

1271467

Assurance visit

Information about this children's home

This home provides care for up to three young people who have a learning disability. The home is operated by a national, private organisation.

The manager for this home registered with Ofsted on 5 May 2020.

A monitoring visit was completed on 4 August 2020. Statutory requirements were set at this inspection.

Visit dates: 21 to 22 September 2020

Previous inspection date: 5 November 2018

Previous inspection judgement: Declined in effectiveness

Information about this visit

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), Ofsted suspended all routine inspections in March 2020. As part of a phased return to routine inspection, we are undertaking assurance visits to children's social care services that are inspected under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF).

At these visits, inspectors evaluate the extent to which:

- children are well cared for
- children are safe
- leaders and managers are exercising strong leadership.

This visit was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000, following the published guidance for assurance visits.

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills is leading Ofsted's work into how England's social care system has delivered child-centred practice and care within the context of the restrictions placed on society during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Findings from the visit

We did not identify any serious or widespread concerns in relation to the care or protection of children at this assurance visit.

The care of children

All three children present as happy, settled and confident in their home. They have good, caring relationships with the manager and staff members, who they can confide in. The home environment continues to be comfortable, well-decorated and homely.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, while managing associated risks due to restrictions in place as a result of government guidelines, the team was creative and responsive to children's need to see their families. One parent explained how the staff bought a barbeque and food for their family so that they could meet with their child in the home's garden and eat together. During the visit, the team took the other children out to enable this meeting to happen safely.

All three children attend the organisation's school, and children are getting used to being back in regular routines and after-school clubs. One child in particular has shown good progress in recent weeks, following an incentivised plan, and the challenge is now for the home to help him maintain this progress.

A parent spoken with praised the home and the support it gives to them and their child. Social workers are satisfied with the care given to the children. They, alongside parents, are sent a 'good news' letter regularly, but do not receive regular written reports about progress made in relation to the children's care plan aims.

The safety of children

Children said they feel safe and have trusted staff members with whom they feel confident to talk. Staff encourage regular routines and family-type meals together, which helps the children feel secure. The pandemic affected the home significantly, and staff's utmost concern was to keep the children safe and ensure that the hygiene guidelines were followed. Now the manager is able to focus on supporting the children to make progress.

Safeguarding incidents have occurred, and allegations have been made. Safeguarding processes have not always been followed properly or in a timely manner. There have been no serious concerns for children identified following multi-agency discussions and intervention. However, senior leaders in the organisation have acted to ensure that human and system errors are independently investigated in order to assure themselves that any lessons that can be learned are implemented.

Children know the procedure for making a complaint, and such matters raised are addressed by the manager.

Leaders and managers

Since the monitoring visit in August, placement plans and guidance for staff have improved in parts. However, clarity about specific goals for children, including about how to help them achieve these goals, remains a significant area for development. Incidents of concern have occurred for one child that, at times, have had an emotional impact on other children in the home. It is vital that guidance for staff, debriefs for children and staff, and incident evaluation and review are effective and focused. Leaders and managers acknowledge these issues and are working towards improving practice in these specific areas. New systems have been recently put into place, but these are in their infancy.

Leadership and management monitoring did not highlight missing information in supervision documents looked at during the inspection. However, monthly independent monitoring reports on the home are carried out to a good standard and assist the manager with reviewing quality of care. The manager also completes six-monthly reports, although there is limited feedback from children in these reports.

Some of the requirements made at the previous interim inspection in 2018 are no longer applicable and were not raised as concerns during this assurance visit.

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>understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and</p> <p>are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii))</p>	12/10/2020

<p>In particular, ensure that debriefs for children and staff are timely and that physical intervention records are organised so that they contain sufficient information to enable robust evaluation and review.</p>	
<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—</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and deliver the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose;</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—</p> <p>feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(f)(g)(ii)(h))</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ensure that placement plans are concise, have the necessary detail and include children's specific, measurable goals. ■ Ensure that guidance and instruction to staff about caring for young people are clear and reviewed. ■ Ensure that the manager's evaluation, monitoring and review of incidents are sufficiently robust and inform care planning. ■ Ensure that supervision and performance review of staff are thorough and take place at sufficient intervals. 	<p>12/10/2020</p>

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Consider providing regular written reports of progress to parents and social workers. | |
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Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1271467

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Nancy O'Regan

Registered manager: Samantha Treleaven

Inspectors

Sarah Canto, Social Care Inspector

Carys Flain, Social Care Inspector

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