

Children's homes – interim inspection

Inspection date	25/01/2017
Unique reference number	1248043
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Embrace New Horizon Centre Limited
Registered provider address	2 Parklands Business Park, Rednal, Birmingham, B45 9PZ

Responsible individual	Amanda Morgan-Taylor
Registered manager	Joseph Kane
Inspector	Karen Willson

Inspection date	25/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
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 has not yet had a full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. The provider re-registered with Ofsted in December 2016. There are no changes to the day-to-day management of the home as a result. Under its previous registration, the home was judged to be good by Ofsted. There have been no new admissions or discharges since the last inspection. One young person will be 16 later this year, and the home and social worker will be meeting to discuss his transition in the forthcoming weeks. This is essential in order to ensure that the young person's needs are fully considered and plans progress to his timescales. The social worker confirmed during her visit that staff communicate with her effectively, and had alerted her to emerging behavioural issues in school which had not been reported directly. A referral is likely to be made to Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS) as a result, whose input will need to be considered as part of the young person's transition. Staff have already identified life skills that the young person can progress towards, and carefully track his achievements, such as exchanging money in local shops, completing household tasks and making simple snacks. The home has now engaged an advocate with whom the young person meets regularly to develop understanding of his wishes and feelings for the future. He therefore has appropriate independent advocacy for this important transitional phase and the recommendation from the last inspection has been addressed. The home also has effective links with the young person's independent reviewing officer, who provides scrutiny and challenge to the placing authority's plans where necessary. This demonstrates the home's commitment to young people's preparation for their future and continued well-being. The home has continued to benefit from the support of specialists and external agencies to develop further strategies in supporting the individual needs of young people. An autism specialist has offered suggestions and strategies to enhance practice with one young person with sensory needs. She now enjoys showers more than previously as a result of the use of play, and is making progress with using the toilet and dressing herself. This enables and supports her ongoing development and enjoyment of life experiences. CAMHS have also supported the home to	

introduce a new approach to monitoring her behaviours. This is yet to be analysed to provide further insight and individual support strategies.

The home continues to have effective working relationships with placing authorities, health professionals and schools to support young people's holistic needs. Staff are creative in working with young people, and will use role-play to help them cope with experiences such as going to the dentist. They have good relationships with health professionals and communicate well to help improve young people's health. While staff have recently accessed training in relation to sexual behaviour, the manager has been proactive in seeking additional support from an external agency. Staff felt that the training did not fully equip them to help the young people to understand sexual development, relationships and sexual health. As this recommendation from the last inspection has yet to be addressed fully, it is repeated at this inspection. Appropriate notifications are made to relevant agencies, and staff fully engage and comply with any child protection matters. Discussions have been held, and policy reviewed, with a young person's placing authority and designated officer regarding the procedures to follow if an allegation is made, in order to meet the requirement from the last inspection.

Young people are supported well in their behaviour management and communication by staff who know them well and use effective planning and strategies. Simple adjustments, such as the use of photographs, rather than cartoons within picture exchange communication systems, provide more realistic tools to support communication and understanding. Young people's views are captured on a regular basis and staff appropriately use careful observations where individuals are non-verbal. Use of countdowns, for example towards the end of activities, reduces the likelihood of young people becoming upset and therefore occurrences of significant incidents.

There have been a limited number of occasions when physical intervention has been required at a low level to guide a young person to ensure their safety. Records are, on the whole, carefully and clearly recorded and include observations of the young person's behaviour following any use of restraint. There is appropriate managerial oversight to ensure that restraint is necessary and proportionate for the safety of the young person or others. However, one record contains an error in respect of the duration of the restraint. While this had no impact on the young person's well-being, a recommendation is made to ensure that all staff understand the need for recording accuracy.

The home has appropriate arrangements in place for the administration and disposal of medication. One young person continues to receive medication covertly in food, with the consent of parents and professionals. Staff have made efforts to reduce the need for this practice in line with national guidelines; however, the young person refuses to take medication when it is presented directly. They continue to demonstrate placing medication into food to the young person in accordance with her plan.

The home is suitably led by a new registered manager who has been in post since October 2016, and who recently completed his leadership and management qualification. This was an internal promotion, with minimal disruption to the continuity of the home's operations. Staff value him as a manager, given his in-depth knowledge of the home and young people. The previous manager continues to offer support, having stepped down to be able to pursue full-time study. The manager uses internal and external monitoring well to identify and implement improvements to the service. Risk assessments and care plans are regularly reviewed to reflect the changing needs of young people. Young people do not go missing from the home due to responsible levels of supervision. Staff review procedures to follow if young people were to go missing to ensure that they are clear about action to take. Trackers provide a monitoring system for young people's progress, which contribute to reports to placing authorities.

Staff feel supported and are able to access training to continue to develop professionally, as well as to improve their ways of working with young people with autism and learning disabilities. Staff who have had the opportunity to learn more about attachment disorder report that they have a better understanding of one young person's behaviour. This has enhanced their practice and response as a result, and meets the requirement from the last inspection. Staff who were due to complete their professional qualification have unfortunately experienced a delay due to a change in training provider. They have therefore not completed within expected timescales and consequently the requirement from the last inspection is repeated.

Regular supervision offers staff an opportunity to reflect on and identify any improvements to their practice. Their views and suggestions are shared during team meetings to enhance the experiences of young people living in the home. Staff verbally communicate any changing needs during handovers. However, team meetings are not a regular occurrence, which depletes the opportunity for group communication and reflection. A requirement is therefore made in relation to this issue. The home has not fully addressed the areas of improvement from the last inspection, but is working towards the outstanding issues. Young people continue to make positive progress in their lives, resulting in the judgement made at this inspection.

Information about this children's home

- The home provides accommodation and care for up to two young people who may have learning disabilities.
- The home is owned and managed by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A		

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that staff have the appropriate qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; that they achieve an appropriate qualification within expected timescales. (Regulation 32 (4))	24/02/2017
The registered person must ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate. In particular, staff need to meet as a team on a regular basis in order to ensure good communication and consistency of care. (Regulation 13 (2) (b))	24/02/2017

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording, specifically with respect to accurate recording of duration of physical interventions. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Ensure that staff have the skills and relevant knowledge to be able to help children to understand sexual development and relationships and sexual health. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)

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 who 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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