

1269565

Registered provider: Q Plus Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home was purpose-built in 2014 and is situated on the site of Queensmill School, a co-educational special school for autistic children. It provides care for up to four young people who may have a learning disability. Young people stay on a short-break basis. At present this ranges from one to three nights per week. Many of the young people using the home attend Queensmill School or have previously attended the school.

This home and manager were registered by Ofsted in January 2018. The home has been operational since May 2018.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **requires improvement to be good**

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

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

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.

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
Review of quality of care In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system of 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 to children. (Regulation 45 (2)(a)(b)(c)(d))	01/02/2019
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— 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 (1) (a) (2) (a)(i)) In particular, the home must ensure that each bedroom has plug guards fitted and adheres to the risk assessment of the young person concerned.	01/02/2019
The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child	01/02/2019

and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (2)(f))	
In particular, the registered person must ensure that a full assessment is conducted on young people prior to their admission.	
Employment of staff	01/02/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))	

Recommendations

- Ensure that when a restraint occurs young people are given the opportunity to express their feelings about the experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the young person and the circumstances of the restraint into account. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- The following elements of the workforce plan should be included in the statement of purpose: (in accordance with schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20)) the staffing structure, experience and qualifications of staff and arrangements for supervision of staff practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.10)
- Ensure that the home has enough suitably trained staff, including someone in a management role, on duty to meet the assessed needs of all young people in the home, and that those staff are able to respond to emergency placements where accepted. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Inspection judgements

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

The home has failed to recruit any staff following registration of the home. This has limited management support and the development of the home.

All members of the staff team are employed by the school within the day provision and know the young people well. These established relationships are very important. Staff respond quickly when young people struggle and offer young people effective alternatives such as a hand massage to calm them at times of stress.

Feedback from parents and placing social workers is positive. One social worker commented, 'The staff are absolutely fantastic and know her really well.' One parent commented about their child, 'She is happy there.'

Behaviour management fails to consider the impact on young people. Staff do not obtain the feelings of young people following incidents where staff have needed to use a physical restraint on them. Therefore, this limits the home's ability to fully evaluate incidents and subsequently presents a possible risk to young people.

Young people benefit from a new, purpose-built home that offers specialist facilities. These include a sensory room, cookery area and music room. Activities allow young people to develop skills that are useful in school such as learning to manage their own behaviour.

Staff skilfully use strategies that are used in school with young people, back in the home. These include the use of Picture Exchange Communication System and a 'first and then' board. These tools encourage young people to communicate and make choices for themselves.

Young people make positive progress. Staff positively model important self-care skills and encourage young people to replicate them. This helps to develop independence skills and raise self-esteem.

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

None of the staff team have prior experience of working in a children's home. One staff member reported that this has resulted in some 'teething' problems. Staff also said that they have a limited understanding of their individual roles and responsibilities in a children's home setting.

The home environment is not always as safe as it must be. During a tour of the home the inspector found plug guards missing from bedrooms. This poses a potential risk to

young people.

Staff use their experience of working with young people to safeguard young people effectively. If concerns are noted, information is quickly passed to key professionals and protective action is taken. Staff displayed a good awareness of safeguarding procedures.

Behaviour and risk assessments are good. They offer a clear, individualised picture of young people's complex needs. Staff understand the assessments and respond consistently to young people.

Partnership work with specialist professionals is positive and helps young people reduce their risk-taking behaviour. Staff worked with an occupational therapist to help support one young person to limit incidents of self-harm.

Staff work well with parents. Parents are aware of key targets such as reducing the time that young people spend on using electronic devices, and respond accordingly. This helps promote consistency and reduces confusion for young people.

Direct work with young people helps keep them safe. Young people have a "keep safe" book. This book supports young people to develop an understanding of safe touch and appropriate behaviour in public.

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

Poor leadership has limited development of the home. The registered manager is the only member of staff employed to work in the home who has previous experience of working in a children's home. The registered manager is yet to commence the required qualification course. This was planned to begin in January 2018.

The formal supervision of staff is lacking. The registered manager has not received any formal supervision since May 2018. Despite clear limitations in experience, staff have not received any formal supervision. Furthermore, there have been no formal team meetings since the opening of the home.

Succession planning is poor. The home has failed to employ a deputy manager, leaving the registered manager without any support. During the registered manager's recent period of annual leave, the responsible individual assumed management responsibility. The responsible individual has no previous experience of managing a children's home.

The registered manager has acted to address some of the concerns. Four members of staff are due to commence the required qualification course. As staff work with the same young people in the school, they are able to apply their knowledge of young people's particular needs when looking after them in the home.

Despite the concerns, staff morale is positive. Staff enjoy the opportunity of developing their relationships with young people, away from the more formal structure of the day

school. Staff are eager to learn and develop a new range of skills.

Management monitoring requires improvement. Ofsted has not received a monitoring report or workforce development plan since the home's opening. In addition, the home's statement of purpose does not reflect the experience and qualifications of the staff team. These shortfalls limited the inspector's ability to evaluate the home's progress since it was registered.

The registered manager controls admissions well. Each young person enjoys an extended introduction to the home, at their own pace. However, at present there is no formal procedure to assess the impact of admissions on other young people.

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: 1269565

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Q Plus Ltd

Responsible individual: Freddie Adu

Registered manager: Christine Fishley

Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector

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