well managed in this home, and young people do not participate in risk-taking behaviours. Since the home opened, there have been no missing-from-</p>	

care incidents. Although individual risk assessments are in place, neither protocols about what to do should a young person go missing, nor agreed arrangements for an independent return-home interview, are in place. While this shortfall has not had an impact so far, it is imperative that this is addressed, to ensure that young people are appropriately helped and protected should they go missing from the home in the future.

Children and young people are complimented and rewarded for their good behaviour. A restorative justice approach is taken by staff in responding to young people's unsociable behaviour. This approach is very positive, but further training is needed for staff to consistently understand what this approach is in practice, as some responses appear more like sanctions. Detailed individual risk assessments are in place for each young person. These records follow a generic model, and many areas that do not apply to young people are included, which can cloud what the real areas of concern are. The manager is aware of this and is trying to see how this template can be modified.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager is appropriately qualified and experienced. He has had a variety of management roles and managed the setting in which three of the young people previously lived. The manager is very motivated to achieve high standards and has confidence in his staff team. In turn, staff have embraced the move from a residential school to a community location. They feel supported and share the manager's aspirations for helping young people to do well in this placement.</p> <p>Staffing arrangements at the home are good. Some agency staff have been used since the home opened, but the manager is monitoring this carefully. Staffing levels are flexibly arranged to meet the needs of young people. There is always a senior leading each shift, in addition to the manager working full-time hours throughout the week. On-call arrangements are also in place for evenings and weekends. Senior staff have delegated areas of responsibility, including staff supervision. Although seniors have been given some in-house guidance, training in this area would be beneficial, to ensure that they fully meet their responsibilities in this key area.</p> <p>The manager and staff feel supported by the good standard of training that they receive. There have been recent improvements in staff being able to pursue appropriate diploma qualifications. The manager has a level 5 qualification and four</p>	

of the nine members of the staff team have at least a level 3 qualification. Three more are part way through their training. One member of staff, who has worked as a bank worker for more than four years, has just been permanently appointed. He has been enrolled to undertake his level 3 training. The manager is aware that this member of staff has fallen outside of the timescale for achieving this qualification and will ensure that he receives appropriate support to achieve this in a timely way.

The quality of records maintained by the home is good. In-house placement plans are well organised, well written in the first person and very informative. The young person's guide is very child centred. It contains specific comments from young people about their rules and expectations, such as 'Bullying is not cool'.

Independent visits are taking place regularly. The manager is finding them useful but would benefit further from a more rigorous scrutiny of the conduct of the home. Specifically, more attention should be given to involving young people in assessing how well staff promote their well-being and keep them safe.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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