

1259061

Registered provider: Outbound Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of a number operated by a private provider. It provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and social difficulties or a learning disability.

The manager has managed the home since June 2019. He completed the registration process with Ofsted as part of this inspection.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 December 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 3 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/10/2018	Full	Good
23/01/2018	Full	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 protection of children standard 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 staff— - understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; - take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and - are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; and that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	31/01/2020
Notification of a serious event The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4)(c))	31/01/2020

Recommendations

- Ensure that each child's day-to-day health and well-being needs are met. Staff should work to make the children's home an environment that supports children's physical, mental and emotional health, in line with the approach set out in the home's Statement of Purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

In particular, that individual work is completed with young people about specific issues, such as refusal to attend health appointments, taking prescribed medication and engagement with smoking cessation.

- Ensure that medicines are administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Where the home has questions or concerns about a child's medication, they should approach an expert such as a General Medical Practitioner, community pharmacist or designated nurse for looked-after children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35,

paragraph 7.15)

- Ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

- Ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

In particular, training for staff on attachment, autism spectrum disorder and internet safety.

- Ensure that staff appraisal takes into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people who live in this home benefit from living in a homely environment. It is a small family home which young people can personalise with their own belongings, so that they feel comfortable and relaxed here. They respect their home environment, rarely causing any damage.

Young people are making good progress. One young person is now attending education, albeit on a reduced timetable, but this is considerable progress given his starting point.

Staff work well with other professionals. One professional commented in feedback requested by the home, 'Communication has been excellent and is crucial in order to provide consistency for the young person and enable them to progress in all areas.'

Young people have positive relationships with staff and mostly respect and value their opinions and advice. This has helped to stabilise young people, as they feel safe and

secure here. Young people move in and out of the home in a planned way. One young person has made a planned move to semi-independence since the last inspection. One social work professional commented, '[Name of the young person] has made exceptional progress. He has become equipped to deal with the world.' This young person remains in contact with staff, demonstrating the significance of the relationships made. He is also planning to return for a birthday celebration for another resident shortly.

Young people are generally healthy, and staff support them to attend medical appointments if there are health concerns. However, on one occasion when a young person had been prescribed antibiotics, they had not been administered as prescribed, as the young person refused to take the tablets. The decision was made to cease the course of treatment without consultation with an individual with medical expertise. Staff acted instinctively and, on this occasion, there appears to have been no adverse effect on the young person. However, potentially the outcome may not have been a positive one. The young person's medical records would also suggest that she has completed the treatment, which is incorrect.

While records demonstrate that staff regularly complete key-work sessions with young people, some pertinent matters have been overlooked or unaddressed for some time. This includes support to attend smoking cessation and refusing to wear prescribed spectacles and to attend a dentist appointment. In addition, records do not always make it clear if a young person attended an appointment as planned and the outcome of this. Similarly, while staff do keep a log of all room searches completed, they do not record what they did with any items removed.

Young people receive encouragement and support to pursue their individual interests. One young person is currently going boxing, along with his key worker. The plan is to gradually introduce him to a group lesson, in order to introduce an opportunity for social interaction with peers, as the young person struggles with such situations. Another young person enjoyed a holiday abroad over the summer and was attending a live music event with her key worker as this inspection concluded. Such experiences remain with young people and help to build their confidence and self-esteem.

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

The positive relationships that staff have with young people enable them to de-escalate most challenging situations. There has only been one incident requiring a physical intervention since the last inspection over a year ago.

Staff usually choose to reward young people for their achievements rather than sanction poor behaviour. If possible, sanctions are also restorative in nature, for example helping to repair the damage caused. Young people can also earn extra monies if they meet their agreed incentives, which has proved particularly effective for one of the current residents.

Young people do not engage in frequent risk-taking behaviours. Risk assessments contain pertinent information and strategies for staff to implement to reduce risk. They are also subject to regular review. However, on one occasion, a serious incident could have been prevented if staff had adhered to the young person's risk assessment. It is unclear if the staff member involved was familiar with the risk assessment, as she had not signed the document to confirm this. She also appeared surprised by the young person's actions. If preventative strategies are not adhered to, this compromises the safety of young people. Furthermore, when staff became aware of further information after this event, it was not passed promptly to the police. This has the potential to impact on any investigation.

The home is small, allowing for staff to have individual conversations with young people daily. On one such occasion, a young person expressed concern about the inappropriate actions of a staff member. This was passed to a senior manager in the organisation. Some initial fact finding was completed, but no record was made of this. Consequently, it is difficult to tell if consultation took place with appropriate individuals. This is necessary to ensure that information is not lost and does not compromise the integrity of staff working in the home. Furthermore, Ofsted did not receive notification about this incident, preventing Ofsted from evaluating and ensuring that the appropriate action was taken at the time. Ofsted only became aware of this incident during this inspection.

Young people like living in the home and live a long distance from their areas of origin. Staff support age-appropriate risks and permissions are in place for some young people to stay overnight with friends. They rarely have a need to go missing from home. There has only been one such incident since the last inspection. While staff took appropriate actions to locate the young person, he was missing for three nights and this was unusual behaviour. However, the young person did not benefit from an independent return interview on his return to the home, as insufficient challenge to the local authority was made by managers. This prevents staff from identifying any learning from such an event.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager completed the registration process with Ofsted as part of this inspection. He is appropriately qualified and experienced. He worked as the deputy manager in this home for three months prior to becoming the manager in June 2019. The new deputy manager has worked in the home since it opened. Together they demonstrate a commitment to improving outcomes for young people and in developing their staff team.

The manager is in the process of reviewing and revising practice and procedures in the home. He has devised a comprehensive development plan, where responsibilities are delegated if appropriate and dates for completion are clear. This makes the best use of staff members' skills and interests and ensures that things get done. It also ensures that staff feel valued.

There have been a number of staff changes over the last year, with the majority of staff yet to complete a level 3 qualification, although most are now working towards this. Staff receive a good period of induction, including a number of shadow shifts prior to

starting work in the home. Core training which includes safeguarding is completed during induction. However, staff would benefit from specific training to meet the needs of young people living in the home. This includes attachment issues, autism spectrum disorder and internet safety. This would ensure that they are best able to meet the needs of the young people in their care.

The manager is eager to learn and make improvements in the home. He makes good use of external monitoring systems and takes swift action to address any recommendations made. Similarly, action has been taken to address the requirements and recommendations resulting from the last inspection. However, one recommendation is repeated, relating to independent return interviews for young people, as this is still to be addressed.

Staff receive regular supportive supervision and an annual performance appraisal. However, currently, appraisals do not include the views of others who have worked with staff or those of young people living in the home. This would increase the effectiveness of this process.

Staff and managers are highly thought of by other professionals. Feedback about the home is positive. One social worker commented, 'Staff have been consistent in communication with me around [Name of young person]'s needs and care. They are strong advocates and know her extremely well. Weekly reports are good and consistent.'

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: 1259061

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Outbound Care Limited

Registered provider address: Unit 2, Metropolitan Business Park, Preston New Road, Blackpool, Lancashire FY3 9LT

Responsible individual: Paul Cotton

Registered manager: David Harrison

Inspector

Mandy Williams: social care inspector

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