

SC412971

Registered provider: Priory New Education Services Limited 07221650

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by a private organisation. The home provides residential accommodation for up to four young people with learning disabilities. The manager has been registered since November 2017.

Inspection dates: 29 to 30 May 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/06/2018	Full	Good
10/07/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to 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 person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(b)(2)(e))	19/07/2019

Recommendations

- The registered manager must lead and manage the home in a way that delivers the ethos, outcomes and approach set out in the home's Statement of Purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.4) In particular, the registered manager should better manage noise and activity levels within the home at busy times such as staff handovers.
- The following elements of the workforce plan should be included in the Statement of Purpose: (in accordance with Schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20)) the staffing structure; experience and qualifications of staff and arrangements for supervision of staff practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.10)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) In particular, debriefs with staff following incidents should be undertaken consistently.
- Staff must be aware of whether a child has an EHC plan and the information in it. An EHC plan details the education, health and social care support that is to be provided to a child or young person who has special educational needs or a disability. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 26, paragraph 5.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people receive care that is tailored to meet their complex needs. Staff understand young people's needs, which helps them to individualise young people's care. All young people have communication passports which help staff to understand young people's behaviours. Young people's anxiety levels are reduced because of this. The introduction and consistent use of picture exchange communication system (PECS) symbols have given one young person a voice. He now has access to a means of communication with staff.

Care plans are detailed and comprehensive. These are live documents that are kept under regular review as young people change and an understanding of their behaviours develops. Young people's routines are very important to them and they are recorded in great detail for staff to follow. The management team carefully designs any new routines and introduces them slowly and sensitively.

All young people attend school regularly. The school that they all attend is managed by the same organisation and this provides a high level of consistency. One independent reviewing officer said, 'There is excellent communication between residential, education and home to ensure that everyone is using the same strategies to support the young person.'

Contact with families is actively supported and family members regularly spend time in the home. Staff have worked with families to produce pictorial life-story work and create keepsake boxes to capture special memories for young people. As a result of staff support, young people have been able to participate in trips out and holidays with their families. This means that families have been able to spend time together.

Young people have access to a wide range of activities both at home and in the community. These activities are well planned and reflect their personal interests and choices. Staff have recently developed a swimming award with eight achievable stages for young people to complete. One parent commented, 'They do things with him that we would never be able to do, like take him swimming. I know he is getting the best care. They give him 100% attention.'

Young people are making good progress with their independence skills. The management team is ambitious for the young people and creates individual targets to maximise their independence in all aspects of their daily life. For example, staff have supported one young person to become continent, through consistent approaches and sensitive support. One parent said, 'I am totally confident in their approach to [name of young person]'s care. They are preparing him for his future by building his independence skills.'

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

Young people are safe and protected from harm. Their individual vulnerabilities and risks are well recorded and understood by the permanent staff team.

Team meetings and supervision meetings keep staff updated with any new risks and supporting guidance. One parent said, 'I can sleep at night knowing he is all right. It's a gold star from me!'

Individual behaviour support plans are comprehensive and contain detailed strategies for staff to support young people. They are kept under review and adapted as young people's behaviours change. However, the high turnover of staff means that staff are not always using consistent approaches. Staff do not always respond to young people's behaviours consistently and as a result, some young people's negative behaviours have increased.

Monthly reports are sent to social workers to keep them updated about their young person's progress and welfare. One social worker commented, 'I am really happy with the level of care provided, the information and recording at the unit. It is very clear that they know [the young person] well and celebrate any achievements or successes he has.'

Managers respond swiftly and effectively to emerging risk. They analyse all incidents to better understand potential triggers and shape future practice. However, managers are not conducting debriefs consistently with staff after incidents. This is a lost opportunity for staff to learn and reflect on their practice.

Staff have had a full induction and have access to specialist training such as Team-Teach and intensive interaction. Managers source research and training specific to the needs of the young people and use these to inform their practice. The staff benefit from access to a behaviour analyst, an occupational therapist and a speech and language therapist to support them in responding to young people's needs. One parent said, '[Young person's name] is in really good hands. I never have to worry about them.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The team is led by an experienced manager who has a comprehensive knowledge of the young people's needs. She has high expectations for them and aspires to provide them with a nurturing environment that maximises their health and well-being. One independent reviewing officer commented, 'I have been very impressed with her knowledge and insight into [name of young person]'s needs and behaviours.'

However, the manager has struggled to recruit and retain a consistent staff team. There is a reliance on agency staff, bank staff and school staff to cover vacant posts. This is having a negative impact on the young people, whose complex needs require consistent approaches and a stable staff team. The manager recognises this issue and has made efforts to use consistent agency staff, however this hasn't always been possible. One parent said, 'Communication between staff has been affected by the turnover – they forget things. These things are only little but they all add up and they

are important to [young person's name].'

Current vacancies in the management structure are starting to have an adverse effect on the manager's capacity. For example, the frequency of staff supervision has been compromised. Managers have also had to cover some gaps in the rota and this has had an impact on their ability to fulfil management tasks.

There are effective systems in place to monitor the quality of care. This means that the manager has a strong understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. The manager acts quickly to rectify issues that arise. However, there is a dependency on the manager overseeing this, and these tasks are not consistently undertaken in her absence.

There is a large staff team, and handover time at the start of shifts was observed to be disorganised and noisy. This is an area for improvement due to the calm environment that the young people's complex needs require.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: SC412971

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Priory New Education Services Limited 07221650

Registered provider address: 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual: Wendy Sparling

Registered manager: Sarah Calvert

Inspector

Sophie Thomson, social care inspector

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