

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	24 May 2016 and 25 May 2016
Unique reference number	1215521
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Resolute Care Ltd
Responsible individual	Paul Bancroft
Registered manager	Katherine Brown
Inspector	Judith Longden

Inspection date	24 May 2016 and 25 May 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	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

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Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- The home has only been registered for a short time but all children and young people have already made, and continue to make, exceptional progress given their starting points.
- Staff create an extremely caring and nurturing environment that provides a solid foundation for positive and trusting relationships between them and the children and young people. The welcome guide succinctly sums this up, stating 'this is your home and we as a staff team couldn't be more thrilled to have you here'.
- There continues to be a dramatic reduction in all risk-taking behaviour, such as drug use, going missing, self-harm and aggression. Staff are thoroughly trained in all aspects of safeguarding and of protecting children and young people.
- Staff have a wide range of skills and work exceptionally well as a team. The responsible individual and registered manager are truly inspirational and motivate staff to improve continually.
- The views of others indicate the care provided, progress, and experiences of children and young people are outstanding and that the service is, 'one of the best I have seen'.
- No shortfalls have been identified and no recommendations or requirements made.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to care for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is owned and managed by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

This is the first inspection following registration of the home.

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A		

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
This home has been open for seven months. During that time, children and young people have made extraordinary progress given their starting points. Currently, two children and young people reside here and a further two have moved on from the home. A social worker commented: 'I have only positive comments about the home. When the young person arrived in 2015, she was struggling, [with] very challenging behaviour and no school placement. The home and staff team were very supportive and stabilised her behaviour, identified a school where she achieved 100% attendance, got her involved in the community in part-time work. Her self-esteem and confidence really grew, they worked extremely hard, they are fabulous, and I have nothing but overwhelmingly positive things to say.' Children and young people make excellent progress in their education attendance and attainment. One young person, who had not been in education for 16 months, attended full-time education every day whilst living at this home. She went on to obtain part-time work experience because staff supported and encouraged her. Children and young people are engaging with education, as they have the right education packages in place to meet their needs. This is because staff are tenacious in engaging with other professionals to secure the right education plan, enabling children, and young people to reach their potential. Staff actively support transition from primary to secondary school, attending open days and transition days with children. Educational progress is underpinned by continuous, excellent communication between staff and schools. Staff are very ambitious for all the children and young people, helping them to pursue their career plans and aspirations. For example, staff are helping one young person improve his physical fitness and complete online assessments in order for him to pursue a career in the army. Children and young people enjoy an extensive range of new experiences and opportunities that they record in their memory books. These new experiences include riding on a tram, visiting an athletics track, horse riding, going to air cadets, and rock climbing. A number of other activities promote the health of children and young people. For example, they enjoy walking, cycling, going to the gym, rugby and football. These activities and the provision of healthy, varied meals mean that the general health and well-being of children and young people is excellent. Primary healthcare needs are addressed well, ensuring that minor ailments are treated appropriately and regular check-ups are performed. Children and young people do not smoke. A previous resident had experience of extensive drug use but while living here was supported to stop all substance misuse. A	

substance misuse worker commented: 'They are holistic in their approach, accessing a multi-agency approach where needed. Currently they are one of the best I have seen.'

Staff receive very effective support from mental health teams, helping them to develop an understanding of behaviours and identify strategies to support children and young people with their emotional health and well-being. Children and young people also benefit from direct work with these professionals. This results in a reduction in behaviours such as self-harm and for one young person an end to reliance on prescribed medication. Children and young people develop an understanding of their identity, growing in confidence and improving their self-esteem. One professional commented, 'He is opening up to the staff about past life events, which he has never done to anyone before.'

Children and young people actively engage in the 'giving back' initiative developed by the staff. They bake cakes, raising funds for various charities and readily and enthusiastically sort through their clothes and toys to donate to charitable causes. Neighbours also receive homemade cakes, and the current project, growing fruit and vegetables, will provide neighbours with a steady supply of home grown produce later this year. This encourages an understanding of others in need, and develops a community spirit within the home and with neighbours.

Contact with families has become a much more positive experience for children and young people, with a significant decrease in challenging behaviours displayed before and after contact. For some, contact is steadily increasing and extending to the wider family. Excellent arrangements for contact, clearly understood and implemented by staff, ensure that it is a safe and enjoyable time.

Young people receive excellent, very thorough support to prepare them for adulthood. A detailed independence package starts from the moment they arrive at the home, and, utilising key work sessions, they progress through varying levels. A full assessment on completion of the packages identifies the progress and achievements they have made. One young person who recently moved from the home would not initially walk to the corner shop. Having completed the independence programme, she was able easily to use public transport to take her to her work experience placement.

Meticulous planning for new placements, including excellent preparation work with current residents, ensures that children and young people enjoy a smooth transition into the home. They have a thorough induction to the home, making choices and expressing preferences on such things as the gender of medical professionals involved in their care. On occasions where an emergency placement has been sought, the registered manager has been resolute in ensuring that sufficient information is available and has effectively challenged placing authorities when this is not provided.

Enthusiastic, experienced, and motivated staff provide excellent care. Staff, children, and young people enjoy fabulous relationships and a culture of warmth, nurture, and respect promotes positive interactions. One young person commented in a survey: 'Staff are absolutely amazing, they do everything to help and support us. I have never been in such a welcoming home to be honest.' A member of staff, commenting on the best thing about the home, said: 'It is the positivity, the happy, slight crazy atmosphere! The relationships made between staff and the young people balanced with being professional.'

Care planning is excellent. Children and young people participate fully in preparing and reviewing their care plans. The 'my file' provides an easy to read version of the more detailed care plan, education and health plans: outlining the children's and young people's aspirations, and enabling them to identify the progress they make and where they need help. This provides a clear reflection of the journey they make.

Consultation is a real strength. Staff utilise various formats such as key work, resident meetings, surveys and questionnaires and children and young people attend their reviews ensuring that their views are heard. The use of 'daily consultation' records the small things of importance to the child or young person. For example, they may comment on how they like their toast buttered, or how they enjoy an evening walk. This is then shared with the rest of the staff team to ensure consistency. Staff believe that this is important, as the small, everyday things mean so much to the children and young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Children and young people are safe living at this home. Their behaviour improves massively because of living here, and incidents such as going missing, assaults on staff, criminal damage, drug use, and the need for physical intervention have either drastically reduced or ceased altogether. One young person commented: 'Staff help me understand things instead of me feeling like I need to kick off. They help. They're just amazing.' Positive behaviour is an expectation rather than being part of an incentive and reward programme. Staff use the 'just because' forms to record their praise for any particular achievement or behaviour such as being a 'superstar' at the dentist. This improves children's and young people's self-esteem and encourages continued positive behaviour. Restorative practice is utilised effectively to address any negative behaviour, helping children to understand the reasons for their behaviour, exploring how they feel, how they think others are affected, and identifying what	

will make it right. One professional commented: 'The use of restorative practice has been a big step for the child. He had not previously been able to reflect on incidents and never wanted to hear the other side of the situation.'

The registered manager and staff utilise a range of tools to monitor risk and behaviour, identifying where and why progress is made and highlighting particular practices that help children and young people. A detailed analysis of physical intervention enables staff to understand triggers for negative behaviour, identify why intervention is needed and target areas to help reduce incidents. This results in less physical intervention being used. When it is used it is for much shorter periods and children and young people are able to effectively move on from the incident.

Incidents of going missing have substantially decreased. Any incidents that do occur are recorded in detail and return interviews with independent persons and a thorough debrief with staff ensure that the risk of a repeat of the incident reduces. Previous concerns regarding absence and risks of sexual exploitation have been managed extremely well, with well-trained staff utilising additional support from various agencies and safeguarding professionals resulting in a reduction of risk and increased protection for young people.

Staff benefit from extensive training, enhanced by thorough research, in a range of safeguarding matters, such as gang membership, missing from home and radicalisation. Staff with expertise and knowledge in a particular area share this with the team. In addition, they have designed a number of toolkits with topics such as child sexual exploitation, domestic violence, gangs, and extremism. These are extremely useful resources, informing and improving practice.

The registered manager and staff have an excellent relationship with the local designated safeguarding officer who offers advice and guidance in addition to taking the lead in investigating any safeguarding concerns. The manager regularly attends network meetings to discuss safeguarding matters and share information with other professionals. This ensures that she is up to date on current research and issues and can disseminate information to enable staff to continue to keep children and young people safe.

Children and young people understand how to make a complaint and have support from independent advocates. There have been no complaints, no incidents of bullying, and children and young people report that they are very happy living here.

The home is well maintained, clean and kept safe and appropriately secure. Regular fire, maintenance, and health and safety checks ensure that it remains so. The well-maintained environment and family feel to the home means that children and young people respect their home, and incidents of damage have stopped. Regular fire drills mean that children, young people, and staff know what to do in

the event of a fire. Recruitment practice is robust, ensuring safe and appropriate adults are employed. Children and young people actively participate in the recruitment process, not just ensuring that the right people are appointed but also providing them with skills in communication and helping them to understand the interview process in preparation for their own future.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
Leaders and managers exude an ethos of warmth, nurture, and generosity of spirit. This, and their enthusiasm and desire 'to get it right,' permeates throughout the staff team. The registered manager and responsible individual are very experienced, well qualified, motivated, enthusiastic, and inspirational. They clearly understand the strengths and areas that need to be developed, and an extremely detailed development plan ensures that these areas are progressed in order to continue to provide excellent outcomes for children and young people. Staff are a real strength in this service. A superb team ethic promotes the sharing of effective practice, affords appropriate challenge, and ensures that staff work consistently to provide excellent and continually improving care for children and young people. Staff are either qualified to the appropriate level, are on the relevant course, or are probationary staff who will start once they have completed their probationary period. This will ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified within the required timescales. Staff support is excellent, with staff benefiting from in-depth supervision, regular team meetings, effective handovers, and a range of training opportunities. The registered manager encourages reflective practice, enabling the team to grow and develop. One member of staff said: 'Supervision enables me to learn from my mistakes but also thrive on my successes.' The use of 'hot topics' highlights a particular area for staff to focus on in any given month. For example, this month the staff are looking at the transition to the home. This provides a strong focus for the team to work together, enabling shared learning and ensuring consistency in their approach. An extensive range of monitoring and analysis tools enable staff and managers to analyse and recognise progress children and young people make and the impact they have on these outcomes. One example of effective monitoring is the 'weekly outcome checker'. This is an IT-based recording system used to record daily activities and identify progress made towards each target in a care plan. It provides a useful tool for analysis of daily events and helps the registered manager identify any particular situation or time of day when achievement is difficult for a	

particular child or young person. External monitoring is robust, with an independent person assessing the service on a monthly basis, ensuring that children and young people are well cared for, making progress and safe.

The statement of purpose provides an excellent overview of the service, its ethos, and practice. The welcome guide for children and young people is in brochure format, and uses very child friendly language. The availability of this guide in app format means information is provided in a way that children and young people can readily access and understand.

Excellent partnership working enables staff to gain knowledge of specific issues such as drug and alcohol misuse and mental health and provides for a joined up approach to working with children and young people. Staff are instrumental in establishing these partnerships. One professional commented: 'I am grateful for the multi-agency way of working the home implemented to meet the young person's complex needs.'

No shortfalls have been identified during this inspection, no requirements or recommendations made.

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 children looked after 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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