

1254555

Registered provider: Next Stage 4 Life

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for two young people up to the age of 18, who have a range of complex needs based on their previous traumatic experiences.

There is no registered manager in place at this home.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 May 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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.

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
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16/02/2018
13/11/2017

Interim
Full

Declined in effectiveness
Good

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 health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and 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— achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans; understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv))	11/06/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the	11/06/2018

home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))	
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff— help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans; support each child's learning and development, including helping the child to develop independent study skills and, where appropriate, helping the child to complete independent study; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of	11/06/2018

exclusion or non-attendance and to 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; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans; and that each child has access to appropriate equipment, facilities and resources to support the child's learning. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(iv)(v)(vi)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x)(b))	
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(d))	11/06/2018
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must—	11/06/2018

supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and

make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b)(5))

Recommendations

- Staff should ensure that sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children and the staff caring for them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The overall progress and experiences of young people who live in the home are mixed. While one young person excels in all aspects of their development, another young person's health and well-being have deteriorated. Furthermore, non-attendance at school and an overall reluctance to engage with day-to-day living routines negatively impact on all areas of this young person's life.

The staff have worked with other professionals to try and help a young person to eat healthily and attend medical appointments. However, weight loss is a concern. Appropriate support and advice have not been secured by the staff in this area, nor has there been consideration of the long-term effect on the young person's health.

Another young person enjoys very good health and well-being. She has 100% attendance at school, achieves academically and enjoys a range of social activities and hobbies, including singing lessons, volleyball and visits from her friends. However, the young people's computer is broken and needs replacing so that they have the necessary equipment to support their learning.

In recent months, young people have lived through a period of high staff turnover. This is not conducive to a stable and predictable home life for them. Young people identify this as something that they are unhappy about. The management team is well aware of this and has taken action to secure a more consistent and committed staff team.

Young people understand their rights. They know how to make a complaint through an easily accessible and child-focused procedure. This is displayed clearly in the home. Moreover, they have weekly meetings in which to raise their views and opinions. They also have regular visits from an advocate who educates them on their entitlements.

Young people have regular contact with their family members and their friends come to the home to visit them. Young people all live near to their home towns, which helps to facilitate this.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

There have been no incidents of young people going missing from home. Protocols with partner agencies are in place should this happen.

Self-harm incidents are managed in line with guidance from the child and adolescent mental health services. However, regular professionals' meetings have not taken place recently, despite a marked deterioration in a young person's health.

The staff and young people are clear about acceptable standards of behaviour and young people generally accept these. Physical interventions are rarely used; there has been one since the last full inspection in November 2017. This was not reported appropriately, which resulted in disciplinary action for the staff involved. Sanctions are not used excessively; however, these are leaning towards a punitive rather than a restorative approach. This does not help young people learn from their behaviour.

Safer recruitment practice helps to guard against unsafe adults working in the home. Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and references from previous employers are part of this process.

The home is generally very well kept and furnished. Young people have their own bedrooms and the staff encourage them to keep their rooms clean. However, a young person's bedroom is unhygienic and in need of improvement. This was being addressed during the inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has very recently left the home. A recruitment drive is underway to replace the manager. The deputy manager and a manager from another home in the company are overseeing the day-to-day running of the home. They have identified areas for improvement, such as clear monitoring of care practice and the stability of the staff team.

Staff turnover has been high in recent months, resulting in a lack of the consistency and

predictability needed for young people to settle. One agency staff member and staff from other homes in the company have been resourced to provide adequate staffing levels. The home is now sufficiently staffed with experienced and appropriately qualified staff, who bring fresh ideas to the team.

External monitoring is good. The independent visitor attends monthly and raises actions for improvement. However, these actions are not addressed promptly. This is partly due to the lack of consistent staffing. Furthermore, a quality of care review has not been completed to inform and develop the standard of care provided.

Staff work well with young people's families and the placing authority social workers to meet the needs of young people. Social workers spoken to are complimentary about the care and support given by staff.

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: 1254555

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Next Stage 4 Life

Registered provider address: Next Stage, 28 Manchester Road, Westhoughton, Bolton BL5 3QJ

Responsible individual: Richard Guy

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Caroline Jones: social care inspector

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