

1249259

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 privately owned by a large organisation. It is registered to accommodate up to six children with learning disabilities. The statement of purpose states that the home accommodates children with a diagnosis of moderate to severe autism spectrum disorder, often with difficult and challenging behaviour.

The home has been without a registered manager since May 2021.

Due to COVID-19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 7 September 2020 to carry out an assurance visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 July 2021

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**

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

Date of last inspection: 24 July 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/07/2019	Full	Outstanding
06/11/2018	Full	Good
26/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/11/2017	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children make progress through their positive relationships with the staff, who understand the children's individual needs. Staff create a homely atmosphere by providing thoughtful individual care and by personalising the environment to the children's needs. A parent said she trusts the staff 'fully' to support her son in the home.

Children's views are sought and acted upon in a variety of ways, including during one-to-one time with staff, who know the children well. Children also use house meetings to consider what activities they would like to try, make menu choices, and to share their success stories from the week. Activities and cultural experiences are particularly well planned, and photographs show children thoroughly enjoy them. Children are engaged in a variety of activities to look at other cultures and celebrate their own identity. Staff have been creative in devising activities for children in order to make learning fun. Themes have included an Egyptian night, treasure hunts and dressing up. They celebrated Autism Awareness Week through arts and crafts, and explore the cultures of children and staff in the home. Photographs show children dressing up as characters for World Book Day, making drums and learning about the animals of Ghana.

Strong joint working with the on-site school supports a consistent experience of care for children across the home and school settings. Children's plans and targets are shared across the settings, with staff encouraging children to develop their independence skills. One child was really keen to help staff with the grocery shop, listing the food that they needed. Children are also encouraged to form friendships with others from school through 'playdates', which the children say they enjoy.

Children are supported to lead healthy lifestyles, such as by going for walks, using the trampoline, and trying a more varied diet. Close liaison with medical professionals, including child and adolescent mental health services, means children's physical and emotional well-being needs are fully met.

Children's healthcare plans are detailed. However, in one instance, information relating to how a child became significantly unwell while at their family home is not included in any plans or records. Additionally, a subsequent change of medication is not recorded across plans. Systems for storing and administering medication are generally sound. However, medication provided by a child's family is not always clearly identified in their blister packs. This means that staff cannot assure themselves that the medication is as described on the pharmacy labelled box. Additionally, staff were subject to distractions when auditing medication, which increases the chance that errors will occur.

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

Children's actions and demeanours show that they are confident in their home. They are comfortable with the staff, approaching them for play, support or when they are worried or upset. Staff are acutely aware of each child's vulnerabilities and do all they can to keep children safe from avoidable risk. Children are afforded the opportunity to take reasonable risks in line with their age and abilities in order to explore and try new things.

Staff understand their responsibilities to protect children, and their responses to safeguarding concerns are swift. Records of actions taken with regard to safeguarding concerns show sound joint working with partner agencies to ensure the safety of children.

Staff recognise that children's behaviour is a communication. They confidently help children when they are upset or distressed, recognising that each child will display their feelings in different ways. Staff are skilled in recognising when a child is becoming upset or anxious and they use diversions to prevent unnecessary upset.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort if this is necessary to prevent harm. The managers' post-incident reflections with staff provide constructive challenge to help staff consider how their approach may have influenced events and how they might support children to avoid future incidents. Children are supported to reflect on how they manage their worries. Individual sessions are relevant to the child's needs and paced at the right level for their understanding.

Children are protected from avoidable risk through regular reviews of the condition of the home and the testing of fire-safety equipment. Safe recruitment practice ensures that the staff who work in the home are suitably experienced and of suitable character.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home has been without a registered manager since the end of May 2021. The deputy manager is running the home with the support of the responsible individual and managers of other homes in the group. The organisation is actively recruiting to appoint a suitable person. Staff are complimentary of the deputy manager, saying they can approach him at any time. Staff benefit from supervision from the management and senior team that provides them with support and direction. The format of supervision ensures that safeguarding is a key topic.

Training has continued throughout national and local lockdowns. Staff report that they feel that they have the skills and training required to meet the needs of the children. They also have support from the school's therapy team, who provide specific training for children's diagnosed conditions.

Managers regularly review children's plans but have failed to ensure that plans contain all the essential information regarding a medical episode and change of medication for one child. Effective systems track children's progress in meeting the targets identified in their relevant health and care plans. Children's care plans are

regularly reviewed to make sure all of their individual targets remain achievable and realistic.

Reports by the independent visitor, in conjunction with the managers and responsible individual monitoring of the quality of care, ensure that practice in the home is reviewed and, where necessary, adapted. The development plan identifies key areas for the improvement of the physical environment and the care children receive.

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 health and well-being standard is that—</p> <p>the health and well-being needs of children are met;</p> <p>children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and</p> <p>children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that staff help each child to—</p> <p>understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10 (1)(a)(b)(c) (2)(a)(ii)(iv))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that healthcare plans are accurate and up to date.</p>	27 August 2021
<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>	27 August 2021

helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.

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)(b) (2)(h))

Recommendations

- The registered person must ensure that prescribed medicines are only administered to the individual for whom they are prescribed and that medicines are administered in line with a medically approved protocol. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: Priory Education Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Hannah Cox

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, Social Care Inspector

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