

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	17/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC393567
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Priory Education Services Limited
Registered provider address	Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Christopher Wells
Registered manager	Geraldine Hicks
Inspector	Melissa McMillan

Inspection date	17/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness. The manager was not able to be present during this inspection. Although the deputy manager was present and demonstrated a good knowledge of the young people and issues at the home, he does not have full oversight or access to necessary information. As a result, records of safeguarding concerns and allegations against staff could not be appraised during this inspection. The limited oversight available from the deputy manager means that when the manager is absent there is a risk that routine systems do not function smoothly. Care plans are individualised and ensure that staff are made aware of young people's individual needs and how best to support them. However, a recommendation regarding young people's risk assessments that was made at the last inspection has not been met. This is because a young person's risk assessment did not advise of behaviours that could present a risk to others, such as throwing objects, damaging property and threatening others with a weapon. A review of this risk assessment at this inspection found that it still lacked essential information. The limited detail on previously known risks may result in staff not being informed how to protect the young person, themselves or others. As a result, a requirement has been made. Staff do not update behaviour management plans to reflect new information which would inform staff how to identify when a young person is becoming angry or distressed and whose resulting behaviour may pose a risk. As a result, staff may not recognise when a young person's emotions are becoming heightened, and this may compromise their response and ability to keep the young person or others safe. Members of staff are trained in the method of physical intervention used by the organisation. Records of physical interventions meet regulation. Sanctions are used appropriately and young people have opportunities to discuss restorative measures with staff, enabling them to appreciate the consequences of their actions. Young people do go missing from the home. Staff respond to missing from care incidents using a coordinated approach. They search for young people and contact	

other professionals, relatives and known associates to try to establish their whereabouts. However, young people's protocols lack detail and clarity regarding preventative measures. As a result, a requirement made at the last inspection remains in place.

Young people have opportunities to share their views on the care that they receive through individual key-work sessions. However, there is limited evidence of staff working proactively with young people to provide education and support around areas of concerns such as smoking, substance misuse and 'missing' incidents, and the safe use of social media and the internet. As a result, records do not demonstrate that young people are receiving sufficient education or guidance from staff.

Medication arrangements are neither sound nor safe. Young people's medication administration records have many unexplained gaps where staff have not recorded whether medication has been administered or the reason why not. This means that neither the young people's known compliance with their prescribed medication nor the stock records are secure. These concerns were identified within the home's last inspection report and, as a result, a requirement has now been made.

A recommendation regarding recruitment checks was made at the last inspection. An evaluation of recruitment records found that the full employment history of prospective employees is not obtained. No attempt had been made to obtain a certificate of good conduct in place of disclosure and barring checks for the significant time that a prospective employee had spent abroad. As a result, recruitment checks do not ensure that only safe adults work with young people. Consequently, a requirement has been made.

Young people continue to make steady progress in their education, and in learning independence and social skills. From their starting points, young people have made significant steps in improving their attendance at. They are developing their social skills through group living and taking part in activities both inside and outside the home. As a result, they are making friends and expanding their social network, which is increasing their feelings of self-worth. Staff encourage young people to complete chores, use public transport and access the community independently. Young people are rewarded for their efforts and are enabled to take more responsibility for themselves while learning the skills necessary for adulthood.

There has been one new admission since the last inspection and no young people have left the service. A thorough assessment is completed to ensure that young people are admitted to the home only if the staff have the skills, experience and understanding to support them. Young people and their parents have opportunities to visit the home and meet staff prior to admission. This supports a positive transition. A recommendation regarding completing impact risk assessments, which considers the prospective young people's compatibility with existing residents, has been met.

The manager has taken action to meet a recommendation made at the last

inspection regarding the home's workforce development plan. Although this document is yet to be finalised, it now contains the information required by guidance.

Information about this children's home

This is an independent residential home that meets the needs of five young people who have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties. It provides accommodation for young people who attend the local associated residential special school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/09/2016	Full	Good
23/11/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/05/2015	Full	Good
21/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ('the missing child policy') setting out the steps taken, and to be taken, to prevent children from being absent without permission. (Regulation 34(4)(a))	28/02/2017
In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person is required to ensure: that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation (2)(a)(i))	28/02/2017
The registered persons must obtain a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing. (Schedule 2, regulations 26 & 28(3))	28/02/2017
The registered person must ensure that a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23(2)(c))	28/02/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- The registered persons must ensure that there are clear arrangements in place to maintain effective management when the manager is absent, off duty or on leave. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- The registered persons must ensure that staff have the skills and knowledge to understand how children might communicate their feelings through their behaviour. In particular, ensure that young people's individual behaviour management plans contain all relevant information. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.10)
- The registered person must ensure staff support children in strategies to manage and reduce any risks. In particular, evidencing the support provided to young people to reduce risks associated with substance misuse, smoking and missing. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.10)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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