

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	26 April 2016
Unique reference number	1159868
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Linda Bond

Inspection date	26 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

1159868

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Young people are not attending any formal education, training or employment. As a result the young people are missing opportunities to learn and socialise with their peers. Ultimately non-school attendance is impacting negatively on the young people's educational outcomes.
- Young people are not attending routine medical appointments for example the dentist and GP. For some young people their choice of meals and sugary drinks consumed will, if not challenged and moderated by the staff, have an adverse effect on their long term health and well-being.
- Although the home is clean and tidy, it is sparsely furnished with few soft furnishings and pictures, and with no evidence of the young people's identity. This makes the home feel unwelcoming and bare.
- The home has recently had a change of management structure. The acting manager has demonstrated outstanding leadership and management in their previous home. However, this change has yet to fully impact on the leadership and management of the home.
- There is an inconsistency in the quality and recording of information by some staff. Some documents are not appropriately signed and dated by the author. This impacts on the accuracy of data used by the manager to monitor and review the young people's outcomes.

The children's home strengths

- The manager currently in post has previously demonstrated outstanding practice within another children's home. With the support of his senior management team he has been swift to assess the current situation and formulate an action plan.
- The staff team welcome the presence of the strong leadership within the home. They feel inspired and motivated to improve the living environment and outcomes of each of the young people living in the home.
- Young people are safely cared and supported by a staff team that are trained and appropriately qualified.

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 the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
8: The education standard The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(iv)(viii)(ix))	30/06/2016
10: The health and well-being standard The health and well-being standard is that children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health needs. (Regulation 10 (1)(c)(2)(a)(111))	30/06/2016
13: The leadership and management standard 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 staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(2)(c))	30/06/2016
27: Appointment of manager	30/06/2016

The registered person must appoint a person to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a))	
36: Children's case records The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)(c))	30/06/2016
6: The quality and purpose of care standard The quality and purpose standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; and ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(2)(vii)(c)(i))	30/06/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered for up to three children and young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/09/2015	Registration visit	Not applicable

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
Young people living in the home are not attending any formal education, training or employment. Records indicate that staff have worked hard to engage the young people in their education, using encouragement and rewards as incentives. Unfortunately, this has not been successful and as a result both young people's long term educational and learning outcomes are significantly compromised. A placing social worker reported being concerned, but remains confident that with the now 'strong leadership' in the home and the support of the local authority there will be improvement. Overall young people benefit from living in a spacious home that provides the scope and possibility to develop and become very comfortable and homely. The young people's bedrooms are personalised and comfortable, and during the course of the inspection one young person was observed contributing to the planting of flowers and plants in the garden. Nevertheless, the communal areas of the home are not appropriately furnished. There is little or no evidence of the young people's identity or contribution from the young people. As a result the home presents as austere and unwelcoming. During the course of the inspection the acting manager was swift to address this and agreed to make changes to the furnishing of the home. A requirement is made to ensure there are continued improvements to the young people's living environment. Both young people have individualised care plans tailored to their health and behavioural needs. Staff are aware of these documents and work hard to ensure the young people receive personalised care. However, staff are failing to consistently engage young people in healthy lifestyle choices. Young people are consuming a high volume of sugary drinks, and those young people who are moving towards independence are having difficulty in moderating their own eating habits. Further to this young people are not attending routine medical appointments, for example the dentist. This has a negative effect on the young peoples' health. A requirement is therefore made to ensure staff engage young people in improving their health and lifestyles. Both of the young people are provided with a good choice of fun activities, and records indicate that they both enjoy time with staff in and out of the home. Staff routinely encourage the young people to spend time out of the home being active, for example cycling and walking. A choice of local youth clubs and leisure centres are made accessible for both the young people, and for one young person their regular attendance at church is a much enjoyed experience. As a result young	

people are provided with opportunities to develop confidence, self-worth, achievement and socialisation with the wider community.

Observations of the staff interacting with the young people during the course of the inspection confirmed consultation, negotiation and discussion routinely takes place. In addition the acting manager has produced an action plan that further focusses on capturing the young people's views and opinions. In doing so the young people will feel included, consulted and valued.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Young people have a staff team that ensure they are kept safe. Episodes of young people going missing and physical intervention are rare. In the event of either, staff are trained and qualified to support the young person and report to the appropriate agencies and professionals. On the whole reports completed by staff are well written. However, upon closer scrutiny some documents are not signed or dated by the author. Further to this young people's views and opinions are not routinely sought and captured. A requirement is made to ensure staff refresh their knowledge and improve their skills in report writing. Both the young people have positive behaviour management plans which help staff be consistent in their response to managing difficult and challenging outbursts. Staff encourage the young people to make positive choices through gentle persuasion and constant reassurance. However, some staff are not being consistent with these methods of intervention and subsequently young people are presenting with controlling and aggressive behaviours and refusing to engage. While staff have received a good level of training and supervision, further training is required to ensure young people's negative behaviours and patterns can be addressed. A requirement is made to ensure staff are provided with additional training where required. The organisation has robust recruitment policies and procedures which help to protect young people from unsuitable adults. The home environment is safe and use of window restrictors and door alarms are used in line with local authority risk assessments and plans. Young people report they feel safe and 'don't have any concerns'. Staff are aware that the young people are vulnerable when using the internet. They carefully monitor their access when in the home and in the community, and a computer that young people can use is accessible and safeguarded with appropriate parental locks.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home has recently undergone an unplanned change in the registered manager's position. The senior management team were swift to recognise areas that required immediate improvement and in response, a registered manager, who has been responsible for an outstanding children's home has been relocated to the home. The acting manager confirms that he will be making an application to become the registered manager for this home. A requirement is made to ensure an application to the post is made. Both the acting manager and the responsible individual have worked well to address immediate concerns and have produced an action plan that is of an excellent quality. The acting manager is enthusiastic, committed and extremely experienced and as a result of these qualities, the staff team are benefitting from strong leadership, focus and structure. Good staffing ratios means there are always sufficient staff on duty to support the young people and enable them to engage in a range of activities in the home and the wider community. Staff confirm supervision takes place routinely and notes are taken and secured safely. Since the acting manager has been in post staff are benefitting from team meetings that are meaningful and purposeful with carefully considered actions that have an immediate positive impact on the young people. For example the review of the ethos of the home has resulted in the young people being consulted and included in decision making. The development plan for the home is currently under review, recognises shortfalls in practice and demonstrates plans to address them; for example refurbishment of the home and the re-engagement of young people in their learning. The plan details improvement objectives and has a range of review and evaluation tools that will enable the acting manager to monitor the impact on the young people. The acting manager has been in position for a short period of time. However, there is already evidence of a robust challenge to the local authority to ensure they are fulfilling their responsibilities and duty of care to the young people. This includes the provision of educational opportunities and the structure of young people's visits with their families. A number of shortfalls were identified during the course of the inspection. However, the acting manager responded immediately to ensure that the home has an agenda for change and the young people remain safe. Some actions to address areas of improvement have taken place but not all have become embedded.	

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

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