

1259061

Registered provider: Outbound Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This private company has one children's home. It provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 January 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people make good progress living here, and have good relationships with staff and each other. They are happy and content living here.
- The home is welcoming and the atmosphere is homely. Young people describe their home as a family home.
- Young people have good relationships with managers. The relationships between the managers and the staff team are also positive.
- Staff pride themselves on delivering the best possible care for young people.
- Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities with regard to keeping young people safe. Young people are safe and they know that staff care about them.
- The registered manager and staff manage safeguarding concerns effectively. They follow procedures well and ensure that all relevant people have the required information in a timely way.
- Young people have the time and space to explore their wishes and feelings. They benefit from focused and regular key-work sessions. Staff undertake these to a good standard.
- Young people are encouraged to take part in a range of activities. Staff know the young people well and introduce young people to activities that they may enjoy.
- Young people's records are very detailed and are of a very high standard. They offer great insight into a young person's daily achievements. Photographs of young people enjoying activities and new experiences further enhance these records.
- Liaison with other agencies is excellent. Professionals speak very positively about staff communication and partnership working.

The children's home's areas for development:

- When young people are not engaged in education, their daily routine does not match that of a school day.
- Staff do not always assess young people's health needs. Furthermore, they do not always access specialist health support when needed.
- Risk assessments and plans do not always take into account all risk-taking behaviour. Consequently, these are not always managed and monitored effectively.
- The training available does not always meet young people's needs.

- The staffing levels identified in the current statement of purpose are not aligned to the local authority planning restrictions for this home.

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 education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; promote opportunities for each child to learn informally; 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 exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(iv)(v)(viii))	18/03/2018
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. (Regulation 10 (1)(b)) In particular, ensure that young people's physical and emotional health needs are assessed and that the identified needs are managed and monitored accordingly. Furthermore, that the relevant provision is put in place to address the young people's needs.	18/03/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and make sure that the plans in place to manage these risks are clear. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5) In particular, that young people's access to the internet is safe, and that all risk assessments and plans are clear and not ambiguous.
- The registered person should ensure that staff access training that is relevant to the young people's needs and risks. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- Homes are required to develop and keep under review a 'Statement of Purpose' (regulation 16 and schedule 1). The home's Statement of Purpose should indicate how the home provides individualised care to meet the Quality Standards for the children in their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 14, paragraph 3.5) In particular, this should reflect any restrictions imposed by the local authority.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make good progress while living here. Shortly after arriving at the home, they settle in well and begin to make positive progress. Young people have good relationships with staff and each other. They are happy and content living here. Staff provide a nurturing and warm environment for young people. Staff are supportive, encouraging and caring. Young people respond well to this. Young people trust staff and they know that they are there to support them. Overall, staff have a good insight into young people's needs and risks. Staff are sensitive to young people's individual needs. This enables young people to feel safe and secure.

The home is welcoming and the atmosphere is homely; young people describe it as a family home. Young people are very respectful of their home, which is reflective of the young people living there. Young people are encouraged to personalise their home and they display pictures of themselves, their families and other interests that they may have. Young people's bedrooms are a reflection of the young people's personalities and their interests.

The impact risk assessments highlight young people's historic and current presenting needs and risks. The risk assessments are analytical and highlight the impact that young people could have on one another. Nonetheless, it is not always clear which young people present which risk. This means that the suggested strategies in place are also not clear.

Young people receive individual care that reflects their needs and risks. However, on occasions, assessments do not include all of the necessary detail. While staff are aware of the risks and needs, the assessments and plans do not reflect these. This means that the monitoring and reviewing arrangements are not always robust enough. Staff addressed this during the inspection and, as a result, monitoring arrangements are now in place for a number of presenting risks and needs.

When staff are aware of the risks, they manage these well. Staff work proactively with young people, their families and the relevant agencies to reduce risk. Young people receive good help, support and guidance. As a result, young people's risk-taking behaviour reduces.

Staff do not routinely identify all young people's health needs. Consequently, young people do not always receive the help and support that they need to understand their needs. Furthermore, they do not always receive the help that they need to address them. However, when staff do recognise young people's health need they respond in a timely way and seek the support that they need. In these instances, young people receive the correct help and support that they need to be healthy.

When young people first arrive at the home, they are not always engaged in suitable education. Staff take a proactive approach in order to secure education that meets young people's needs. They work together with the local authority to ensure that young people have access to the correct educational placements at the earliest opportunity. When young people do access education, they engage extremely well and attendance is good. The relationships that staff have with school are also good. However, when young people are not engaged in education their daily routine does not match that of a school day. Consequently, some young people are not engaged in meaningful and focused educational activities.

Young people are involved in the running of the home. There are regular young people's meetings. Young people engage well in these meetings. The meetings cover a range of agenda items. These include the weekly menu, activities, fun facts and young people's progress. The registered manager reviews the meeting minutes. This demonstrates that he has an oversight of what the young people have discussed and agreed.

Young people are encouraged to take part in a range of activities. Staff know the young people well and introduce young people to activities that they may enjoy. When young people struggle to take part in activities, staff support young people to gain the confidence to engage. As a result, they start to take part in activities and enjoy them. Young people enjoy activities such as BMX-biking, going to the zoo, snooker and going to the cinema.

Young people have regular contact with their families and friends. They use technology to support this, such as Facetime. Staff support young people to develop relationships with their peers. When young people do not have contact with their families, staff work closely with social workers to establish this contact. They support young people to re-establish contact in a safe and meaningful way.

Staff promote the achievements that young people make. Social workers and other relevant professionals receive regular updates on young people's progress. Young people's daily records are very detailed and are of a very high standard. They offer great insight into a young person's daily achievements. Photographs of young people enjoying activities and new experiences further enhance these records.

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

Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities with regard to keeping young people safe. Young people are safe and they know that staff care about them. Staffing levels are very good. This allows young people to have access to good levels of support that are in line with their individual assessments. Furthermore, this ensures that young people have the required safeguards in place. However, the current staffing ratios are not in line with the local authority planning restrictions.

Young people spend meaningful time with staff and they enjoy the company of the staff. Young people have the time and space to explore their wishes and feelings. They benefit

from focused and regular key-work sessions. Staff undertake these to a good standard. The sessions are reflective in nature and young people receive help with learning about and understanding their needs and their risk-taking behaviours. Young people are benefiting from this work and this is evident in the positive progress that they are making.

When young people go missing from the home staff respond swiftly. They follow the young person's risk assessment well. Staff generally work well with other agencies to ensure that everyone is working effectively together to find the young person, but staff do not always share pertinent information with all the relevant people. In one example, while staff reported a young person missing to the police in the county where the young person went missing, they did not notify the local police authority. This meant that the local police force was not able to update the local missing from home risk assessment for this young person.

In addition to the excellent daily records, young people's placement plans are of an extremely good standard and easy to follow. Information is clear and the documents are easy to navigate. They are young-person-focused and the reader has a good insight into the young person's journey. Risk assessments and plans are also good. However, as detailed earlier in this report, they do not always identify all presenting risk factors.

Staff and young people are clear about the standards of behaviour that are acceptable. Young people receive the support they need to take responsibility for their own behaviour and respect the boundaries that are in place. Behaviour management plans and strategies are good. They are individualised and provide good insight into young people's behaviour and how best to support them. De-escalation techniques are effective and young people respond well to these. Sanctions are not always restorative in nature and do not always have the desired outcome. Staff do, however, offer young people the opportunity to reflect on their sanctions and young people engage well with this.

The use of physical intervention has significantly reduced. This is because staff have recently spent time reviewing historical incidents. They have reflected on the triggers to young people's behaviour and staff responses. This monitoring and evaluation of behaviour has provided staff with further information to help and support young people. Staff have implemented their learning into practice and young people are responding very well to the positive changes. When physical interventions are used, staff follow clear policies and procedures and use the accredited techniques for which they have been trained. Staff record incidents well. Young people receive follow-up debriefings and key-work sessions to allow time to reflect on the incidents. Staff also receive debriefings to reflect on the incidents. However, these are not always individual debriefings. Therefore, this does not offer the opportunity for individual reflection and learning from the incidents.

The registered manager and staff manage safeguarding concerns effectively. They follow procedures well and ensure that all relevant people have the required information in a timely way. Recording is clear and provides the reader with a good understanding of the situation and the actions taken. In addition, the registered manager and staff act quickly

and follow advice and guidance from other professionals and agencies. This ensures that young people and staff are safe. Staff show empathy and understanding towards young people and each other. Consequently, young people and staff feel safe and supported. The recruitment and selection of staff are good. Staff are vigilant and take appropriate steps to verify each visitor's identity to protect young people. Health and safety checks are undertaken and this ensures a safe living environment.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leadership and management are good. The registered manager has significant experience and has the relevant qualifications for the role. He is a committed and passionate manager who leads by example. The registered manager is also the responsible individual. The registered manager has reviewed this arrangement and consequently he has appointed a new manager. This manager was in post at the time of the inspection.

A committed deputy manager and staff team work well together and support the managers to adhere to the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose. Staff are suitably qualified or working towards achieving the qualification. Staff provide a consistent approach to the care that they provide for the young people.

The relationships between the managers and staff are positive. Staff speak fondly about managers. They say that managers are supportive and that they help them to develop and enhance their practice. Young people have good relationships with managers.

Staff establish good relationships with young people, their families, friends and professionals. They pride themselves on being able to deliver the best possible care for young people. Staff are encouraged to develop and enhance their knowledge and skills. A good variety of staff training is available. Overall, this training reflects the needs of the young people. However, some key training is missing, and thus staff do not always have the required understanding of the young people's needs and how to meet them.

When staff do have a good understanding of the needs of young people, they work effectively together to meet them. They ensure that young people receive positive messages that are empowering and consistent.

Liaison with other agencies is excellent. Professionals speak very positively about staff communication and partnership working. They receive regular updates on the progress that young people are making. In addition, staff share any incidents in a timely way. Agencies value the home and the positive changes that young people make there.

When placements are breaking down, the registered manager and the staff are able to respond quickly. They work hard to reduce the risk of placement breakdown and ensure that young people are reassured and supported throughout. On occasions, young people need to move on to a new placement to ensure that they are happy and safe. When this happens, staff work proactively with partner agencies to ensure that this is a positive transition for the young person. This demonstrates the continuing commitment staff have

to ensure that, despite some challenging circumstances, young people have positive outcomes. One family member praised the team on the support a young person had received in their transition to semi-independent living. She said that staff communicated effectively throughout and that they were 'just brilliant' in supporting the young person to make positive progress.

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 Ltd

Registered provider address: Unit 5 Lancaster House, Amy Johnson Way, Blackpool
FY4 2RP

Responsible individual: Paul Cotton

Registered manager: Paul Cotton

Inspector

Lisa Gregoire-Parker, social care inspector

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