

# 1280412

Registered provider: Apex Children's Services

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people, irrespective of gender. The home specialises in caring for young people who have been or who are experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities.

This home is managed by an experienced and qualified registered manager.

**Inspection dates:** 4 to 7 January 2019

**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:** this is the first inspection

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| not applicable  |                 |                      |

## 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   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Specifically, risk management must consider all factors relating to risk and put in detailed measures to mitigate these risks.<br/>(Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> | 08/02/2019 |

### Recommendations

- Ensure that children can see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon during consultation. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are settled and very happy living in the home. A young person commented, 'It is like a family. People are interested in me again.' Young people receive nurturing and supportive care from a committed and stable staff team. Staff invest time in each young person individually and strive to give them the best opportunities.

Young people's attendance and achievement at school and alternative educational provision are much improved due to the determination and encouragement of staff. Young people now value their education and are making plans to study in the future. These are huge steps forward for young people, especially young people who have been out of education for long periods.

Young people enjoy spending time with their friends and participate in recreational activities, such as day trips to the zoo, theme parks and the cinema. One young person has enrolled on a performing arts course to pursue his talents. Photographs show staff and young people enjoying Christmas time together and having fun.

Staff have a good understanding of young people's backgrounds and histories. Memory boxes are being collated with young people to give them an understanding of their life journey.

Care planning is generally good and young people's day-to-day needs, such as routine, privacy and fun, are met. Moreover, staff make sure that young people see their family regularly to maintain these relationships.

Young people are in good health. They are registered with appropriate healthcare services and attend all necessary appointments. Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and to exercise. They receive regular therapeutic input and support in relation to all aspects of their health and well-being from trained professionals.

A warm welcome is part of the introduction to the home, alongside a children's guide explaining how the home runs. A young person's placement has ended due to the placing authority not sharing all the necessary information from the onset. The management team has learned from this and has put in measures to improve its systems.

Consultation is regularly undertaken with young people to ensure that they can voice their views and opinions. However, the results of their views being acted upon by staff are not always fed back to young people to show them that their views count.

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

Young people say that they 'feel safe' and 'comfortable'. Staff help young people to understand risk and how to stay safe through direct work sessions. Young people are encouraged to live like their peers and to enjoy freedom and time with their friends. This is appropriately managed by the staff.

Risk management plans are in place. However, these lack sufficient detail in identifying and mitigating risks. For example, although a nut allergy is identified, other diagnosed food allergens are not identified. This does not ensure that risks to the young person are managed.

Young people's behaviour has improved significantly since coming to live in the home. There are no physical restraints, which demonstrates the respectful and trusting relationships that are developing between staff and young people.

There have been no incidents of young people going missing from care since the home opened. Procedures are in place should this occur.

Safer recruitment practice helps to safeguard against unsafe adults working in the home. Checks with the Disclosure and Barring Service and obtaining references from previous employers are part of this process.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

This home is managed by an experienced and qualified registered manager. He is supported by two deputy managers. Together they set the high standards of care. A nurturing and family environment is prevalent within the fabric of the home.

Staff spoken to during the inspection said that they enjoy their work. They feel supported by the manager and their team members. The staff are suitably qualified or working towards a recognised qualification. They also have regular training, supervisions and team meetings to keep them up to date on emerging information.

There are sufficient numbers of staff members working at the home. They are energetic and passionate about the work that they do with young people.

External monitoring is good. The independent visitor attends monthly and raises actions for improvement. A development plan is in place to improve further the standard of care provided.

Liaison with partner agencies is effective. All professionals contacted spoke very positively about the staff, the communication with them and the progress that young people make. A professional commented, 'It feels like a family home. This is one of the best homes. Communication is excellent.'

## **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:** 1280412

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Apex Children's Services

**Registered provider address:** 6 Tower Quays, Tower Road, Birkenhead, Cheshire  
CH41 1BP

**Responsible individual:** Barry Henry

**Registered manager:** Liam Wharton

## Inspector

Caroline Jones: social care inspector

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