

2484682

Registered provider: Next Stage 4 Life

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 three 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.

The home was registered in August 2018. This is the first inspection since registration. There is a registered manager in post.

Since registration, the home has provided placements at different times for three young people, on both an emergency short-term and a planned basis. During the inspection, the inspector had the opportunity to speak with two young people to gain their views and experiences since moving into the home.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 February 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 **requires improvement to be 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: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date

Not applicable

Inspection type

Inspection judgement

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child and uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(e) and (h))	30/04/2019
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the home at least once each month. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (1)(7)(a))	30/04/2018

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the home has been registered, three young people have moved into the home and one young person has been discharged. Planning for young people to move into the home is exceptionally well executed. The manager and staff work with placing authorities to gain as much information as possible about a young person prior to them moving in. This is even the case in the event of an emergency admission. Young people are encouraged and supported to visit the home prior to moving in. This is to enable them to meet other young people and staff, and to choose the decor of their bedroom. It also enables staff to gain young people's wishes and views about what they would like to achieve and what would help them to do so, and this helps young people feel welcomed and settled from the start of their time living at the home. A commissioner and placing social worker commented positively about the manager and staff's engagement with a young person. The commissioner said, 'The manager and staff were involved in planning the young person's admission from the onset of him moving into the

home. Nothing was left to chance and the young person was enabled to meet the staff team on several occasions prior to moving in and was involved with all aspects of his care planning to make sure his move went as smoothly as possible.' The social worker said, 'Staff worked exceptionally well to help [name] achieve some excellent outcomes during his stay there. However, due to the level of emotional and mental healthcare needs, his needs are currently being met in hospital. That said, the staff provided [a] consistently high level of care and support to enable him to attend education and activities within community-based facilities, which previously had not been an option. The support provided was outstanding.'

Young people attend education and continue to make progress. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the educational support required to sustain this. One young person is supported within school by staff from the home to enable ongoing positive educational outcomes. The other young person continues to attend school and staff take the initiative to make themselves known to teachers to enable open and effective communication to support the young person in all aspects of their educational attainment.

Healthcare needs are known and supported well. Staff have undertaken a range of training to support young people's physical and emotional health. The organisation also has a clinical psychologist who works with young people and provides training, guidance and support to staff to help them to understand the emotional needs of young people and how to provide care that is inclusive of these.

Young people are encouraged to maintain positive links with family and friends in accordance with agreed plans. One parent said, 'I have been made to feel very welcome at the home when I have visited. I am very happy with the care and support they are providing to our child and am confident they are keeping her safe. This is really important and reassuring for me.'

The views of young people are regularly sought to encourage them to have a real say in their care. This includes regular young people's meetings, as well as individual one-to-one support and discussions. Records are well maintained and evidence clearly the links between each young person's overall care needs and areas where they require further support.

Young people take part in a range of activities, both within the home and in the community. Art is a great interest for both young people and they spend time creating pictures and posters for the home. In addition, they have had trips to local leisure centres and cinemas, and further plans are being discussed to make sure they have the opportunity to experience a wide range of activities that can be sustained when they move on to semi-independence.

The home is a large detached property, providing plenty of room for young people to spend time together or have some individual space to themselves if they wish. They are encouraged to personalise their own bedrooms to reflect their individual interests. They are also encouraged to have pictures and photographs in the home to make it feel homely.

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

Young people say they feel safe at the home. Staff place the safety and wellbeing of young people at the centre of their practice. There has been one incident of a young person going missing from the home. When young people go missing, staff follow agreed risk management strategies, ensuring that they act to enable young people to safely return home. Independent return home interviews are conducted to help to understand if there was a specific reason or concern that led to the missing episode.

Staff have undertaken training in safeguarding and child protection. They demonstrate a good understanding of risk and behaviour management to help to maintain the safety of the young people, including risks associated with self-harm. Behaviour is managed well with the use of de-escalation techniques and reassurance, reducing the need for physical intervention. Where this is required, staff make sure they follow agreed strategies and training. Records are maintained to enable oversight of incidents of restraint. However, not all records have been signed off by the manager in a timely manner to ensure effective monitoring. Young people receive positive rewards to reinforce good behaviour. Where a negative consequence is put in place, this is discussed with the young people to help them to understand and reflect on their behaviour. This has had a positive impact. Overall, young people say the rules within the home are fair.

Staff receive support from the clinical psychologist working for the organisation. This includes training on attachment and specific needs of young people. Staff say this training and support have given them additional skills and insight to support and safeguard young people effectively.

Health and safety checks are part of the routine of the home. This means that young people live in a home where health and safety are given high priority to ensure that the home remains a safe place for them to live.

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

The registered manager has been in post since the home was registered in August 2018. He holds the relevant level 5 qualification in leadership and management and has extensive knowledge of working with children and young people in a residential setting. There are plans for a new manager, who has been appointed, to be registered to enable the current manager to have oversight as a senior manager of the company. At the current time, the registered manager still has day-to-day oversight of the home.

Since registration, there have been changes within the staff team. Although most changes happened while there were no children living at the home, there is the potential that this could have impacted on the young people. However, staff now report that the team is established and there are no further staff changes proposed.

Staff have monthly supervision, providing an opportunity for them to reflect on and discuss their practice and for any further developmental training needs to be identified. Staff meetings are also used to undertake training and development of staff, by using research and current issues to help inform their practice. This enables staff to keep their knowledge and skills up to date, and to develop additional skills. Four staff hold the level 3 diploma in working with children and young people, with another four staff currently working towards this qualification.

The home's statement of purpose has been updated and a copy forwarded to Ofsted. It has also been made available to placing social workers and other interested parties to enable them to have a good understanding of the services provided. The home is operating in accordance with this document.

The manager undertakes monitoring of the home. However, some records require additional oversight and signing to demonstrate full oversight of all areas of the home. An independent visitor also undertakes monthly monitoring and provides written feedback to the manager of any areas for further development. However, these reports have not been sent to Ofsted in a timely manner, as required by regulation. This impacts on the regulator's full oversight of how the home is operating and whether there are any areas of concern. Two requirements have been issued in relation to leadership oversight and monitoring reports.

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: 2484682

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Next Stage 4 Life

Registered provider address: Next Stage, Comtech House, 28 Manchester Road, Westhoughton, Bolton, Lancashire BL5 3QJ

Responsible individual: Jeremy Alston

Registered manager: Richard Guy

Inspector

Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

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