

# SC486479

Registered provider: Priory Education Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The children's home is registered to accommodate up to five children. Its statement of purpose notes that children accommodated are likely to have complex needs which may include autism spectrum disorder. It is operated by a private organisation.

The home has not had a registered manager since December 2017. The manager currently in day-to-day charge of the home has been only recently appointed.

**Inspection dates:** 2 to 3 August 2018

|                                                                                           |                                        |
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| <b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account | <b>requires improvement to be good</b> |
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|                                                             |      |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | good |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------|

|                                           |            |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|
| The effectiveness of leaders and managers | inadequate |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

**Date of last inspection:** 26 September 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** outstanding

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 26/09/2017      | Full            | Outstanding          |
| 13/03/2017      | Full            | Outstanding          |

## 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—<br>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—<br>meet the needs of each child; and<br>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.<br>(Regulation 6(2)(c)(i)(ii))                                                                                                           | 30/11/2018 |
| The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—<br>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and<br>promotes their welfare.<br>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—<br>ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;<br>(Regulation 13(1)(a)(b), (2)(d)) | 30/11/2018 |
| The care planning standard is that children—<br>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and<br>have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.<br>(Regulation 14(1)(a)(b))                                                                                                                                                                                                               | 30/11/2018 |
| The registered person must—<br>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and<br>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.<br>(Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))                                                                                                                                                                                 | 30/11/2018 |
| The registered person must ensure that all employees—<br>undertake appropriate continuing professional development;<br>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience;<br>(Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))                                                                                                                                                                                                           | 30/11/2018 |
| The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which—<br>include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | 30/11/2018 |

|                                                                                                                                                   |  |
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| <p>relation to each child;<br/>are kept up to date; and<br/>are signed and dated by the author of each entry.<br/>(Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))</p> |  |
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## Recommendations

- Children who cannot or choose not to verbalise have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings heard and respected in the same way as other children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24)
- The registered person should ensure that children are offered a wide range of activities both inside and outside of the home (where appropriate) and are encouraged to participate in those activities in school. Staff should support children to take part in school trips, out of school and other clubs, volunteering and leisure activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)
- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good**

The experiences of the children living in the home have declined since the last inspection. This is mainly because of the lack of sufficient management overview of their day-to-day care. Records for the children are disorganised and out of date, therefore it is unclear what progress they have made. For example, no detail was available on the circumstances and decision-making in respect of a recent placement ending earlier than expected.

The internal home environment needs urgent redecoration. Key areas are unappealing to children and lack colour. In addition, there is no noticeboard with photos of staff to show children who is working on shift.

Staff are not encouraging independence for children. The children are not being guided by weekly plans with specific assigned tasks. The absence of suitable independence plans has contributed to children not flourishing by becoming more self-sufficient.

A strength of the children's home is the relationships that children have with staff. Many of the children have difficulty communicating, yet the staff are skilful in obtaining their views in a patient and nurturing manner. Staff respect the individual cultures and identities of the children, while honouring their wishes and feelings. However, the children were neither informed about nor had the opportunity to express their views on a key member of management leaving the home.

Children have planned transitions when they move into the home. The process involves consultation with the children already living in the home and with staff. Children receive a warm welcome to the home through arranged visits which allow them to become familiar with other residents and staff.

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

The key component to keeping the children safe and protected is the positive relationships formed with staff. Staff have good knowledge of individual behaviours that children display which could place them at risk. Children are closely monitored, with one-to-one or higher staffing levels that provide an additional safety precaution. There has been only a limited number of untoward events involving the children.

Staff often intervene and positively handle the children when they exhibit concerning behaviours that are considered a risk to themselves or others. Unfortunately, the views of non-verbal children, or staff's efforts to obtain their views, are not reflected in reports documenting incidents.

Risk assessments for children are good. Risks associated with the complex needs of the children are correctly identified and offer guidance to staff. Staff reassess information

based on behaviours, without limiting or restricting the children.

There have been good responses by managers to any allegations against staff. The managers actively follow up any allegations against staff until there is a formal resolution. These matters are handled confidentially, with the safety of the children at the forefront. The managers ensure that the member of staff understands the process.

Children benefit from safe recruitment processes. New staff, prior to joining the home, have a Disclosure and Barring Service check, and their employment history is scrutinised and all references are confirmed. They are then given a good induction programme prior to working directly with the children.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate**

The home has not had a registered manager for more than 26 weeks and this, combined with additional shortcomings, has resulted in the inadequate judgement in this section of the report. The new manager for the service has been in post for less than a week.

The decision to employ two inexperienced deputy managers in the absence of a manager has impacted on the quality of service provided to children. The deputy managers were unfamiliar with the dynamics of the home and what managing entails. For example, decisions not in the best interest of children have gone unchallenged, the clarity of paperwork was not sufficiently well overseen and children were unable to participate in activities over the half-term holiday due to managers not securing necessary funds.

The staff morale has been low for several months. Many staff expressed concerns regarding the low level of support that they have received and limited opportunities for development in the absence of a manager. Records show that supervision for staff has been sporadic and of poor quality for over six months. Some staff have missed training opportunities due to low staff numbers and the rota being incomplete.

An updated statement of purpose had not been submitted to Ofsted for a considerable period. The one provided on inspection has yet to be updated to adequately reflect the current staffing arrangements.

## **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 difference 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:** SC486479

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Priory Education Services Limited

**Registered provider address:** Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London, Middlesex W14 8UD

**Responsible individual:** Hannah Cox

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector(s)

James Harmon, social care inspector

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