

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	15/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC412971
Type of inspection	Interim
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	Anya Bailey
Inspector	Graham Robinson

Inspection date	15/03/2017
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 improved effectiveness. The home has continued to move forward and develop since the previous inspection. It has maintained the high standards of care provided to young people, who continue to thrive and progress in all areas of their lives. The manager, who is now just over eight months into her post, has been a steadying influence in the home. For example, more stability has been achieved with the staff group, meaning a reduction in the use of agency staff. This has improved the continuity of care given to young people. Each young person is settled into a long-term placement. All are in full-time education where attendance levels are high. Any disability they may have does not stop them experiencing and enjoying a varied lifestyle and making full use of community facilities. For example, one young person is soon to commence work experience in a local charity shop. The home provides young people who have a variety of special needs with structure and daily routines that they are comfortable with. Dialogue between staff and a group of young people who have limited or no verbal communication is high. Staff are skilled in this area. For example, one young person has developed the skills and confidence to use an alternative form of communication. Dialogue and communication in its various forms is ongoing, which allows young people to make choices and express their opinions. Young people who are vulnerable and who at times put themselves at risk are kept safe. Plans, risk assessments and coping strategies are individual to each young person and are updated regularly to keep them current. Staff understand the needs of each young person in their care, which enables them to manage difficult behaviour safely and effectively, for example, with self-injurious behaviour. Strong bonds and relationships develop between staff, young people and their families who continue to have an active role in their child's development. For example, a family member contributed to a recently agreed positive behaviour support plan. Written monthly reports, illustrated with photographs, are sent to parents and social workers. These evidence areas of progress, as well as report on	

the month gone by.

Young people can be quite destructive and damaging to the fabric of the building. However, repairs are carried out quickly. The overall state of repair, fixtures, fittings, décor, furnishings and equipment are all of a good standard. The home is child-friendly and relatively spacious. Sprucing up the home is a continuous activity, with evidence of recent re-painting, the laying of a new floor covering in one bedroom and a new bed for one young person. Clear plans are in place for continued improvement.

Young people benefit from having a stable, trained and relatively experienced staff team looking after them. Most of the staff team in post when the previous inspection took place remain, and the team has grown with a number of new additions. A temporary shortage of senior staff has meant that the manager has had to operate the home without senior staff support since January. However, some senior support is now available on a regular basis, which should prove beneficial to everyone in the home.

Despite this, the manager has continued to move the home forward by developing and introducing a number of new initiatives. For example, a database for staff training has been created, new posters containing safeguarding information using communication methods understood by young people are displayed around the home, and menus have been revised with input from young people and their parents.

The monitoring of the home, both internally and externally, meets with statutory requirements. Training for staff remains an active and ongoing area in the home, with a number of training events having taken place since the previous inspection. However, the formal programme of supervision for staff has been hampered due to a lack of senior staff, and it has not imbedded with any consistency into the home's working practices. Staff appraisals are planned, and feedback from staff indicates that they feel well supported.

Overall, the home has a good record of compliance. The one requirement and two of the three recommendations made at the previous inspection have been addressed. This has led to improvement with revising the home's statement of purpose and keeping it up to date, retaining evidence of educational attainment and achievement made by young people on site, and ensuring that young people have access to the prescribed contact numbers they need, should they have any issues or concerns. The third recommendation linked to consistency of staff supervision has been repeated.

This was a positive visit. Despite some of the difficulties described, the home has continued to move forward and progress. Young people also continue to progress. Standards of care are high, helped by an increase in stability of the staff team. Stability for the senior team needs to be replicated.

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
15/08/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
05/01/2016	Full	Good
26/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- 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 13.1)

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 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 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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