

1249259

Registered provider: The Priory Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home which is operated by a large independent company. It is registered to accommodate up to four children who have learning disabilities and focuses on caring for children who have complex needs that may include autism spectrum disorders. The previous registered manager left the organisation at the end of May 2018. The acting manager is currently going through the process of being registered with Ofsted.

The home is located on the provider's school campus. The current residents attend the school.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 November 2018

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

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

Date of last inspection: 26 March 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/11/2017	Full	Outstanding

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
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff—</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	14/12/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(e))</p>	14/12/2018
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child— is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry). (Regulation 40 (4)(d)(i)(ii))</p>	14/12/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for leading a team which provides high quality care for all children living in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4) In particular, managers should continuously monitor staff working hours to ensure that they are not working excessive hours and that there is consistency in how staff work with children.
- The registered person must ensure that there is a workforce plan in place. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.8) In particular, ensure that there are agreed timescales for the induction of staff covering shifts in the home.
- Records of restraint must be kept and enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) In particular, ensure that the analysis of behaviours requiring restraint is shared with staff to help them identify triggers.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The atmosphere in the home is positive and this has a beneficial impact on the care being provided to the children. Relationships with staff are positive; children were seen to have fun and staff were aware when they required additional support.

There has been higher than expected turnover of staff and some reliance on education staff in recent months to cover shifts. This has resulted in a more task-focused approach to care. The focus on individual targets has not been consistently implemented. When education staff fill extra shifts, they don't receive an induction into the home to ensure that they are aware of the child's support needs and routines in the home environment. This has, at times, led to some heightened behaviours in children. It was evident, however, that the more experienced staff know the children very well and continue to work on achieving children's individual targets.

Children have made considerable progress from their starting points. Some children who previously couldn't vocalise are now able to do so. Other children are now able to take themselves away from situations they find challenging. Staff talked positively about the impact they have as a staff team on ensuring that children have positive outcomes. Although this has been challenging at times, staff learn together and develop as a result.

The staff and managers ensure that children enjoy a range of experiences which enhance their emotional and physical development and wider well-being. The views of children are at the forefront of all decisions made. Children are given choice as part of the shift planning. One parent stated, 'He [her son] loves the choices he has, as it gives him a level of independence he hasn't had before.'

Children are encouraged and supported to develop everyday skills which help them to be as independent as possible. This is very individualised, and the age and starting point for each child is carefully considered. This enables children's self confidence and self-esteem to be further developed.

Since the last inspection, staff have worked to manage one transition into the home and they have had one discharge. The discharge was at the child's request and it was a very positive move enabling the child to be with a more age-appropriate peer group. Impact risk assessments are completed prior to admission, and these clearly take into account all vulnerabilities. These are reviewed during the transition process to ensure that children in placement are safe and compatible.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Children appear comfortable in the staff's presence and will, and do, approach staff when they require help and support. Staff are aware when children may feel anxious and will promptly act to resolve any issues.

There have been some safeguarding concerns which were appropriately referred to the external professionals and others internally investigated. When staff have been asked to provide statements by the manager, these have not always been detailed enough. In one case, all witnesses were not asked about an allegation. In addition, within some statements some leading questions have been asked by staff, which is contrary to the organisation's policies and procedures. There has been a missed opportunity to develop staff skills in safeguarding practice following training. For instance, team meetings are not utilised to look at scenarios and discuss safeguarding concerns or gain further advice.

When allegations have been made and followed by decisions to either move staff to another house or to suspend them, no risk assessments have been put in place or rationale recorded to support the decision made. The policies and processes around safeguarding need to be reviewed to ensure that they are effective.

Ofsted has not been updated when safeguarding investigations have been completed, which is contrary to the notification process. The manager looked at how to resolve this during the inspection.

Children who access the service are not currently assessed as displaying high risk in the areas of self-harm and exploitation. When children are placed, consideration is given to whether they may put themselves at risk by going off site. The necessary protocols are put in place to enable staff to be aware of and manage risks in this area. High staffing levels minimise this risk, and there have not been any such instances since the last inspection.

Staff are consistent in their management of behaviours, and positive behaviour is

consistently promoted and sanctions rarely used. Natural consequences which enable children to begin to understand implications of behaviours and increase a sense of personal responsibility are given priority.

There has been a high use of physical intervention since the last inspection. Incidents following any challenging behaviours are recorded. Analysis of this, to look at trends and patterns, has been carried out by the therapy team. The manager has good awareness of why some behaviours are occurring and has taken steps to reduce them. However, the deeper analysis by the therapy team is not available in the home for the manager to be able to reflect on with the staff.

Behaviour support plans and risk assessments are very detailed to enable staff to be clear on the strategies that need to take place to support the children. These are updated regularly when any incidents have taken place.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been a change to management arrangements in the home since the last inspection. The new manager is very aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and has embraced her new responsibilities. The management team has created good working relationships with other professionals and parents and ensured that staff have been fully involved in the journey of this home. This has resulted in a strong and effective team. Managers are ambitious and are looking to ensure that they achieve high standards. They have high expectations and are beginning to ensure that the staff team does too.

The passion was evident across both managers and staff in wanting the best for the children. They are all committed and do achieve a child-centred approach. Children's views and experiences are at the centre of decisions made.

Staff are clear that the management team is both approachable and supportive. Staff reported that they receive regular good-quality supervision. They feel they are beginning to work well as a team.

Due to the high turnover of staff, some are still learning and developing. The manager is aware of this and continues to assess the staff skills. There are some staff members who are working a high number of hours, and this is something that needs to be closely monitored because of the negative impact their fatigue may have on the quality of care.

The leaders have a clear understanding of children's progress and constantly look at how this is achieved and evidenced. They have an understanding of the plans in place for the children and take effective action when other professionals are not fulfilling their responsibilities.

Monitoring takes place which is evaluative and identifies any areas for improvement. This enables the home to reflect on current practice. Effective action is taken when weaknesses are highlighted.

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: 1249259

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: Hannah Cox

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Emeline Evans, social care inspector

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