

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	09/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC402385
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	Dan Svensson
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Louise Battersby

Inspection date	09/08/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in effectiveness
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	Good

SC402385

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff strive to develop positive and nurturing relationships with each young person.
- Staff rarely restrain young people physically.
- Staff work well with young people to promote independence and develop the skills and confidence they need in adulthood.
- Young people's living accommodation is spacious and appropriate to their needs.
- Strong recruitment and vetting processes are in place.
- Staff feel valued and supported by the management team and each other.
- There is effective leadership in the home.
- Young people's self-esteem and confidence are promoted through a range of varied and focused activities.
- Staff encourage young people to sustain positive relationships with their families.
- Young people have clear individualised plans and risk assessments, which are reviewed and updated.
- A few shortfalls in practice require some improvement. These include the manager's supervision, the locking of the kitchen door at night, the recordings of complaints and staff refreshment training.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must (2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.	06/10/2016
21: Privacy and access The registered person must ensure that, in relation to locking the kitchen door at night, any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home; is necessary and proportionate; is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(c)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	06/10/2016
39: Complaints and representations The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))	06/10/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, such as teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home accommodates up to five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is run by a private company.

The home's statement of purpose indicates that the age range will be between 14 and 19 years.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/02/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
22/07/2015	Full	Good
18/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/09/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Staff strive to develop positive and nurturing relationships with each young person, meaning that they develop an understanding that staff care about them and want the very best for them. One young person commented, 'The staff are good. They respect me. You can have a laugh with them. They fight my corner.' Care is individualised. Young people have clear individualised plans and risk assessments, which are reviewed and updated. Achievements, no matter how small, are recognised. Young people also acknowledge the progress that they are making. One young person commented, 'I would never go on budget. I've been a lot better here. My behaviour and everything has improved here.' Boundaries have been re-evaluated since the new manager came into post, and are clear and reasonable. Behaviour management is consistent. Staff often use humour as a means to de-escalate behaviours, and staff are vigilant regarding bullying. This all helps to create an environment where young people are able to make significant emotional and behavioural progress. The young people have all had placements with the organisation's school. Young people's educational attainment is variable, with care staff reporting that some young people refuse to attend aspects of their education, despite encouragement from staff. The staff have worked in partnership with the school and placing authorities to make and update tailor-made educational packages. Staff are currently supporting one young person to apply for a placement at a local college. The young people are in good health. Most young people take part in their routine health checks. When young people choose not to do so, staff work with them and encourage them to attend. They have a 'never give up' attitude and keep trying. Young people are involved in decisions about the development of the home through their attendance at young people's meetings and key-working sessions. Advocates aid the young people to have their voices heard. This enhances the young people's day-to-day experience of living in the home. Young people's self-esteem and confidence are promoted through a range of varied and focused activities, both inside and outside the home. Activities are planned and enjoyable, but also facilitated with purpose. Staff support young people to develop social skills and relationships, and to enjoy healthy living. Good-quality daily experiences help young people to make progress. They take part in activities, such as going to the cinema and having driving lessons. One young person has a pet rabbit for which she cares.	

When it is appropriate to do so, young people are encouraged to develop their levels of responsibility in preparation for the transition to adulthood. This is reflected in the key skills that young people have developed. For example, young people are supported to manage a budget and to cook their own meals. This ensures that they are able to advance their own self-resilience and life skills.

The home is complemented by an annex. Although this is currently closed for refurbishment, it is planned that this will be used to further aid young people with their journeys into independence.

Young people maintain contact with their parents and carers. Staff are available for parents to discuss the current and future needs of the young people. Staff work with parents and have good lines of communication. One parent reported that her child had made 'good progress' while in the home. She stated, 'I want her to stay there and she's doing really well.'

Young people's living accommodation is spacious and appropriate to their needs. It is personalised by them. However, at night, young people have restricted access to the kitchen as staff lock the doors. This is routine, rather than risk assessed. This detracts from a homely environment.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people say that they feel safe. They live in a safe environment where they are protected from harm. Young people arrive with complex needs and challenging behaviours. Staff use their skills and knowledge of behaviour management to understand young people's needs. This helps young people to manage their emotions safely and to begin to understand the triggers that can place them at risk. The home uses a system of financial rewards and incentives to promote positive behaviour. Consequently, the use of physical intervention is rare. Sanctions are also rare, and positive behaviour is focused on. This further helps to support the young people with their behaviour management skills. Staff undergo a comprehensive induction training programme. Subsequently, staff are clear about safeguarding procedures should they need to use them. There are in-depth risk assessments, which are updated and cover many aspects, including family members working together and the presence of the young person's pet	

rabbit.

The manager ensures that location and environmental health and safety risk assessments are comprehensive. They detail the specific risks associated with the location of the home. Staff undertake regular health and safety checks, routine servicing of equipment and robust risk assessments to ensure that the home is safe for young people. Staff are trained in fire safety procedures, and they ensure that young people take part in fire evacuation drills so that they understand how to leave the home safely in an emergency.

Incidents of young people going missing from the home are low. This is because staff work with young people, their families, social workers and local police, to identify triggers to these events. Young people are not currently at risk of exploitation nor do they self-harm.

Young people are protected by the organisation's robust recruitment practices. Staff are vetted and assessed as suitable before any appointment is confirmed. These procedures promote the safety of the young people by preventing unsuitable adults from working with them.

Allegations against staff and complaints are reported to the correct professionals without delay. However, this level of action is not robustly recorded. This leaves the good practice within the home not being formally captured.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
Since the interim inspection, a number of improvements have been made to the home. There is a new management structure in place, the staff team has been stabilised, and areas of the home are being refurbished. After the interim inspection, the home took the decision not to admit any more children. This was to allow the home to stabilise so that a focus on improvements could be achieved. Two young people have since moved on, leaving one young person currently in the home. There are now plans to admit another young person. The manager has managed the home since April 2016 and is supported by a newly appointed deputy manager. The manager holds his level 5 qualification in leadership and management and is in the process of applying for registered manager status through Ofsted. Staff feel valued and supported by the registered manager and each other. They	

feel listened to and that their views are valued. This helps the staff to remain highly motivated in their care of young people. A member of staff commented, 'I think that the manager is really good and this is why I wanted to come and work here. He is like a breath of fresh air.' Another staff member commented, 'The home is settled and it is fantastic to have a manager who is here and is supportive.'

The home is currently fully staffed. When needed, regular bank staff are used to ensure that young people are experiencing consistency and continuity of care

The management team is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and has recently implemented processes to improve monitoring further. An independent visitor undertakes monthly visits and produces a report. The organisation also has a 'quality team', which has been visiting the home on a monthly basis to help improve standards in the home since the interim inspection. The management team finds these visits useful. These visits, together with other systems, enable the manager to monitor the quality of care. As a result, young people benefit from consistency of care that achieves better outcomes than previously.

The manager ensures that the statement of purpose clearly demonstrates the aims and objectives of the home. This makes it possible for parents or placing authorities to have a clear understanding of services available. The manager ensures that young people are provided with an informative children's guide, providing them with information that is important for them to know and understand

Partnership working with other agencies remains vital in helping young people to make good levels of progress educationally, socially and emotionally. A social worker commented, 'The placement are efficient in informing me of any incidents in relation to [the young person] and appear to follow the correct protocol.'

Effective team meetings ensure good communication and consistency of practice across the staff group. The manager has brought in fresh practice and this has been fully discussed and agreed during these meetings. Mutually supportive and respectful relationships exist across the staff group. These demonstrate positive role models and consistency for the young people.

The manager escalates any concerns sufficiently to bring about the necessary change in the best interests of young people in a timely fashion. For example, when a young person was not engaging in education, the manager quickly was able to work in partnership with education providers to reconsider the educational package available to the young person, to give him the best opportunity to engage and to promote learning attainment.

Staff receive regular supervision and consequently work safely and consistently together. The registered manager receives regular supervision from the head of care. However, this supervision has not been sufficiently reflective with an emphasis on practice and professional development. This hinders the manager's opportunity to enhance her practice through the aid of reflective supervision.

All staff have obtained their level 3 qualification in residential childcare within the appropriate timescales, and have completed their mandatory training, although some staff require refreshment training. This means that some staff may not be working with up-to-date knowledge and skills.

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 that 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 that 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 whom 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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