

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	23/11/2016
Unique reference number	1234621
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Priory Education Services Limited
Registered provider address	Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Patricia Gregory
Registered manager	Deborah Jones
Inspector	Rosie Davie

Inspection date	23/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

1234621

Summary of findings

The children's home's provision is good because:

- The children receive individualised care. They recognise that they are receiving help from the staff.
- A therapist employed by a partner organisation visits the home to meet with the children individually.
- Education provided on site is delivered creatively and in a way that captures each child's interests. The result is that the children engage in education and accept opportunities for learning.
- The children are busy and involved in activities to promote good physical and emotional well-being.
- The staff work hard to manage challenging behaviour. There is a newly introduced system for rewarding good behaviour, which the children respond well to.
- Feedback from placing social workers is positive. They recognise the difference that living in the home is making.
- The children rarely go missing from the home. The staff safeguard the children well because they have good systems to know where the children are.
- The staff go above and beyond to help the children to maintain relationships with their family. As a result, feedback from parents is positive because they feel included in their child's care.
- The home offers comfortable accommodation, which is of a high standard.
- The shortfalls identified in this inspection relate to aspects of management and leadership. On one occasion, a child was admitted in an emergency without adequate planning. There are also shortfalls in the content of the statement of purpose, the quality of staff supervision and the skill and experience of some of the staff group.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard, with particular regard to emergency admissions, the registered person must: (1)(b) ensure that each child has a positive experience of arriving at the home.	31/01/2017
The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5))	31/01/2017
The registered person must ensure that all staff receive effective practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	31/01/2017
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with particular regard to staffing, the registered person must: (2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.	31/01/2017

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a group run by a national organisation. The home provides care and support for up to five children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home specialises in offering care and support to children who display sexually harmful behaviours. Education is provided on site and a therapist visits the home.

The home was registered on 19 July 2016, so there have been no previous inspections.

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Registered in July 2016, this is the home's first inspection. The home's aim is to support children known to display sexually harmful behaviours. Placement plans and objectives are bespoke and individualised. Overall, children have good experiences and receive the help that they need. The staff team draws upon advice and guidance from a therapist, who is employed by a partner agency. The therapist comes to the home to meet each child and to discuss with the staff any emerging themes in behaviour. This approach helps the staff, and particularly those who are new to working with children who harm, to understand about the intense support that each child requires. The result is that in a short time the children feel supported. One child said, 'All of us have done something to be here. The staff, they want the best and they help us to think about our future and how to be safe people.' A converted area adjacent to the house provides the space for a classroom. With the direct support from the residential staff, all of the children attend every day. Some children have previously disengaged from traditional school arrangements, which means that their attendance and engagement with this curriculum is a significant achievement. The principal teacher overseeing education said, 'We adapt the children's education plans to ensure that we encourage learning in a way that captures each child's interests.' Alongside building numeracy and literacy skills, the children take part in a range of creative educational experiences, including car mechanics, and recording music in a local studio. This makes learning fun and creative. One child said, 'I have been out of school for a long time because I could not get on in a classroom with lots of other children. Here I am up every day and getting on with my learning. I cannot believe it, and I feel proud of myself.' In addition to the routine of school, the children are encouraged to take part in a broad range of activities in the home and in the local community, such as visits to local attractions, sport and leisure facilities. This helps the children to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle. Families and those who are significant to them are supported and encouraged to visit the home regularly. The staff go above and beyond to ensure that each child has the contact as described in their plans and support, and they encourage parents to remain actively involved with their child. One parent said, 'They are marvellous. I really like how they are helping us.' This thoughtful approach helps the children, particularly those who are living far from home, to feel valued and helps them to sustain significant attachments when this is possible.	

The staff are keen to involve the children in the running of the home. A housekeeper helps to ensure that meals are varied, nutritious and reflect a healthy diet. Bedrooms are personalised and offer comfortable en suite accommodation, which means that the reasons for children to come out of their bedrooms during the night are reduced. Bedroom door alarms help to alert staff to any unplanned activity which may occur after the children have gone to bed. This system helps to safeguard everyone.

The communal areas in the home offer excellent opportunities for the children to relax or have their family to visit. There is a large, enclosed garden easily accessed from the kitchen, which means that it is somewhere safe for the children to run around or play games. This layout also helps staff during the day when managing the impact of the group dynamic.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The children say that they feel safe living in this home. They say that staff are fair and that they treat them with respect. Praise and reward are at the heart of the approach encouraged by the registered manager to recognise when each child is behaving well. The staff record positive comments and feedback for each child. This demonstrates that the adults have noticed when the children make an effort to change or modify their behaviours in and around the home. A token system enables each child to see when they are achieving. They receive financial rewards and have permission to purchase things that they attach value to, such as toys. This newly introduced approach is helping to reduce incidents in the home. The staff do deal with the physical and verbal challenge from the children. Records show that some staff have the skill and experience to de-escalate scenarios. The staff who have had the training do use physical intervention, which means that they use the approach safely. When physical intervention is used, the contact with the children tends to be brief. Often, discussion with the child and the member of staff follows the incident, which encourages children to reflect on the impact of their behaviour. One child said, 'I have talked to staff about how they can help me when I get really angry, and they are doing what we have agreed.' Missing incidents are the exception. During the one recorded incident, two children left the grounds at the same time by climbing the garden fence. They were gone	

for approximately ten minutes. A quick and expedient response from the staff resulted in their swift return. One child said, 'Yes when I tried to go missing the staff called the police straight away and I was brought back. I think I am not going to do that again.' The introduction of hand-held radios helps the staff to know where every child is, which reduces the likelihood of serious incidents arising. Furthermore, updated and amended risk assessments help all of the staff to remain aware of the ongoing risks posed by each individual.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The registered manager had a fundamental role in the setting up and registration of this service. She is suitably qualified, has prior experience of being a registered manager and has previously worked with vulnerable children. For the majority of the children coming to this home, the admission process is planned and carefully assessed. For example, for one child, prior to admission, the registered and deputy managers went first to meet with him in his own home. Another child came to look around with his parent during this inspection. These are examples of good practice and reflect the information about the admission process as described in the statement of purpose. However, since registration, there has been a change in responsible individual. This has resulted in some misunderstanding between the responsible individual and the registered manager about the significance of the admission process for every child. This is because one child was admitted in an emergency late in the evening when there was no senior member of staff physically present. Furthermore, the staff had been given minimal information about the child, which meant that the risk and impact risk assessments were not completed until after his arrival. The staff worked with the child to provide the best for him and the other children during his placement. On this occasion, there were no incidents of lasting harm in the home, but this shortfall in care planning resulted in significant disruption. The outcome for this child was that he was moved, albeit in a planned way, to another placement a few weeks later. Currently, 40% of staff have the required level 3 diploma, and the remaining 60% have been enrolled to embark on the qualification. For those staff who joined before the home opened, the induction process is clear and helps them to understand the work to a certain extent. For example, before working directly with the children, staff attend a three-day course in managing sexually harmful behaviours. Staff receive ongoing support and formal supervision, and this is shared between the deputy and registered managers. However, the deputy manager has minimal experience of supervising staff in the context of working with	

children who harm. In recent months, the registered manager has been on shift, helping staff to deal with some of the challenges from the children. The result is that the quality of ongoing formal supervision is compromised. This means that staff do not receive the depth of professional supervision required to help them to understand and process the emotional impact of working with children who challenge and harm. Since the home has opened, three staff have left, and should this shortfall in approach to ensuring that all staff receive robust support from individuals with the right experience continue, this turnover in staff could escalate.

The statement of purpose states that the home has waking night staff. This is not correct. The home does not have waking night staff. This means that this is a clear shortfall in the description of how the home is conducted.

The location risk assessment provides useful and pertinent information about the home and its position in the community. The document also makes reference to the pond, which is situated behind the eight-foot fence in the back garden. This information, alongside access to grab bags, including mobile phones and torches, helps staff to mitigate the potential risk of the children coming to harm should they attempt to leave the property by climbing this particular fence.

The registered manager is seeking to build good relationships within the local community and with relevant agencies. The children are registered with a local doctor, and the police are kept informed about the profile of the children coming into the home. This means that the home is outward-facing, which helps to ensure that children have all of their needs met. One placing social worker said, 'Communication is good and in a short time our child is making progress.'

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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