

1257101

Registered provider: The Drive Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is a privately owned children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for three children who have learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 February 2018

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 **Requires improvement to be 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 August 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:

- Children receive a good standard of care, which has helped them to make progress.
- Staff ensure that children's voices are at the centre of decision-making. This helps young people to feel valued and have a say in their day-to-day care.
- Partnership working is central to the home's practice, which ensures that children receive the right support to have their holistic needs met.
- Professionals are very complimentary about the quality of care and support provided to children by the staff team.
- Children have access to a range of activities. They engage in activities based on their individual interests and have opportunities to try new pursuits. As a result, children have a lot of fun while at the same time improving their social skills.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The staff team's expectations of children's behaviour are not explicit.
- Managers do not have a systematic pre-admissions risk assessment tool in place.
- The staff rota fails to demonstrate a sufficient number of staff who can meet the specific needs of young people.
- Management systems do not confirm the timescales for processing complaints.
- There is no workforce development plan in place.

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 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 positive relationships standard In order to meet the positive relationships standard, the registered person must ensure that they— communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (2)(a)(c))	30/03/2018
The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (2)(1)(a)(i)) In particular, ensure that pre-admissions impact risk assessments are completed for each child prior to admission.	30/03/2018
The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must ensure that— staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c)) In particular, that the staff rota demonstrates that the majority of staff on any shift have the qualifications and experience to meet the needs of children.	30/03/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce development plan, which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, Schedule 1 (paragraph 19 and 20) ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8).
- The children's guide must be age appropriate, provided in an accessible format and explained to each child to make sure they understand it, taking into account their age and ability ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.21). In particular, staff must evidence that the procedure has been fully explained to children.
- The children's guide should help children to understand how to make a complaint in line with the home's complaints procedure ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22). In particular, managers must fully set out the process and timescales for each complaint.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The service is working to its statement of purpose and achieving the aims for children set out in it. There is a good ethos of understanding with, as far as possible, children's wishes and feelings being understood by staff. This includes staff actively seeking feedback on whether children enjoy activities or meals. Children are offered choices and staff establish that they are meaningful by offering them options in different ways.

Four children have been placed at the home following registration. All of these children have been respite placements, where placing authorities have sought accommodation over school holidays or the weekend.

Staff help children to communicate in their preferred way, including the use of communication aids. This means that children are helped to understand that their opinions are valued and that they will have an influence on their environment.

Staff set realistic and achievable goals for each child after consulting with parents and other professionals involved. For example, children help to clear the table after meals and for some children making progress in dressing themselves. This collaborative effort leads to promoting skills that have a beneficial impact on the child's life in different settings. A social worker commented, 'In a relatively short time, the staff have establish robust routines for X. These have worked so well that education have incorporated these routines in working with this Year 10 child.' For one family, this has been particularly useful in preparing their child for permanent residential living. Professionals described the staff team as fair but firm in providing effective support. As a result, children have

settled well into the home.

Written records do not consistently support the work undertaken with children or evidence the progress that they make. Targets are not broken down into manageable steps and daily logs do not always record whether and how they have been worked on and it can be hard to track progress in other records. Although information is contained in reports, the home has no method of demonstrating the child's progress from when they first moved in.

Care plans highlight each child's specific diagnosis and the manner in which they communicate their needs. They also include details of the child's daytime and night-time routine, behaviour, sleeping patterns and medication. The good quality of care plans helps to guide staff in providing children with consistent care and guidance.

Risk assessments and associated care records are detailed and staff review these regularly. These help to monitor progress and identify any areas of concern. However, staff do not always sign and date the changes that they make to records. This shortfall had no impact on the care provided to children.

Placement matching decisions are not always clear. Managers do not have a systematic system in place to consider the compatibility of children already accessing the home with those who are being considered for a placement. This means that the home has no method of demonstrating their decision-making process.

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

Staff are aware of how to respond to safeguarding concerns. This includes ensuring that a child is immediately kept safe and what to report and record. Staff are also clear about the need to escalate concerns to the home's designated safeguarding leads in the home and local authority designated officers if they do not think that they are being dealt with appropriately.

Staff receive a range of training opportunities, including all aspects of safeguarding, supporting positive behaviour for children and health and safety.

The staff team provides children with clear and consistent expectations and boundaries, and with the high levels of structure and supervision, the children are kept safe. However, behavioural expectations of children are not explicitly communicated to them. For example, although the children's guide and care plans contain written details of what behaviour is expected from children, which helps to inform staff, parents and those children who can comprehend words, there is currently no evidence of how children who have less ability to understand written materials have this explained to them.

Managers rigorously follow safer recruitment protocols, ensuring that gaps in potential new staff employment histories are investigated and appropriate references pursued. This ensures that only suitable candidates are employed to work with children, keeping them protected from potential harm.

Two complaints received from parents were dealt with thoroughly, with clear records of the action taken and the outcomes.

Managers have ensured that the home's location risk assessment is relevant and covers known risks within the areas, for example a nearby park used for activities and the home's proximity to the local shopping centre meets. Managers have sought information from the local support police officers and have informed the local authority of their opening.

The home provides a well-maintained and nurturing environment for children. Children have individual fire evacuation plans that guide staff in knowing how to keep children safe in the event of a fire. All health and safety checks are regularly completed.

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

The registered manager has been in post since the home opened in August 2017. She is in the process of obtaining the level 5 leadership and management qualification. This is her first management post.

The supervision of staff is generally regular and supportive. Staff commented, 'The manager is supportive and always available to help and support us when we need it.' However, newly appointed staff do not benefit from a reflective approach that builds on the training received to further develop their skills and understanding of the care needs of children with learning disabilities.

The induction process for all new staff is thorough; all newly appointed staff are required to attend a week of training prior to an induction relating to the children and the home. However, a number of staff lack qualifications and childcare experience. For example, three out of seven members of staff did not have a level 3 qualification at the time of the inspection. This lack of experience means that children have staff caring for them who have not achieved a recognised qualification in residential childcare. The registered manager provided evidence that all unqualified staff are in the process of enrolment.

Managers do not have a workforce development plan in place. As a result, they do not have strategic oversight of the development needs of the staff team.

The home has a detailed statement of purpose, providing information on the aims and objectives of the service. This enables parents and professionals to have an overview of the services provided by the home. The children's guide is available in a written and visual guide. However, information on the complaints procedure requires more detailed information on timescales on keeping children informed on what is happening.

The registered manager is developing her awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of this new service. Monthly monitoring reports provided by the independent visitor give good reviews of the home's performance. This will allow the registered manager to further develop and inform the quality of care provided for children.

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: 1257101

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Drive Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: The Drive Care Homes Limited, 18 Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4BG

Responsible individual: Emmanuel Akpan

Registered manager: Abisola Sanni

Inspector

Juanita Mayers: social care inspector

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