

2592242

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 was registered on 18 September 2020. The manager also registered with Ofsted at the same time.

This home is part of a large national organisation. It provides care for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural needs.

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 11 March 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on our website.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 August 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	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	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: Not previously inspected

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Recent inspection history

Not previously inspected

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Currently, there are three children living in this home and they have all lived here since it was registered. They have positive experiences and make good progress in many aspects of their lives. Children have safe and trusting relationships with staff, which helps them to feel secure and settled. During the inspection, all the children expressed positive emotions about the home. They said: 'I love it here.'

Staff support children to achieve educationally and provide social opportunities to help them reach their potential. Children have aspirations based on the skills and hobbies that they have developed. For example, one child wants to own their own horse yard when they are older.

Children are making progress in different ways. Since coming to live in the home, risks to them have reduced. For example, children's incidents of going missing, and other serious incidents, have reduced and one child's medication has decreased due to the care and support given by staff. Additionally, children's school attendance used to be sporadic and is now full time.

As the COVID-19 restrictions have lessened, the children have started to enjoy more of a variety of activities, such as riding, climbing and days out during the holidays. Throughout the pandemic, children have enjoyed looking after their pets which have given them much enjoyment. Memorabilia and photographs are displayed around the home. However, they are not organised into individual books or records with narrative so that children can look back and remember these experiences.

Most of the time, children enjoy each other's company and have fun together. Children are developing important life skills of managing relationships when difficulties occur. Children are encouraged to get together and talk, for example during dinner-time talks. Their views and wishes are listened to and the manager and staff incorporate these into the running of the home.

The team focuses successfully on helping children build on their family relationships and those with previous carers. This means that these relationships are strengthening their support networks for now and the future. For example, one child spends a large part of her holidays with a former carer. However, this arrangement has not had sufficient oversight of the intricate planning required to prevent misunderstandings or inconsistency of care. Therefore, a recommendation is made that plans are written down and agreed by all involved, to maximise the success of this child-centred arrangement.

Children are encouraged to be in contact with family and friends, but they can only make video calls if the adult caring for them that day has a device that supports this technology.

Social workers and family members were extremely positive about the care given to children and the progress they have made. They are delighted that the children enjoy living here.

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

Staff plan effectively so that children have daily routines and activities to look forward to. This helps them feel safe and secure. Children are also encouraged to contribute to the running of the home and to care for their animals.

Situations are managed well, and staff prevent them from escalating out of control most of the time. If children self-harm, staff know what to do. Incidents are recorded and listed collectively. However, when there are specific concerns, the lack of a timeline for an individual child means that the manager cannot easily identify any patterns.

On two occasions, staff have needed to use physical intervention to keep children safe near to a busy main road next to the home. The location risk assessment needs further review regarding this risk.

When children run away from the home or go missing, staff diligently follow and search for children. As a result, children are not away from the home for long periods of time. The manager arranges an opportunity for the children to talk to a person who is independent of the home to help in understanding why these incidents happen.

No complaints or allegations have been made. Before staff come to work in the home, safe recruitment procedures are followed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager expects high standards of care and attention to be given to children, and this approach is replicated by the team. The manager makes time to listen to children individually and values their opinions.

Communication with other agencies is good. Professionals have confidence in the care given to children and are kept up to date by telephone, emails, and written reports.

The home is pleasant, maintained well and has considerable outdoor space, which children enjoy. Children have asked for play equipment, during their consultations, and managers have acknowledged and supported this. However, the children have been faced with considerable delay due to organisational processes. There are no timescales as to when the equipment will be bought and installed. Some of this equipment is considered as a therapeutic solution in meeting sensory needs. Professionals also assess it to be a safe alternative to other activities children may be drawn to.

Staff receive regular training and supervision so that they are equipped to carry out their roles effectively. Team meetings are recorded well and focus on the children and their needs. Team members feel supported. They enjoy caring for the children and are proud of their achievements.

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 enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that each child has access to a range of activities that enable the child to pursue the child's interests and hobbies. (Regulation 9 (1) (2)(b)) This refers to providing equipment, such as the swings, climbing frame and trampoline identified, to help keep children safe and meet their sensory needs. It also refers to children having consistent access to a device to video call their friends and family, when appropriate and in accordance with their needs. Additionally, each child should have a memory book that records positive memories and activities, with dates and narrative, so that children can look back at these experiences.	2 September 2021

Recommendations

- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. In particular, the manager should review the risks the busy main road presents for specific children and explore further possible action to mitigate these risks. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Specifically, the manager should consider

using a chronology to review specific, reoccurring behaviours that cause harm to a child, so any patterns or signs are identified to improve strategies and reduce risk. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

- The registered person should ensure that they and their staff engage proactively with the placing authority to contribute fully to the relevant plans for the child's care on an ongoing basis. This particularly refers to the need for a written plan so that arrangements for children moving between placements are clear. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.3).

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: 2592242

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: Nancy O'Regan

Registered manager: Robert Court

Inspectors

Sarah Canto, Social Care Inspector

Claire Drummond, 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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