

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	08/12/2016
Unique reference number	1211772
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	Katherine Bridon
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Michele Hargan

Inspection date	08/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
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

1211772

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff establish trusting relationships with young people.
- Young people make good progress, taking into account their needs when admitted to the home.
- Young people and staff benefit from skilled psychological support and guidance.
- Staff ensure that young people take part in activities that they enjoy and which are beneficial.
- Staff have received training in attachment and trauma, increasing their understanding of young people's difficulties.
- Staff feel well supported by the interim management arrangements, increasing their abilities to provide young people with sound support.
- Leaders and managers establish effective working relationships with professionals.

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 meets 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— details of the child’s behaviour leading to the use of the measure; a description of the measure and its duration; the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(ii)(iii)(vii))	27/2/2017
The registered person must notify the HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e)) In particular, ensure updates of notifications when there are ongoing concerns of a serious nature, such as a prolonged episode of a young person going missing.	27/2/2017

Recommendations

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

- To meet the aspirations embodied in the Quality Standards, children's homes need to connect with and be part of the wider support system for each child in their care. No children's home will be able to meet, on its own, all of a child's needs. It is crucial that the home works in close partnership with all those who play a role in protecting and caring for the child, but particularly the child's local authority and statutory social worker. The registered person and the staff of the home cannot force a relevant person to engage or work productively with them and the regulation does not require this. The registered person should evidence what they have done to achieve engagement, including any actions taken to escalate concerns. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 11, paragraph 2.3)

In particular, compile a policy and procedure document that makes clear to staff their responsibilities and that of the placing authority, taking into account any statutory guidance when a young person has repeated episodes of going missing.

- Staff should understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies in line with the child's relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)

In particular, consistently evaluate the effectiveness of risk assessments and any strategies within young people's behaviour support plans, and where possible do so with young people.

- Where a child runs away persistently or engages in other risky behaviours, such as frequently being absent from the home to meet with inappropriate adults, the registered person, in consultation with the child's placing authority, should convene a risk management meeting to develop a strategy for managing risks to the young person. The strategy should be agreed with the child's placing authority, the local authority where the home is located and the local police. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.32)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan. The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards,' page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring (including under Regulations 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents, such as learning from disruptions and placement breakdowns. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

In particular, undertake regular monitoring of all disciplinary measures to ensure that staff only apply effective interventions.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides accommodation for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private provider. This is the first full inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/06/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Staff provide care and support to young people that reflect their individual needs as outlined within their placement plans. As a result, young people make good progress measured against their needs at the time of their admission. A parent said, 'I can definitely see progress with [Name], he is more sociable and confident and he is taking part in community activities.'</p> <p>Staff build trusting relationships with young people. They recognise that some young people test out boundaries as a way of trying to take control. The thoughtful responses of staff to work through these challenges improve young people's willingness to take more of an active part in what the home has to offer. A young person said, 'This is the best home I have lived in.'</p> <p>Young people and staff benefit from the regular input from a counselling psychologist commissioned by the home. This means that young people take part in therapy sessions, increasing their ability to reflect on and express their feelings. This support also means that staff gain increased understanding about young people's emotional needs, improving the effectiveness of staff. An independent reviewing officer said, 'I think the approach of the psychologist is very child centred and he is managing to engage [Name]'</p> <p>Staff help young people to establish routines that support their school attendance or return to education. Sensitive persistence by staff means that young people realise that education is a high priority and key to their future success. Most young people go to school and are doing well. Other young people who have been out of school receive the necessary support to help them cope with the challenges of full-time education. A professional said, 'The home are gradually getting [Name] back into education.'</p> <p>Young people's meetings take place on a regular basis. This demonstrates that young people are consulted about matters that affect them, including what activities they would like to take part in, what they would like to eat, and how to resolve any issues. They are also well informed about how to raise any concerns. This approach gives young people a voice and respects their rights.</p> <p>Staff encourage young people to take age-appropriate responsibility for their personal care and aspects of daily living, such as keeping their room tidy. This helps young people prepare for adulthood. At times of transition, staff work closely with other professionals to share information that aids others' understanding of young people's needs and how best to meet them. This increases the likelihood of</p>	

young people experiencing a successful transition. A member of staff said, '[Name] went to see the house, she went every day for a visit, then stayed overnight. We continued to go for a week.'

Young people's relationships with their parents and carers are well supported, helping preserve their place within their families. This aids young people's emotional and social development. A parent said, 'It's still early but he seems to be doing okay and the staff seem to be taking really good care of him.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>The use of physical restraints and sanctions is a last resort in response to staff managing young people's challenging behaviours and to help keep them and others safe. However, the staff's written logs do not consistently provide the required level of detail about the events leading to the intervention, the duration, effectiveness, and consequence of these measures. These gaps in recording reduce the manager's ability to evaluate the responses, increasing the likelihood of staff repeatedly using ineffective approaches. This does not help to address young people's underlying needs. In addition, the manager's monitoring of these behaviour management approaches is not rigorous and consequently staff do not receive feedback that will help them reflect on their practice and develop effective strategies for behaviour management.</p> <p>While incidents of young people going missing are low, one young person's prolonged incident was a serious concern. Staff took appropriate action and made daily attempts to stay in touch with the young person and secure their safe return. However, they did not convene a risk management meeting to contribute to the local authority's plans to keep the young person safe.</p> <p>Young people are safe and their ongoing safety is a high priority for staff. They compile risk assessment and behaviour support plans that accurately reflect young people's needs. This means they know what action to take to support young people. Staff are clear about what to do in the event of any concern disclosed by a young person. Robust systems are in place, including established relationships with the designated officer within the local authority so that any concerns about the conduct of staff are addressed. This promotes transparency and means to promote the safety and well-being of young people.</p> <p>Young people's vulnerability to any form of exploitation is well understood by staff, enabling them to stay vigilant to any indicators of concern. There are no young</p>	

people currently experiencing this type of abuse.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home's interim management arrangements since the resignation of the previous manager are working well. The acting manager is suitably experienced and is supported by the registered person. Staff are also well supported. A member of staff said, 'She [manager] has been brilliant. I think we have bonded as a team.' A new permanent manager has been appointed and at the time of the inspection was in the first week of his induction.</p> <p>The newly appointed manager has a good understanding of how to develop the home. As a result, there are plans in place to increase the skills of staff aimed at further improving outcomes for young people. About the home's strengths and weaknesses the manager said, 'The strengths are the relationships that staff have with young people. They strive for positive outcomes along with the use of therapy and education and a multidisciplinary approach. We had a meeting to look at training plans and how we can be more effective.' However, detail relating to staff training and development is not identified in the home's workforce development plan. This makes measuring any progress against these identified objectives difficult.</p> <p>Staff ensure that young people's placement plans clearly reflect their overall needs. They provide clarity on how staff can best aid young people's emotional well-being and incorporate relevant recommendations from psychological assessments. This promotes a consistent approach that benefits young people.</p> <p>Regular staff meetings address how staff should provide young people with the necessary support. This helps staff relate their care practice to outcomes for young people. A member of staff said, 'It feels like we have more plans in place and that everything is coming together.' Staff have completed further training establishing their competency to administer diabetic medication. This increased level of understanding promotes the safety and well-being of young people, meeting a previous requirement.</p> <p>Regular formal supervision from leaders and managers helps improve staff morale. Staff are confident that they can access informal support, and they feel consulted and involved in decisions that affect young people and themselves; for example, when considering referral information about new young people. A member of staff said, 'The interim manager has let us read the referrals and she has said, "Here</p>	

you go, tell us what you think." It's nice that she listened.'

A previous recommendation is met now the home has an updated statement of purpose outlining the type of care and support that it offers. This means that up-to-date information is available for stakeholders, parents and carers if they choose to read this.

Staff work well with professionals, parents and carers. Effective communication on their part means that social workers and families are provided with regular updates. This increases their understanding about young people's needs and progress, and builds confidence in the home's approach to caring for young people. Young people seeing everyone working together helps reduce their anxieties, and teaches them about cooperation and compromise.

In most cases, Ofsted is notified about serious matters affecting the safety and well-being of young people. However, an updated notification about an ongoing matter was not made to the regulator. As Ofsted was not aware of the continued concern, the opportunity for timely oversight and understanding about the action taken by the home was lost.

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 who 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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