

1245980

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a private organisation and is registered to accommodate up to six young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 30 to 31 August 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: This is the home's first inspection.

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: Not applicable

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Staff provide consistent care to young people.
- Young people make good progress and identify improvements in their behaviour. They say that they feel less angry, can socialise better and understand their triggers for poor behaviour due to staff support.
- The registered manager prioritises his safeguarding responsibilities and works collaboratively with social workers and placing authorities.
- Partnership working is extremely effective.
- Young people receive wrap-around care as healthcare, education, risk assessment and behaviour management dovetail into the consistent day-to-day care of young people.
- Young people are encouraged to contribute to their care planning and this gives them a good sense of self-determination and empowerment.
- Young people re-engage with education after long periods of non-attendance in previous placements.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Records need more care and attention as some young people's files contain information about other young people.
- An individual record of young people's controlled medication is needed in addition to the central record.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (regulation 23(2)(c))	27/10/2017
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (regulation 36 (1)(a))	27/10/2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people experience positive relationships and make progress because staff understand and relate to each young person's individuality. Young people feel understood and can express their views because staff listen to them.

Participation by young people is a key strength. Young people feel involved in their care. For example, in the placement plan staff have introduced a section that asks young people questions such as 'What do I like to do independently?' and 'What can you do to support me?'

Young people's good progress takes pride of place in their files. Each young person contributes to their progress reports and maintain a 'My Journey' journal. This child-entered recording ensures that young people have a clear understanding of their experiences of being looked after and plans for the future. Life story work, which helps young people look at childhood experiences, family backgrounds and reasons for coming into care, promotes good self-esteem.

Young people are protected from bullying because the registered manager and staff acknowledge and act on the current dynamics of the group of young people living at the home. Staff are vigilant and have a clear understanding that the short-term placement nature of the service and the high turnover of young people present ever-changing dynamics of group living. Conflict and issues of bullying are dealt with swiftly. Immediate review of young people's risk assessments, one-to-one key-working sessions and focused action plans prioritise young people's safety.

Young people receive good support to help them understand their behaviours and the risk that they present to others. Key-working sessions are very child-centred and include a section for young people to record their own comments. As a result, young people begin to take responsibility for their actions and work towards addressing their behaviour. For example, young people now have a greater understanding of the risks and seriousness of fire setting. They understand the role of the fire service and accept that the fire safety officer will conduct sessional work with them. The staff have also harnessed this partnership working as an opportunity to raise awareness about fire safety with an informative display in the home.

Education outcomes improve because young people receive encouragement and reward for engaging with learning. They begin to understand the importance of education as they see the persistence of the registered manager liaising with social workers and local education services to identify and secure education options that are in their best interests. For example, one young person who arrived at the home during the summer school holidays, and with no education placement, is currently looking at three choices of education placement in readiness for the new academic year.

Young people's learning needs are met with a range of educational arrangements. Joint care, education and health plans promote effective assessment across the spectrum of young people's needs. Good insight into behavioural needs, such as attention deficit hyperactivity, by education and care staff contributes to better engagement in education for young people.

Social workers fully appreciate the staff's abilities to forge and maintain relationships with young people. One social worker said, 'I cannot fault them.' Young people appreciate the commitment shown by staff. One young person feels more comfortable about returning to the home after a failed placement because he likes and respects the staff.

A young person's social worker is clear that the staff's relationship building is key to the positive re-engagement of the young person to the home. The young person expressed his views in a rap song:

This is about [name of home] – should last forever – infinity.
Used to be a bad kid but look at what they did to me.
Give me a good future because I had a bad history.
We are family, brotherly and sisterly.
We share the good times, the bad are mystery.

Young people are able to choose and enjoy a range of activities. Staff understand the individual needs of young people and the challenges they may face in group activities. Discussion of activities in young people's forums helps them to identify positive opportunities to enjoy and improve relationships with each other. Quality one-to-one time with staff encourages young people to find and develop interests and hobbies such as go-karting and going to the gym.

Young people are more empowered because the registered manager is a strong advocate and skilfully represents their views. Collaborative work with social workers has been important in helping young people to understand care planning decisions and plans. For example, one young person has a more meaningful understanding of the reasons why fostering placements have broken down and are no longer possible.

Young people's concerns and complaints are managed effectively as the registered manager takes time to listen to young people's views. In difficult situations, independent advocacy is used to ensure that young people can express their concerns effectively in meetings with the registered manager. This enabling environment ensures that young people have a voice.

Young people benefit from improved health outcomes as staff liaise with a range of health services. Physical health needs are met with regular check-ups. Young people's emotional health needs are addressed with good liaison with mental health professionals.

Healthcare planning is very effective. Young people who have had previous experiences of both physical and emotional neglect receive good health support. They enjoy a healthy diet, eat a greater range of foods and gain weight because of living at the home.

Young people live in a homely and well-maintained environment. Communal areas are spacious and young people have a good sense of belonging, with personalised bedrooms where they can enjoy their own personal space. High regard for health and safety ensures that all staff take responsibility for keeping young people and themselves safe.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Young people receive child-centred care that is consistently carried out by staff. Regular review and good communication with social workers ensure that young people's care is aligned with placing authority plans.

Care plans reflect and celebrate young people's uniqueness. However, one young person's file includes information about another young person.

Young people are kept safe with comprehensive risk assessments, which clearly measure and prioritise the risks presented by and to the young person. Action plans provide guidance for staff to keep young people safe in the community and monitor the risks that they present to each other in the home.

Missing from care protocols are individualised and agreed with police on each young person's admission to the home. Staff consistently follow young people when they leave the home without permission. Visiting family homes, talking to taxi drivers and searching possible locations help staff gather intelligence about the whereabouts and activities of young people. Police are able to work more effectively in locating young people based on the information provided by the staff at the home. Young people develop a greater

sense of safety and awareness of the risks associated with going missing because staff use key-working sessions, independent visits and the police to follow up incidents of going missing.

Staff ensure that there is early intervention support so that young people are protected from child sexual exploitation. While there are no concerns about young people's exposure to radicalisation, staff training sets them in good stead to identify and report concerns should they arise. A young person's information booklet about the risks of radicalisation has been developed because of the staff training. This exemplifies the child-centred and proactive approach of the management team. Training keeps staff up to date with social care trends. For example, online training on areas such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation keeps staff alert to safeguarding issues that may affect the safety of young people.

Young people see an improvement in their behaviour because behaviour management is sensitive and strategic. Plans are extremely detailed and child-centred. For example, staff take on board young people's level of communication. Staff comments, such as 'Will have a brief chat – plant the seed and then another member of staff might grow that seed a little bit more. Like taking [the young person] quad biking and he can grow that seed a little bit more. Then the key worker will do a key-work session,' demonstrate staff's insight into the young person's needs and their bespoke behaviour management.

Recruitment procedures protect young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has extensive managerial experience and a suitable level 4 qualification in management. Leadership is strong and has been integral to the effective transition of this home from a local authority provision over to a private provider.

The registered manager keeps the home's statement of purpose up to date in order to reflect the operation of the home. Staffing is well organised and recruitment to the home now results in a full complement of staff as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

Staff training is managed to ensure a seamless progression from induction, probationary training and then timely registration for a level 3 diploma in caring for children. All experienced staff have completed their level 3 diploma in caring for children.

The registered manager and staff show unquestionable commitment to young people. They access information prior to placement being agreed. Compatibility assessments are carried out in light of the individual young person's needs and the potential impact on other young people living at the home. While some young people have been discharged due to significant and threatening behaviours, the termination of placements is fully assessed.

Consultancy is a clear strength. The registered manager is both strategic and consultative in his approach to managing and improving the home. Improvement plans

are working documents in the day-to-day improvement of the home and include full consultation with the young people.

Thorough investigation of complaints is used as an opportunity to assess and improve the operation of the home. For example, there are now clear protocols regarding parents visiting the home late at night. The registered manager takes effective action to tackle poor staff performance to ensure that care is consistent.

The registered manager works in open partnership with Ofsted and safeguarding agencies. Concerns about young people's welfare and concerns about staff practice are routinely notified and show that appropriate safeguarding and disciplinary action is taken as concerns arise.

The registered manager has a clear understanding of his monitoring responsibilities. This includes responding to independent monitoring reports.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1245980

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Registered provider address: Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Shelley Whiting

Registered manager: Junior Patterson

Inspector

Elaine Cray, social care inspector

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