

# 1236387

Registered provider: The Priory Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by a national private provider. The home provides care and accommodation for up to four children who have learning disabilities and/or present behaviours that occur when under high levels of anxiety. The home shares a site with another registered children's home and the organisation's two schools, which most of the children living in the home attend.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 25 Oct 2016.

**Inspection dates:** 15 to 16 October 2018

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 22 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2017	Full	Good
30/01/2017	Full	Good

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

### Recommendations

- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)  
In particular, ensure that staff understand the role of the designated officer of the local authority and how, and in what circumstances, they might contact them.
- Case records must be kept up to date, signed, and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)  
This includes the promotion of tolerance, equality and diversity.

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children, parents and professionals all commented on the warm and welcoming atmosphere of the home. Decor, furnishings, photographs and small pets all contribute to it being, as one parent commented, 'A home from home – a proper home.'

Staff take a non-punitive approach to unwanted behaviour, instead placing an emphasis on learning from incidents and rewarding children for things they do well. Long lists of achievements on case files show how adept staff are at noticing when, for example, children help without being prompted, show empathy or become competent at a self-care task. Verbal praise, small rewards, and occasionally larger ones, make sure children know that their progress is recognised.

The manager and staff make meticulous preparations for children to move into the home, going to great lengths to ensure that children are supported practically and emotionally to make the step. Moves out of the home are mapped out just as well, even if things do not go according to plan.

Staff are resilient, nurturing and creative in their work, which the majority of children respond well to. Children said they knew who they would talk to about any issues they had and were confident staff would respond by trying to make things better for them.

All children make progress while at the home, including with their mental health, educational attainment and emotional well-being. Staff document this well in quarterly summaries that track improvements made from the point of admission. Some children's progress is remarkable, and greater than was expected when they were first placed.

The staff's ability to create trust is central to the approach taken and enables children to begin to manage previously intractable difficulties. One parent described how her daughter now 'has faith in people around her and so addresses other things'. They added, 'People can't believe the difference in her! Before, I had no hope that she would get any qualifications, but now I have.'

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding**

Most children have exceptionally good relationships with those who care for them. This reduces their anxieties and helps them to meet challenges. Anxieties, such as those created by transitions or visiting the dentist, are much easier to manage as a result. One parent said that her daughter 'did not bat an eyelid' when there was an urgent change of plan, 'as she is so happy with the staff'.

The manager and staff have worked extremely hard to keep children safe and maintain placements, even when the home can no longer meet a child's needs. There is an exceptional level of commitment to children to help them achieve and to take good memories with them when they leave.

The manager carries out impact risk assessments that comprehensively address potential difficulties and include the views of current residents and of staff. The high standard of the assessment ensures that when children arrive, appropriate strategies are in place that maintain everyone's safety.

Staff spoken with have a good understanding of their responsibilities should they become aware of a safeguarding concern, but knowledge of the role of the designated officer of the local authority was vague. The local authority's designated officer herself said she 'found the home easy to work with; they seek advice and are eager to follow it up'.

Staff carefully record incidents, such as physical interventions, and the manager's monitoring always includes getting the views of children and staff so that practice can be adjusted when necessary. These views are promptly translated into behaviour support plans.

Staff work exceptionally well with parents. One parent spoke of how low her trust in residential placements had become prior to her child coming to this home. Excellent relationships with staff, particularly the manager, had changed this. Collaboration between the staff team and the child's parent said this, 'helps to puzzle things out' and so minimise the child's risky behaviour and improve her experiences.

## **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager has a clear vision for the home and ensures a high standard of individualised care for children. Staff take a lead from her and see her as someone to learn from.

Supervision, both formal and informal, is frequent and meets the needs of staff extremely well. However, records do not show that issues of equality, diversity and tolerance are regularly discussed. These are matters that are rarely referred to in any paperwork.

The manager has successfully addressed the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. Considerable progress has been made to ensure that staff obtain the relevant qualification within regulatory timescales, although this has not been met in every case.

Case files and the quality of recording are admirable; placement plans, risk assessments and behaviour support plans are especially comprehensive. However, there are some inaccuracies, such as wrong dates, and oversights including, in one instance, missing consent for first aid in a request form.

The manager and staff have forged good links with professionals and community organisations, particularly those running activities and clubs that the children attend. Staff carefully select these to make sure they meet the specific interests and needs of individual children.

The manager has thought carefully about how to meaningfully engage children in making decisions about the running of the home. The principle collective means for this is through residents' meetings. Minutes of these meetings show that staff have responded positively to requests children have made. Keywork session records include actions arising from conversations with children, and staff later note when they have been carried out.

## 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:** 1236387

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** The Priory Group

**Registered provider address:** Priory Education Services Limited, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

**Responsible individual:** Robert Page

**Registered manager:** Hannah Bolton

## Inspector

Chris Peel, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
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