

1259547

Registered provider: Semi-Independent House Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by an independent provider and is registered to provide care for up to three children and young people between the ages of 10 and 18 years old. It provides care to children and young people who may have behavioural, emotional and social difficulties.

The home has been without a registered manager since May 2018. The registered person is currently recruiting a new manager. Temporary management arrangements are in place.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 September 2018

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

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

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 relationship standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from relationships based on mutual respect and trust and an understanding about acceptable behaviour. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff– 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(1)(a)(b), (2)(a)(v)) This is with specific reference to reviewing the use of information in the children's guide about negative behaviours leading to serving notice on children's placements.	08/10/2018
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– 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)(a)(i)) This is with specific reference to ensuring that the matching/compatibility assessments completed are robust in identifying the risks and behaviours of all young people living in the home.	08/10/2018
The registered person must appoint a person to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27(1)(a))	31/10/2018

The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4, specifically: ■ a record in the form of a register showing in respect of each child, the child's address immediately before being accommodated in the home and the child's address on leaving the home. ■ a copy of the staff duty roster of persons working at the home, and a record of actual hours worked. This must include hours worked by agency staff. (Regulation 37(2) schedule 4(1)(c)(d), (3))	08/10/2018
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Recommendations

- Any external agency staff should meet the requirements in regulation 32(4) regarding mandatory training qualifications and the registered person should consider the skills, qualifications and any induction necessary before they commence work in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16)
- The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of turnover of staff, whether agency or directly employed, and be able to understand and where possible, address any negative trends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are happy and settled at the home. They have good relationships with staff and feel respected by staff. Young people make good progress.

Admission processes are generally good. All relevant information is obtained to ensure that an appropriate decision can be made. A matching/compatibility assessment is carried out. However, these assessments are not as robust as they could be, because they lack detail about some needs, behaviours and risks.

Young people are very well supported during the admission process. Staff help them to feel very welcome and relaxed. This helps to relieve anxieties about moving into a children's home. A social worker noted how well staff had supported a young person on their arrival at the home and how the approach of staff had helped the young person to relax quickly.

Care plans, risk assessments and behaviour management plans are of a very good standard and are reviewed regularly. Young people are involved in producing and reviewing their care documents. This means that they know what they need to do to achieve their targets, and that they are able to recognise and celebrate their achievements and progress. This helps to improve their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff work hard to make sure that young people do not miss out on their education. This involves working closely with parents and other relevant agencies to make sure that young people's education is tailored to their individual needs. Young people make good educational progress, which improves their life opportunities. Staff provide both practical and emotional support to young people who transfer to different educational settings.

Young people access a good range of leisure activities. They can pursue their individual interests and hobbies and participate in group activities. This has helped to improve young people's social skills.

Young people feel listened to and valued. Staff ensure that young people have access to independent advocates. Staff have been instrumental in supporting a young person to access an advocate to help them to express their wishes about future plans.

Promoting independence is a particular strength in the home. Young people are actively encouraged to become as independent as possible. During this inspection, young people were observed making meals and taking an active part in redecorating the lounge.

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

Young people are safe at the home. They rarely go missing or engage in risk-taking behaviours in the community.

Young people have positive relationships with staff and are able to raise any concerns that they may have. Risk management strategies are effective, as are key-work sessions, in enabling young people to understand and change their behaviours.

Staff manage young people's behaviour well. Young people know what is expected of them. However, young people are provided with information in the children's guide that states that repeated poor behaviour will lead to notice being served on their placement at the home. This has the potential to undermine young people's ability to form trusting and secure relationships with staff. Additionally, this information may give the wrong message to young people about staff's commitment to working with them.

Staff discuss all incidents of negative behaviour with young people. This helps them to learn about the impact that their behaviours may have on their future lives. Debriefings and key-work sessions also help young people to learn to take responsibility for their actions. Emphasis is placed on positive reinforcement and de-escalating negative behaviours. This has proved successful, because physical intervention has never been used and police involvement is rare.

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

The home has been without a registered manager since May 2018. A new manager was appointed but did not take up the post. The registered person is currently in the process of appointing a new manager.

The acting manager is being supported by the responsible individual who is overseeing the running of the home. The responsible individual visits the home at least twice a week and is providing all staff with supervision.

There was a stable staff team until May 2018, when four staff left, including the registered manager. A small number of established staff remained and were able to provide some consistency and stability. However, these staff changes did have an impact on some of the young people. New staff have been recruited, and young people are beginning to develop positive relationships.

Staff recruitment practice is generally good, as is the induction of new staff. However, when agency staff are used there is no documentary evidence that they receive a formal induction. The acting manager introduced an induction document for agency staff during the inspection. This demonstrates a commitment to improving services and keeping young people safe.

Staff receive a range of mandatory training which helps to ensure that they are able to meet the needs of young people. However, not all agency staff have received safeguarding children training or behaviour management training.

Care records are generally of a good standard. However, the admission and discharge record does not contain all the required information. Staffing rotas do not include the hours worked by agency staff. This does not support effective monitoring of the home.

There is a real commitment to partnership working. Staff are confident to challenge other professionals to ensure that young people receive the services that they need.

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 difference 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: 1259547

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Semi-Independent House Limited

Registered provider address: 51 Ploverly, Peterborough PE4 6HZ

Responsible individual: Collins Usada

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Katarina Djordjevic, social care inspector

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