

1241785

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and run by an education specialist service provider. It is registered to care for up to 11 children who have autism spectrum disorder and associated difficulties. The home is located within the provider's school campus, which the children currently living at the home attend.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2018.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 July 2019

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers good

Date of last inspection: 19 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
16/07/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/01/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
25/07/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make good progress, helped by the warm and nurturing relationships they enjoy with the committed staff team. Children's views are sought on a variety of subjects and issues, and staff are skilled in understanding each child's communication style, taking time to ensure that their views are understood. Children's plans are written from their point of view and, wherever possible, include children's comments and responses. Parents and social workers are positive about the home and how well children have developed while in placement, often beyond all expectations.

Children benefit from a bespoke introduction when moving into the home. Staff work well with parents to ease their anxiety, supporting children to feel more relaxed about the move. A parent was highly complimentary of the support staff have given her and her daughter, who is moving on to an adult placement. This included good liaison and information sharing with the home she is moving into, and emotional support for her daughter through this time of significant anxiety and upheaval.

Children all attend the on-site school. Close liaison, including morning and afternoon handovers between home and school staff, ensures there is consistency in the approach to care across all settings. Children engage in a range of socially and emotionally stimulating activities, both within the home and school grounds and in the community. The variety of outdoor play equipment is limited, given the wide range of interests and activities children enjoy. Children meet up with friends from school, and one child was feeling particularly excited to be having a birthday party with his friends during the inspection.

Children are supported to lead healthy lifestyles and understand what this means for them. Food is freshly made and children are encouraged to try new foods to vary their diets. Medication is safely stored and staff are trained in administering rescue medication as needed. Staff have appropriately sought specialist advice about the protocol they should follow should a child have a seizure, particularly in relation to when to contact paramedics. However, more assertive steps should have been taken to escalate this request when the advice was not forthcoming for several months.

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

Children are confident in their environment and were seen to approach staff when they wanted help or interactions of any kind. Staff have an excellent understanding of children's individual needs and respond effectively to these. Staff know each child's specific vulnerabilities, and do what they can to keep them safe. Staff talk confidently of their responsibility in safeguarding children and are aware of how to respond to any child protection concerns. Staff supervision records would be stronger if they routinely

evidenced the consideration of any safeguarding issues.

Responses to safeguarding concerns are strong. Joint working with the designated officer in the local authority and other key professionals is positive. Records of actions taken and responses to safeguarding concerns are clear and easy to navigate, due to comprehensive chronologies for each investigation. Managers demonstrate a commitment to improve safeguarding practice and to action any suggestions about how to improve their practice. This includes acknowledging a parental complaint should have been treated as a safeguarding concern.

Staff are acutely aware of the potential risks involved with children having a number of different carers. Staff are confident in whistleblowing procedures and said they would raise any concerns they became aware of. Children who are able to will shout out to staff if they feel there is a stranger in the home, for example the inspector. It is extremely positive that children have not become desensitised to new adults in their home.

Staff understand that all children's actions and behaviour are forms of communication. They strive to understand what the child is communicating and, in times of continued distress, consider everything that could be causing the child anxiety. Staff are confident in their interactions with children, including those children who have seriously injured others. Children's plans are explicitly clear on how to respond to the different behaviours they display. Observations showed staff reading subtle cues and redirecting children who were becoming heightened. Physical intervention is rarely used, with staff relying on their relationships with children to redirect and de-escalate when needed.

Children are protected from avoidable risk through regular checks of the home and grounds, and any damage is repaired swiftly. Safer recruitment processes are followed, and visitors are accompanied in the grounds of the school. Children engage in fire drills and, with staff support, know how to respond in an emergency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Staff are happy in their roles and said they feel well supported by the management team. They said they can approach managers with any ideas or concerns about the children, and that they will be listened to and action taken. Staff said they have the training they require to meet the needs of the children they care for and that they find their roles rewarding, enjoying seeing children develop and learn new skills.

Managers regularly review children's records and files. They have a strong understanding of children's progress and the goals and targets they are currently working on. However, practice in relation to children's plans is not always consistent. This is due to a number of plans and records duplicating information. Some plans are updated, but not all, leading to potential confusion for staff when caring for children. For example, one child's culture and identity were not included in their care plan but were referred to elsewhere. This potentially reduces the ability of staff to be fully aware of all the information they

require to understand children's needs.

The registered manager is diligent in ensuring that the home functions well, that children's needs are met, and that the home runs in line with regulations and supporting guidance. She is supported by an extremely capable deputy manager who is eager to continually develop her skills and knowledge. The members of the management team are clear about the strengths and weaknesses within the home and reflect on the improvements that are required to the fabric of the building. They demonstrate a commitment to continually improve the experiences of children living in the home. Staff are encouraged to be involved in developing the service, through supervision and team meetings.

The home is currently relying on bank staff and school staff to cover gaps in the rota. However, this is having little impact on the children, as they know the staff who are caring for them. Staff recruitment is ongoing. The home is not fully occupied. The manager recognises the need to have enough suitably trained staff in place prior to admitting any new children to the home.

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(d))</p>	30/08/2019
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(2)(h))</p>	30/08/2019

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities both inside and outside of the home (where appropriate) and are encouraged to participate in those activities. Staff should support children to take part in school trips, out of school and other clubs, volunteering and leisure activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- 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)

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: 1241785

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Registered provider address: Fifth Floor, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Hannah Cox

Registered manager: Lorraine Sadler

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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