

1263270

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is a part of a large national organisation. The home is registered to care for up to five children.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 August 2018

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

inadequate

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: 9 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

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Three compliance notices were served following the last inspection..

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2018	Full	Inadequate
20/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard (1) The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— (a) understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; (b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to (ii) protect and promote each child's welfare; (iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; (ix) make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans, which give the child an appropriate degree of freedom and choice. (3) The conditions are— (c) that the care is delivered by a person who - (i) has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care; and (ii) is under the supervision of a person who is appropriately skilled and qualified to supervise that care. In particular, careful and considered assessment and decision-making must take place in respect of the mix and compatibility of the group. Due regard must be given to the needs and vulnerabilities of existing children and to the impact that a new child may have on them. In addition, children should be provided with equipment that they require to support them in their day-to-day lives. Care delivered to children should be consistent and in line with their individual plans.	30/09/2018
12: The protection of children standard (1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	30/09/2018

(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm; (e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly. In particular, ensure that any concerns in respect of children are managed swiftly and effectively and in line with policy and procedure.	
13: The leadership and management standard (1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to their full potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (d) ensure the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; (e) ensure the home's workforce provides continuity of care for each child; (f) 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; (g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and actin on— (i) research and developments in relations to the ways in which the needs of the children are best met; and (ii) feedback on the experiences of children, including	30/09/2018

complaints received; and (h) the use of monitoring and review systems that make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. In particular, management oversight should be robust and practice concerns identified and fully understood. Managers should promote a reflective ethos, seeking to learn lessons from serious incidents. In addition, managers should ensure that they are in day-to-day control of the home so that they are fully accountable for decisions made that impact on the children.	
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Inspection judgements

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

Some of the children are not receiving consistently good care. For example, there has been a significant delay in obtaining basic specialist equipment to help one child with her with daily living needs. The lack of action continues to impact on the child's progress and her dignity.

Communication tools required for one child are not used by all the staff. This prevents consistent working practices and delivers mixed messages to the child. The child's need for structure and for an understanding of what their day holds is not provided for. This can lead to emotional distress.

Specialist help for one child has been secured very recently. This support aims to inform and deliver appropriate care. This provision was not accessed in a timely way. Some of the staff are not implementing the techniques and strategies that are needed; this is obstructing progress. It is too soon to measure the impact of this support.

Observations undertaken by inspectors demonstrated that there were some elements of good practice. For example, a member of staff was observed working with a child with warmth and kindness. This effectively diverted the child away from a negative situation.

Children benefit from a good range of activities and social interaction in the community. Activities have increased over the summer holidays. Children are involved in making plans and they are looking forward to some fun days out.

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

improvement to be good

Some staff cannot demonstrate that they can identify and act on safeguarding concerns. There has been one incident when a child complained that they did not feel safe. The member of staff failed to report this to the manager. This resulted in a delay of five days before the manager become aware and responded.

Incidents of physical intervention are common. Inspectors noted incidents that raised concerns. For example, one child was held on their bed in a restrictive and intrusive hold. The record failed to demonstrate that this level of force was required. Worryingly, the staff member involved in the hold also undertook a de-brief session with the child. The absence of management oversight has obstructed challenge and prevented learning from this incident.

Positive behaviour is not consistently promoted. De-escalation techniques are not always effective; staff do not apply these consistently. There are plans to ensure that all staff receive training to manage challenging behaviour appropriately.

The introduction of a system to scrutinise concerning behaviours for one child has led to some reflection and useful discussions. This has motivated staff to start to try to understand triggers and patterns of behaviour and to reduce the risks for the child.

The arrangements in place to ensure the safekeeping and administration of medication have improved. The manager has sought external support and has plans in place to further simplify the processes and make further improvements.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

There has been no registered manager for over 26 weeks. The current manager is the third within this period. A permanent manager has been identified. They are yet to start working for this organisation.

Some staff are being re-deployed to another home in the organisation. In addition, newly appointed staff are completing induction work in this home before moving to take up a position in another home. This wider organisational decision-making has a negative impact on the care children receive.

Decision-making and governance structures within the wider organisation are unclear. Lines of accountability are blurred. Communication at senior leadership level is poor. Practice concerns in respect of one member of staff moving between services had not be shared. This means that those concerns are not understood, monitored or addressed.

The strengths and weakness of this service are not fully understood by leaders. There is no effective mechanism to monitor the quality of care. When shortfalls and weaknesses have been identified, action has been too slow or absent. Learning from practice is not consistently being used to improve the experiences for children.

Currently, children have too many plans, which leads to confusion. Some progress has been made in respect of the recording of incidents and the quality of individual care plans. These improvements are yet to be embedded and tested in practice.

The manager demonstrates drive and enthusiasm. During this inspection, her engagement in the process and the plans she has in place have offered inspectors some assurance that performance will continue to improve. The manager has accessed external support to help her make the necessary changes. Engagement with the organisational quality team is starting to bring about positive changes.

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: 1263270

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: Clive Coombs

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspectors

Tracey Ledder, social care inspector
Dianne Partridge, social care HMI

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