

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	26/07/2016
Unique reference number	SC486479
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Priory Education Services Limited
Registered provider address	Priory Group, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Clive Coombs
Registered manager	Tracey Beales
Inspector	Chris Peel

Inspection date	26/07/2016
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The manager and staff are working to the home's statement of purpose well and are achieving the aims that it sets out. Considerable thought and effort are made to enable 'each individual child or young person to get the most out of life and develop their skills for adulthood'. The manager is able to explain how the home meets its aims and readily gives examples to illustrate this. A particular aim is 'to support each individual child or young person to be comfortable with their identity, where their views are sought and acted upon.' Instances of this include choices of activities: one young person enjoys role-play games that would not be appropriate in a public place but are facilitated in the home. A child who has recently been admitted was able to manage his feelings about this by pretending that it was Christmas every day. Staff facilitated this while ensuring that he understood that it was make-believe. Recommendations set at the last inspection have been met. Particular attention has been given to the recording of incidents of control, discipline and restraint. These are now detailed, monitored and demonstrate that timescales required by regulation are met. In addition, the manager has begun an analysis of behaviours and of strategies that are most effective at reducing frequency or decreasing severity. Although in the early stages, she has already identified the positive impact of changes in behaviour management on one young person that have resulted in his not escalating to more disruptive levels. Key-work session recording has improved with the introduction of a new format that identifies the issues that a young person has brought and actions to be taken. Some of the home's records are not kept as accurately as required: the register occasionally gives the type of placement a child or young person has transferred to or from rather than the actual address, as stipulated in regulations. The supervision log indicates that some sessions for the manager took place when they had been missed. It is worth noting here, though, that the manager took time to undertake an exercise in self-reflection when supervision did not happen. The home's workforce plan, location risk assessment and development plan have all been updated since the last inspection and show continuing progress in thinking	

about how children's and young people's needs are met, how their welfare is promoted and how staff are supported. Actions identified in the review of the quality of care have been effectively followed up.

Personnel files demonstrate that safer recruitment protocols are followed, satisfactory induction and ongoing training are delivered and regular supervision is provided. A safe and competent staff team is therefore in place to work with the vulnerable children and young people who live in the home.

Interactions of staff with children and young people are characterised as good humoured and encouraging engagement. Responses to excitable or disruptive behaviour are measured and effective. This contributes to the progress being made by children and young people. Examples include increasing ability to communicate verbally and with aids, greater capacity to be alongside peers and to participate in activities in the community. One young person told me that he had achieved 'the biggest thing in my life', which was to be enrolled permanently in the air cadets.

Some consents for activities, use of photographs and similar things were not as clear as they should be, with occasional 'yes/no' and 'do/do not' options not indicated. Signatories are often unspecified by name or designation so that it is not apparent who is giving permissions. Consent for the use of closed-circuit television (CCTV) monitoring, outside of the building, is normally obtained, but that for a child admitted several weeks ago had not been sought. As guidance specifies that this should be gained at the time of admission, this is made as a recommendation.

The manager's planning for transitions in or out of the home is exemplary, with care taken to meet the needs of the individual moving and the other children and young people in the home. Of particular note is the way in which a need for an urgent placement was managed following the breakdown of the previous one. It allowed the young person to be admitted as soon as possible, while preparing others for his arrival. Furthermore, the planning for a young person moving out of the home did not stop at the date he was due to move but detailed the following two weeks as well, ensuring continuity for him. In both cases, the practical arrangements and emotional impact were very well catered for.

The manager and staff are skilled at managing behaviour, so that incidents of restraint and use of sanctions are low. Some physical barriers are used to curb behaviours disruptive to other children and young people. An example is the use of a stairgate to prevent a child from running into other bedrooms early in the morning. This is a proportionate response as the gate can be opened by other young people and is left open during the day. Work is being done to help the child to have internal control and so not need the barrier in the future.

The supervision of children and young people is high, and the premises are secure, so that the risks of sexual exploitation and of absconding are low. Nevertheless, messages about keeping safe, who is a stranger and appropriate touch are given and re-enforced by staff, as is information about whom to tell if children and young people are concerned.

Safeguarding training is obtained from providers other than the local safeguarding

children's board, but formal links to the board have been sought. Relationships with other professionals, such as the designated officer of the local authority and local police, are good.

Information about this children's home

This is a recently registered children's home for up to five young people with learning difficulties. It is run by a private organisation and all the young people currently resident at the home are educated at the provider's school, located at another site.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/12/2015	Children's Home – Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons meets 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. They must, specifically, record in the form of a register each child's address immediately before being accommodated in the home and the child's address on leaving the home. (Regulation 37(2)(a))	10/09/2016

Recommendations

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

- Homes must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 3.16, page 16)

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 whom 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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