

1249715

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned service that can accommodate up to seven children aged eight to 18. It can provide care and accommodation for children who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

There has been no registered manager since July 2017.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 September 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2017	Full	Good
04/07/2017	Full	Inadequate

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
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— - the name of the child; - details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; - the date, time and location of the use of the measure; - a description of the measure and its duration; - details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; - the name of the person who used the measure ('the user'), and of any other person present when the measure was used; - the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)) In particular, ensure that all sanctions given by staff are recorded with the child's name, the duration of the sanction and its effectiveness.	30/10/2018
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality of care review') at least once every six months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(c)) In particular, develop systems to enable improved oversight and analysis of incidents and to identify related learning opportunities.	30/10/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

This judgment arises because the leadership and management judgment is inadequate, so this can be no higher than requires improvement. However, children are increasingly settled in the home and are making good progress in some important areas of their lives.

Children previously placed at the home experienced disruption due to changes of managers and poor placement matching. Senior leaders and managers have responded, the home has changed direction and children now enjoy a more positive environment. Children have made good progress across many aspects of their lives in a short period of time.

The children receive a good standard of care that is focused on their well-being and safety. They say that they are happy at the home and they have a good level of involvement in their day-to-day care. Realistic individualised goals are set and reviewed jointly with the children. This enables the staff and the children to focus on the areas of support that children need, such as in improving their education attendance, learning a new social skill or getting a good night's sleep.

The staff proactively encourage children to attend education and they achieve very high levels of attendance. For those children who were previously poor or non-school attendees this is an excellent achievement. The staff support the children with their education, including chatting with them about their day and celebrating educational achievements, large or small. Good relationships are maintained with a range of professionals, including teachers, to ensure consistency of care and effective implementation of strategies.

Children receive regular planned key-working sessions in addition to one-to-one time if they are upset, when things have gone wrong or when they have something important to say. Outcomes are carefully followed up with actions, showing children that what they feel and think is important to staff.

Relationships between children and staff are a strength, and the ability of staff to care for children in an unbiased and non-discriminatory way means that children can integrate into the local and wider community successfully.

The much-improved placement decision-making process has resulted in appropriate placements. Effective, thoughtful planning has resulted in good moving-in experiences for the children who are currently placed.

The children benefit from living in a home that is furnished and decorated to a high standard.

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

The children are protected by a staff team which has a good understanding and knowledge of safeguarding practices. The staff receive regular training on safeguarding, so that they are kept up to date with changing legislation and the management of risks. The training provided covers a wide range of appropriate safeguarding areas.

The response to, and recording of, incidents, including allegations made by children, is increasingly detailed and effective. Records demonstrate that the staff approach difficult conversations with children with care and sensitivity. In response to an incident in November 2017, staff did not take all necessary steps, such as contacting other professionals quickly enough; however, the practice has improved since this time.

Positive behaviour is promoted, with staff using effective de-escalation techniques and strategies that are specific to the needs of each child. This lessens the use of physical intervention. When required, physical intervention is used in accordance with legislation and only to protect the child. There are clear protocols for the staff to follow if a child goes missing. Individual child records inform the staff how to respond to any missing event. Incidents of children going missing and physical interventions are currently very low. Sanctions are applied where this is believed to be necessary and beneficial. These sanctions are fair and proportionate. However, records lack all the detail required and need to be further improved.

Safeguarding logs, which record all incidents, including those reported to Ofsted, are not always clear enough in terms of the action that has been taken and the outcome. Although the manager has made improvements in response to incidents, the quality of these records reduces the ability of the manager to take an overview of the steps taken by the staff, and to ensure that related learning is properly embedded. Managers acknowledge that the overview of incidents and learning could be improved and are in the process of introducing an incident analysis process.

Risk assessments are regularly updated, taking into account changing information. Individual risk assessments address any known vulnerabilities for each child effectively and set out what action should be taken to address the risk.

The staff undertake regular health and safety checks. This ensures that the home is as safe as possible for the children and staff. Recruitment procedures are robust and meet the required standard. This means that the children are cared for by adults who have been checked and deemed to be safe to care for them.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

This judgement arises because, although there is a new manager in post, she is not yet registered; therefore, the service has not had a registered manager for more than 26 weeks. The new manager's application to register is in progress. She has suitable

experience and qualifications to fulfil her role and knows the home well. She has a very good understanding of the children's needs, with a clear focus on developing a stable staff team and ensuring that the referral and matching process is detailed and effective.

The manager has had a positive impact on the service. She has the skills to lead and develop the service, supported by senior managers and leaders. Together, they have already made improvements and continue to review all aspects of the home's practice.

The home is currently recruiting staff in line with the increasing numbers of children. The manager is committed to ensuring that there is a stable staff team which can offer the best care to the children and their families before increasing the numbers of admissions. This decision is supported by senior leaders in the organisation.

The manager provides a supportive environment for staff through regular and effective supervision and daily informal discussions. The induction and training programme also supports the staff to fulfil their roles and responsibilities.

Monitoring of the service is an area the manager is improving. She is developing systems that include improved auditing and analysis of incidents. The manager has completed a development plan to improve the experiences of children, alongside a workforce plan to ensure stability of staffing.

The quality of professional relationships has been hindered by poor responses from some partner agencies. The manager is supported by leaders to actively challenge practice when responses from other services are too slow or do not meet the needs of children. She acts as a good parent would in challenging decisions and plans where this is in the children's best interests.

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: 1249715

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Robert Page

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspector

Liz Driver, 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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