

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	15/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC412971
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Priory New Education Services Limited
Registered provider address	80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Katherine Bridon
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Graham Robinson

Previous Inspection date	21/03/2016
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	Requires improvement

SC412971

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- A new permanent manager is in her third month since taking up her post. Registration with Ofsted is ongoing.
- The manager and senior team are being well supported by the staff team, leading to young people receiving a consistently high standard of care.
- The manager has worked hard to gain permanency in the staff team, which has significantly reduced the need to use agency staff.
- Young people live in an environment where disability is not viewed as a barrier to achieving a full, meaningful lifestyle.
- The home provides young people with an inclusive, non-judgemental environment where communication and consultation is part of everyday life.
- Young people live in an environment where they feel secure and are kept safe. Challenging and self-injurious behaviour is safely handled and well managed.
- The educational arrangements in place, coupled with high levels of attendance, help young people to make good educational progress.
- High levels of care, coupled with plans, strategies and assessments of risk, provide young people with individualised packages of care designed to meet specific needs.
- All aspects of behaviour management are monitored effectively, with evaluation and planning taking place for the purpose of reducing the number of incidents.
- Staff have good and supportive relationships with parents which underpin their high level of communication.
- Young people settle well and form strong, trusting relationships with staff. As a result, they make good progress in all areas of their lives.

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 '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 keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)&(b))	08/09/2016

Recommendations

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

- The home should ensure that it receives copies of each young person's school report and that details such as educational progress and attendance are kept in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.9)
- Ensure that the details of the Office of the Children's Commissioner are included in the young people's guide to the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- Ensure that the formal staff supervision programme takes place with greater consistency to allow it to become embedded into the home's working practice more effectively. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private organisation. The home provides residential and respite care and accommodation for up to four young people who have learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
05/01/2016	Full	Good
26/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/06/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Temporary arrangements made to cover the period when there was no permanent manager for the home ensured that there was no long-term detrimental effect on the quality of care that young people receive. It has remained high at all times. As a result, young people have continued to prosper and make good progress in all areas of their lives. Staff work well with parents, who appreciate the support that they get and the quality of care that their child receives. When discussing staff and the standard of care, a parent commented, 'I can't fault them at all. I am really happy. The support he is getting is fantastic and the standard of care is extraordinary.' Another said, 'I am happy with every aspect of her care. I couldn't be happier. It is good for us as a family. It was a difficult decision to make, but I feel so happy with the care that she is getting.' The views of parents were echoed by the social workers spoken with. For example, one reported, 'I feel this placement is really supportive. I think the staff are quite forward thinking and they ask the right questions. I find them very thorough. They always ensure that there is good information prepared for meetings. They liaise really well with professionals, as well. There has been a lot of joint working which has really benefited him. Any hiccups are resolved quickly. I couldn't say anything negative. He is really settled and thriving.' Staff are skilled in settling young people and providing them with a routine that they are comfortable with. Individuality is recognised, with young people living a meaningful lifestyle that embraces the wider community. Disability is not viewed as a barrier or a deterrent to hinder this. Parents are happy with this ethos. For example, one told the inspector, 'He has a good, full life. Plenty of activities, both inside and out.' Progress and achievement is tracked and can be evidenced when reviewing documents such as planning documentation, coping strategies, assessments of individual risk, reports prepared for reviews, monthly reports and daily records. They are reviewed and updated regularly, which keeps them current. All documents are individualised to reflect the specific needs of a young person. The arrangements to meet young people's educational needs are good, and all of them are in full-time education. One goes to a local special school, with the others attending a school operated by the Priory group. This school acts as a hub for this	

and two other homes by providing education and specialist input, such as speech and language and occupational therapists, along with a behaviour analyst, a learning disability nurse and a cognitive behaviour therapist. Attendance levels are good, and is reflected in the good educational progress that young people are making, based on their starting point. For example, one young person had a 16% ability in writing in July 2014. It is now up to 36%. There has also been an increase in other subjects.

During the inspection, the quality of information kept by the home regarding each young person's educational attendance and attainment was sparse. This made obtaining the correct information required for inspection purposes difficult, especially as it was during the school holidays.

The arrangements made to promote young people's health are good. Daily health needs and care are addressed through the long-standing community-based arrangements that provide for a young person's everyday health needs. The home also has well established links into specialist provision, such as local mental health services, which are actively working with the young people. The arrangements for storing, administering and recording medication are good. The home's own arrangements with community-based health facilities, along with the specialist input available through school, ensures that all aspects of a young person's physical and mental health are being addressed.

Although the young people are non-verbal, the level of communication between them and staff is high. This aids the level of consultation that is ongoing at the home on a daily basis. Young people are invited to make simple choices. For example, one young person indicated to staff that he wished to play outside when he had finished his breakfast. Making choices and being asked to make decisions give young people confidence and allow them some influence over the way that the home's daily routines operate.

The home provides young people with information in formats that they can understand, for example with guides to the home which are personalised to them. The guides contain contact details for external services that will advocate for young people, should they be contacted. However, one – the Office of the Children's Commissioner – has been left out.

All young people have received a sensory assessment which has resulted in each of them having a sensory menu. This is influential when creating the weekly activity programmes that are prepared for each young person. For example, all young people enjoy their weekly sessions at a centre that specialises in stimulating their senses. Activities are individualised to meet specific needs. For example, one young person enjoys swimming, another has his love of animals catered for with regular visits to zoo's and safari parks where he has annual passes. Activities are well balanced between being fun and in giving young people new experiences and skills. Fitness and exercise are built into the programme. Young people are asked to choose menus, with staff overseeing them to ensure that they are balanced and

nutritional. This is all aimed at promoting a healthy lifestyle.

Developing skills that aid greater independence commences early. For example, young people undertake simple tasks around the home, such as helping with shopping, washing up and cooking. This gives them a sense of achievement and the feeling that they are helping with the everyday tasks that need to be completed.

Young people live in a homely, relaxed environment that meets their specific needs. Bedrooms are single occupancy and personalised to suit the taste and the sensory tolerance of the occupant. For example, some bedrooms are full of pictures and personal items with others less so as they are unable to tolerate things hanging on a wall. Young people are relaxed and at ease in their environment, moving freely around the home. The overall state of repair and the quality of the decor, furnishings, fixtures and equipment are high.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people who are at risk due to self-injurious behaviour, such as hurting themselves are kept safe, with the home creating a warm, safe and secure environment for all. For example, for one young person who has exclusive use of a bathroom, safety padding has been put on the wall around the bath to stop them banging their head. Up-to-date assessments of risk covering the home, locality and activities, along with the regular servicing of safety equipment and good working practices, all contribute towards the environment being kept safe. Staff are able to demonstrate an understanding of their role and responsibility in keeping young people safe. They all receive initial basic training in safeguarding, which is refreshed regularly. Members of the senior team have knowledge and experience of safeguarding issues. For example, the manager is qualified to deliver safeguarding training. The deputy manager is trained to level 4 in safeguarding. Although not tested recently, appropriate safeguarding procedures are in place. The manager is looking to make personal contact with other agencies charged with keeping young people safe, with a view to strengthening the home's working relationships with them. She is in the process of introducing herself as the new manager of the home to a range of professionals, such as the designated officer. Young people do not go missing from this home. However, appropriate risk assessments and clearly laid out practices for staff to follow are in place. Due to the nature of the young people and the high staffing levels, bullying is not an area of concern. Young people prosper from living in an environment that is non-punitive and punishment free.	

Consistent routines, underpinned by clearly defined boundaries, help young people to feel safe and secure. Physical intervention is used only to keep young people safe. The high number of incidents is due to some young people's impulsive behaviour that is self-injurious. Records are up to date and incidents are being monitored effectively, with work taking place to look at ways of reducing the number of incidents. Parents and social workers report that they are kept well informed of incidents and contribute towards the strategies in place to reduce harmful behaviour.

Earlier in the year, the home was operating with high numbers of agency staff. Since then, permanent staffing levels have improved and the use of agency staff has significantly reduced. This has improved the consistency of care for young people, something recognised by parents and social workers. A parent summed up the view of others by saying; 'I think the staffing system has really improved. There was a lot more agency staff before, but now they are all permanent. This is much better for the children.'

Recruitment practice and clearance procedures are thorough, and meet with regulatory requirement and current guidance. Longer-serving staff are being rechecked regularly, which is deemed to be good practice. This ensures that young people are being looked after only by staff who have been suitably cleared and recruited.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The home has experienced a difficult period recently due to the lack of a permanent manager. Temporary arrangements were put into place which helped to maintain the standard of care being delivered in the home. Getting the right person to fill the role proved difficult and took some time, as senior management recognised the need to bring in the right calibre of person to fit the management role. Senior managers kept Ofsted well informed of the process at all times. This process has been completed, and registration with Ofsted is ongoing. Already, the manager has brought about a number of positive changes. For example, these include improving the number of permanent staff, allowing for a significant reduction in the use of agency staff. This has improved the continuity of care for young people. Steps have been taken to improve communication externally, which includes the introduction of home diaries for parents. This ensures parents are kept up to date on what their child has been involved with, or if there is a particular issue, allowing them to plan accordingly for when they are at home. Positive and consistent responses to the manager have been received from parents, social workers and staff in the home. Staff say that they feel well	

supported and that they are supportive of her, buying in to the ethos, culture and working practices that are being developed at the home.

The lack of a permanent manager has had some impact on the overall management of the home. For example, the statement of purpose fails to meet with regulations, as it has not been updated regularly to keep up with the new staffing arrangements. Another area links to the supervision of staff. A programme of formal staff supervision has now been planned and put into place. However, since the last inspection, this has proved to be area of inconsistency.

Staff are well trained, benefiting from being involved in an active core staff training programme which keeps their skills current to meet the needs of the young people in their care. Longer-serving staff have completed Level 3 diploma training, with newer staff due to commence professional training in September 2016.

Both the internal and external monitoring of the home are good. Reports from both are evaluative and contribute towards the completion of the home's own plans for future development. The management team has a clear sense of direction of where it wants to take the home to. It understands the strengths and the areas that need further development. For example, a period of stability is identified regarding the staffing structure and to aid the quality of relationships and consistency of care young people receive.

The home has a good record of compliance with regulation. The requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have all been met. This has led to improvements, with the appointment of a permanent manager, more staff being trained in advanced physical intervention, which helps to keep young people safe, a revision of the plans and records used to monitor the use of harnesses when transporting young people in vehicles, and improved information for all staff regarding whistleblowing.

The home has gone through a difficult period since the last inspection and beyond, due to the management issue. This has now been resolved and the home is moving forward again. At all times, young people have been safe and well looked after. The home now needs a period of consolidation when working practices can be honed and refined, which should, in the long term, improve the overall outcomes for young people.

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 looked after children 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 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 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 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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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