

SC402406

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to care for up to three children who have complex needs, which may include needs associated with autism spectrum disorders and accompanying difficulties.

The registered manager has managed the home since November 2014. She holds the level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Due to COVID-19, at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers carried out under the social care common inspection framework (SCCIF) on 17 March 2020. We returned to routine SCCIF inspections on 12 April 2021.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 October 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: 5 February 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/02/2020	Full	Good
11/07/2018	Full	Good
11/05/2017	Full	Good
07/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the last full inspection, there were two settled children living at this home. Both were making good progress. In August 2020, a third child moved into the home. Initially, the three children progressed well and enjoyed living with each other. However, this was not maintained and staff struggled to manage the dynamics between the three children. As a result, the decision was made to move the child who had most recently moved in. Following this child moving out, the remaining two children have returned to being settled and making good progress.

Staff are skilled at supporting the children. They build positive relationships that enable them to have challenging conversations with the children about difficult topics. This enables staff to manage and defuse most incidents and supports some of the children to make informed decisions to keep themselves safe.

Staff promote school and further education. As a result, the children who have historically not attended school re-engage and make good academic progress. When the children face doubts or difficulties, the registered manager works in partnership with academic colleagues and placing authorities. They listen to the children. They support them to continue to access education or as a last resort, and on a temporary basis, be educated in the home. This ensures that the children receive education, reduces barriers to learning and improves opportunities for future employment.

When appropriate, staff work closely with parents to help them maintain positive relationships with their children. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress and are involved in conversations with staff to keep their child focused and safe.

Staff help the children develop hobbies and interests. For example, one child has built a shed in the garden and created a workspace. Staff also sensitively encourage the children to learn skills ready for living independently. For example, one child has gained part-time employment and is attending college, which he is travelling to independently. This encourages the children to consider and think about their futures.

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

Staff receive good-quality training and know the children they care for well. They work closely as a team and with partnership agencies and parents. When the children are unsettled, staff take prompt actions in line with individual children's risk assessments and plans.

The police have commented that the staff team has good insight into the triggers that might result in challenging situations or an increase in the likelihood that a child might struggle to cope. Staff use this knowledge to provide children with

reassurance and understanding, and this enables them to manage conflict well. This ensures that police involvement is rare and only used when appropriate.

The members of the staff team consistently reflect on their practice, and review and develop behaviour management strategies. They celebrate the children's positive behaviour, achievements and progress.

Recruitment practices are safe. This ensures that only suitable people work in the home. Health and safety checks confirm the safety of the premises, and staff undertake regular health and safety checks. Damage to the property is quickly reported and repaired. The home is currently being redecorated throughout.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The responsible individual and registered manager have a clear understanding of the strengths of the service and the areas for further development. They use development plans and internal and external quality assurance systems to monitor and improve staff practice and outcomes for the children.

The responsible individual and registered manager are quick to respond to and address shortfalls in practice. For example, they have improved staff recording of incidents. They also reflect on feedback and implement new systems. For example, the responsible individual now reads all documents relating to any internal investigation, not just the final report. These timely responses ensure that good standards of care and practice are maintained.

The responsible individual and registered manager have a good understanding of patterns and trends of incidents in the home. They also listen to the children and staff. They use this knowledge and understanding to ensure that staff have the skills to meet the children's needs and that the children are making good progress.

Where the responsible individual and registered manager identify that a child's needs are not being met, or that children are not safe, they adjust practice. For example, staffing was increased when the children were unsettled. This was extended to enable the local authority of the unsettled child more time to identify and plan his move to a new home.

Staff feel valued by managers, who acknowledge their hard work. Staff access good support systems that enable them to reflect on and improve practice. The responsible individual and registered manager have organised focused team meetings and clinician lead meetings to support the staff team to discuss recent incidents and the dynamics of the home. This will help them move forward and focus on the two remaining children.

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: SC402406

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

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

Responsible individual: Dwane Eacock

Registered manager: Karen Lewis

Inspector

Dawn Bennett, Social Care Regulatory Inspector

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