

1247244

Registered provider: Watermead Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to three children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 October 2017

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: This is the first inspection since the home was registered in April 2017.

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people receive a good standard of care, which is helping them to make steady progress. Staff are committed to improving young people's lives. Young

people have positive, trusting relationships with staff. This helps young people to feel safe.

- Young people's achievements, however small, are recognised and celebrated. This helps to build up their confidence and self-esteem.
- Education is seen as a high priority for young people and is embedded in the ethos of the home. As a result, young people's prospects of achieving their full potential increase significantly.
- Listening to young people is a key strength, and their voices are at the centre of decision-making. This helps young people to feel valued and increases their sense of self-worth.
- Young people receive very good emotional and practical support in maintaining contact with their families, friends and people who are important to them.
- Young people have access to a wide range of activities. They engage in activities based on their individual interests and have ample opportunity to try new activities. As a result, they have a lot of fun while at the same time improving their social and independence skills.
- Partnership working is central to staff practice, which helps to ensure that young people receive the right support in meeting their holistic needs.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There are some shortfalls in leadership and management, but there is no evidence that these shortfalls have had an impact on the quality of care provided.
- A new manager has been appointed and is due to commence in their role at the beginning of December 2017.
- The management team has not sent copies of the revised statement of purpose to Ofsted. This affects the regulator's ability to monitor the care provided.
- The management team has not always ensured that any agency staff used have received safeguarding children training.
- Staff do not always sign and date records.

Recent inspection history

This is the home's first inspection.

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 registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI, keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(b))	26/11/2017

Recommendations

- Any external agency staff should meet the requirements in regulation 32 (4) regarding mandatory qualifications and the registered person should consider their skills, qualifications and any induction necessary before they commence work. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16.)
This is with specific reference to ensuring that all agency staff have received safeguarding children training.
- Ensure that children's case records are kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3.)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are happy and settled in the home. They are making good progress given the length of time they have lived there and their starting points. This is because staff are committed to providing the very best individualised care. Young people enjoy positive, nurturing relationships with staff, which helps to build up their confidence and self-esteem. A young person wrote the following comment when asked by the inspector for her views: 'This house is very helpful and kind. They help me when I'm upset.' Young people recently contributed to the new young people's guide and their comments were included, as follows:

'It feels like a proper home.'

'I don't ever want to leave. I want to stay as long as I can.'

Improvements have been made to admission processes in the home. The responsible individual and deputy manager ensure that they have sufficient background information about new young people, which aids the decision-making process. Staff are consulted about new admissions, and the management team now carries out an impact/compatibility risk assessment. This helps to ensure that the admission of a new young person does not have a negative impact on the young people already living at the home.

Care plans, risk assessments and associated care records are very detailed and staff review these regularly. This helps to monitor progress and identify any areas of concern. However, staff do not always sign and date records. The management team has recently introduced an 'all about me' care plan to enable young people to have input into their care. It also helps to ensure that young people understand their care needs and can recognise their achievements.

Young people's physical and emotional health improves as a result of living in the home, which in turn increases their safety. Staff work closely with a range of professionals to ensure that young people can access support from appropriate health agencies. Staff support young people with overcoming fears about attending some medical appointments. A young person recently attended dental appointments and received treatment. This was a tremendous achievement for the young person.

Education is seen as a high priority for young people. Staff challenge partner agencies, when necessary, to ensure that young people receive the education that they are entitled to and which meets their individual needs. One young person has recently started a new school and is making very good progress so far, with 100% attendance. His achievements in school have been recognised and rewarded, both at school and at home. Young people who are not initially in school at the point of their admission to the home follow an educational timetable produced by staff. This not only helps them educationally but also helps to establish a routine for the young person. Education underpins care practice in the home and staff combine learning with fun activities.

Young people learn to cook and those who enjoy reading regularly visit the local library. Young people are listened to and their voices are central to the care provided. This was evident throughout the inspection. Consultative systems and practices actively promote their views, which are gathered through regular young people's meetings, key-work and direct-work sessions and feedback questionnaires. This helps young people to trust staff and helps to increase their confidence.

Young people benefit tremendously from being able to access a range of opportunities, including fun activities and experiences, and activities which help develop skills. Their individual interests and talents are supported as they engage in a variety of activities within the community. Examples of these include playing for a local football team, going to a gymnastics club and going horse-riding. Young people also have opportunities to learn about other cultures and religions. They recently went to a nearby city to join in Diwali celebrations, which they really enjoyed. Young people each have a memory book where they add photographs and mementoes of their different experiences.

Staff provide very good practical and emotional support to young people to ensure that they are able to see their families and the people who are important to them.

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

Young people's safety improves in a relatively short space of time and they report feeling safe. This is because they have positive relationships with staff; who they have come to trust and rely on. Staff support young people to take age-appropriate, controlled risks in a nurturing environment. This means that they become more independent and better prepared for their next stages of life.

Staff receive a range of training opportunities, including safeguarding, managing young people's behaviour, and health and safety. Staff fully understand their responsibilities in reporting any safeguarding concerns and notifying relevant agencies, including Ofsted, when necessary.

Staff are good at managing young people's behaviour, implementing consistent strategies. The emphasis is on recognising and rewarding positive behaviour. Staff manage negative behaviours in a variety of ways, based on the individual. These include key-work discussions, the use of incentives and sanctions and, in the last resort, the use of physical intervention. A social worker commented that staff are good at restorative work with young people after an incident, and that the number of outbursts of violence and aggression by the young person they are responsible for has reduced significantly. Although the number of physical interventions used has been high, physical intervention is now reducing as the young people settle in. Staff have received physical intervention training, which has included bespoke holds to manage individual young people's behaviours. Clear and detailed records are kept of all incidents and the responsible individual and deputy manager monitor records to ensure that practice is appropriate and safe.

There are clear procedures to follow in the event of young people going missing from

the home. Young people's risk assessments also include this potential risk and actions to take in the event of a young person going missing. Incidents of young people going missing are very low.

Safe recruitment practices help to protect young people from the risk of harm and abuse. Profiles for agency staff employed by the home confirm that all the required recruitment checks have been carried out. However, it is not always clear whether the agency staff member has received safeguarding children training.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home was registered at the end of April 2017. During the first few months, practice was poor and there was a clear lack of leadership and direction from the registered manager.

Poor admission practices, including a failure to match young people's needs, led to a high number of incidents and police involvement. The registered manager resigned after a period of absence. Senior managers carried out a complete audit of records and staff practice, which included speaking with staff. The audit identified significant shortfalls and a plan of action was produced to make the necessary improvements.

Improvements include:

- the creation of a deputy manager's post, and subsequent appointment
- replacing all policies and procedures, and staff have been given time to familiarise themselves with the revised documents
- refresher training for all staff in key areas; fortnightly staff meetings have been introduced
- in addition to supervision, staff now receive clinical supervision provided by an independent counsellor commissioned by the company
- new management monitoring systems, which are robust and are informing practice and new developments
- improvements to procedures relating to the recruitment and selection of staff, which improves the safety of young people and that ensures that people appointed are suitable to work with young people
- admission procedures have been improved to ensure that decisions are made based on robust assessments of young people's needs
- young people's care plans, risk assessments and behaviour support plans have been reviewed and a new format introduced, resulting in very detailed records.

A new manager is due to start in December 2017. The deputy manager, supported by the responsible individual, is providing good support to staff. Staff told the inspector how much better things are now. They feel well supported, valued and listened to. As a result, staff morale has improved and the commitment to improve the lives of young people was evident throughout this inspection. The resilience and commitment of staff to provide good-quality care and support is to be commended.

The majority of staff have many years' experience of working in residential childcare. They reported that their initial induction was poor but they have now had the opportunity to revisit policies and procedures and have recently received a range of refresher training. Regular staff meetings are used effectively to discuss young people's well-being and progress. This enables them to keep up to date with new developments and issues in children's social care and to have time for reflective practice. Three staff hold the level 3 qualification in working with children and young people and four staff are currently undertaking the diploma.

All staff take responsibility for monitoring different areas of practice. Staff discuss and monitor young people's individual care and support, and reflect on their practice in daily handovers and staff meetings. The management team monitors records and staff practice, and where shortfalls are identified these are dealt with promptly and the learning is used to improve practice. The effective quality assurance systems inform future developments and practice. Monthly visits are undertaken by the independent visitor and copies of the report sent to Ofsted as required.

Partnership working is good. Staff send weekly summary reports to placing social workers, which helps them to monitor that young people's needs are being met. Feedback from other agencies is positive and highlights the commitment of staff to provide good individualised care. A family support worker commented that staff obviously care about young people. She added that they are good at communicating information, are easy to work with and there is a homely and relaxed atmosphere in the home.

The home has a detailed statement of purpose that informs young people and key stakeholders about the services provided. It is updated when necessary but the updated versions have not been sent to Ofsted as required. The children's guide has recently been updated to incorporate the suggestions and views made by the young people.

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: 1247244

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Watermead Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Rawleys, Charnwood House, Meridian Business Park,
Leicester LE19 1WP

Responsible individual: Tamsin White

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Katarina Djordjevic, social care inspector

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