

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	17/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC003792
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Lifeworks Charity Limited
Registered provider address	Blacklers Park Road, Dartington Hall Estate, Totnes, Devon TQ9 6EQ

Responsible individual	Tina Tozer
Registered manager	Andrew Edwards
Inspector	Guy Mammatt

Inspection date	17/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC003792

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Checks that staff undertake on young people overnight are not personalised to their needs. Night staff perform visual checks at 30-minute intervals on all young people, regardless of their individual circumstances, and do not assess their needs individually to determine if this monitoring is required or should be increased.
- The manager does not ensure that there is a clear audit trail for reporting incidents to the lead professional involved in the young person's care. Not all incidents are reported in a timely manner.
- The manager relies on agency staff to fulfil the home's regular staffing rota. He does not have systems in place to obtain or review police code of conduct checks for agency staff employees who have recently moved to the UK.
- The manager did not receive a local authority placement plan for one young person prior to when they moved into the home on a permanent basis.
- Staff do not record the medication stock balance totals for young people who live at the home, although these medication records are maintained for young people who visit the home for short breaks. Two medication administration errors by staff have not been notified to Ofsted.

The children's home strengths

- Young people make good progress in many areas of their life as a result of living at the home or visiting for short breaks.
- Young people's choices and wishes are valued, and are included in the operation of the home.
- The home is decorated and furnished to a very good standard. Significant progress has been made over the past 12 months to ensure that the home is more homely and provides a child-focused environment.
- There has been a significant reduction in staff using restraint when supporting young people with challenging behaviour.
- Parents report feeling involved in the running of the home. They feel listened to and can contribute their ideas to enhance their child's experience.
- Staff are caring and attentive to young people's needs. There are good professional development opportunities for staff, who receive a high level of support from their managers.
- There is strong strategic and operational management of the home. The responsible individual and manager have a clear development plan and aspirations to deliver an outstanding service to young people.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality of care standard the registered person must: (2)(b) ensure that staff: (iv) provide personalised care that meets the each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. This relates specifically to assessing the night-time monitoring needs of children.	31/01/2017
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure: (2)(a) that staff: (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; and (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. In particular, ensure that there is a clear and trackable audit trail of all follow-on evidence from incidents and accidents.	31/01/2017
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must: (2)(e) ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child.	31/01/2017
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard, the registered	31/01/2017

person must ensure: (2)(b) that arrangements are in place to: (ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home. In particular, ensure that the home obtains copies of the placing authority care/pathway plans.	
23: Medicines (1) The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. In particular, ensure that there is an effective system to monitor and record all medication stock balances.	31/01/2017
32: Fitness of workers (1) The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. (2) The registered person may only: (b) if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). (3) The requirements are that: (a) the individual is of integrity and good character; (b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; (c) the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and (d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in schedule 2. This relates to ensuring that all required checks, including overseas code of conduct police checks, are completed on agency workers as necessary.	31/01/2017
40: Notification of a serious event (4) The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if: (e) there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious.	31/01/2017

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a charitable trust, providing care and accommodation for children and young people on both a long-term basis and for short breaks. The home provides six short-break and four residential placements for children and young people who may have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or a sensory impairment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
16/09/2015	Full	Requires improvement
12/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/11/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The overall experience and progress of young people living at the home requires improvement, because of weaknesses identified at the inspection that need addressing to support young people's experience fully and to mitigate risk in the medium and long term. The manager has not obtained a local authority care plan for one young person who has been living at the home since August 2016. As a result, he cannot ensure that the home's care plan is in line with the placing authority's aims and objectives of the placement. The manager recognises that staff's responsibilities towards young people who live at the home differ from those for young people who use it as a short-break service. Thus, he is required to obtain a local authority plan before a young person moves into the home or, in an emergency situation, within a reasonable timeframe. Night-time monitoring of young people is not individually personalised to their specific needs. Night-time staff report that they perform visual checks on all young people at 30-minute intervals. Managers confirm that this provision is part of night-time staff's duties. However, when the staff are on shift, they use discretion and will not disturb certain young people. Therefore, there are inconsistent monitoring procedures being used that are not based on young people's individually assessed needs. The recording of medication for young people who live at the home requires improvement, as staff do not keep a record of the amount of medication that is stored and used at the home. Consequently, staff are unable to audit the medication effectively to identify if there has been a discrepancy in its administration. This does not provide effective protection for young people. Young people who live at the home make good progress in many areas of their life. One young person makes good use of the independent living skills that he has learned. He uses the bus to go shopping every week and joins in with a variety of community-based activities, such as a youth club and football team. Other young people benefit from their time living at the home because it has improved their eating habits and their toileting regime, and has enabled them to make friendships and play with other young people. They enjoy listening to music, dancing and listening to stories, as well as going on trips to trampoline centres, a farm and theme parks. Parents of young people who attend the home for respite care state that they have	

witnessed a significant improvement in the quality of care and young people's experiences in the past two years. They observe that young people's communication skills and behaviour have improved since attending the service, which enables more quality family time when they are all together. Parents said that they feel involved in the running of the home and appreciate the opportunity to meet regularly at a forum that involves the deputy manager. Parents feel that leaders and managers are open and have improved the lines of communication with them. They feel that there is good dialogue between the two parties.

The manager has made vast improvements to the decoration and furnishing of the home over the past 12 months. Each area of the home has been decorated in line with a theme chosen by the young people. The 'Marvel comic' corridor has coat pegs with a selection of cloaks so that young people can choose to dress up as a different superhero each time that they stay. The reading area walls are illustrated with young people's favourite fictional characters. Young people look after chickens, rabbits and guinea pigs in the small, enclosed garden. They have access to a sensory room and eat their meals in an American-style diner, complete with a retro jukebox.

The manager values young people's contribution and ensures that their participation is paramount. Young people who live at the home decorate their rooms to their own taste, while bedrooms used for short-breaks remain plain, so that each resident can personalise it with treasured belongings brought with them from home. Young people are involved interviewing new staff, as well as choosing activities and furnishings. One young person was helped by staff to write to the Army, because he wanted to know more about what they do. This resulted in a person from the armed forces coming to the home, explaining their role and showing young people some of their army kit.

Young people are engaged in education. The manager advocates well for them to ensure that they attend school regularly. Some young people complete vocational awards, supported by staff to supplement their learning and to make the most of their time living at the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The recruitment process for staff supplied by an agency requires improvement. The manager does not have oversight to ensure that agency staff's recruitment procedures include police checks or codes of conduct checks from their country of origin when they have moved to the UK within the past five years. The manager does not have a clear audit trail to evidence that young people's lead	

professional is informed of incidents and accidents that occur. Records do not always clearly state in chronological order staff's response to events relating to a cause for concern. In addition, in some cases it has been up to five weeks before the social worker has been notified of an incident/cause for concern. This approach does not help external agencies to monitor safeguarding concerns effectively, and the action taken by leaders and managers in response.

There has been a significant reduction since the previous inspection in staff using restraint to respond to young people's challenging behaviour. There is an evident downwards trend since September 2015. Staff have taken part in child-positive support training, and work collaboratively with families and local authorities to respond better to the young people, who can become unsettled. The decrease in restraint represents a positive shift in staff's culture and the methods used to respond to young people in crisis.

The recording and monitoring of restraint incidents are of a good standard. Records clearly describe why the intervention was necessary, and they include the effectiveness of the measure and discussions with the staff and young people involved. Managers address issues with staff's practice if they feel that restraint was not the most appropriate course of action to take.

The manager's monitoring of safeguarding concerns is effective. A cause for concern that was identified regarding a young person was not reported by staff in line with child protection procedures. The error was investigated and further training arranged for the staff member responsible.

There have been no recorded incidents of young people going missing from staff's care, due to the high levels of staff supervision. Staff do not use sanctions for negative behaviour, as they determine that they are inappropriate. Managers monitor negative behaviour between young people, or in the presence of other young people, both for patterns and to evaluate the impact that it has on others. The views of young people are sought and their reactions recorded following these events. Parents state that bullying between young people is not an issue.

All the necessary physical and environmental checks of the premises are conducted at appropriate timescales. Young people practise fire evacuation procedures to ensure that they know what to do in the event of an emergency.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers require improvement, because temporary agency staff are continually used to fulfil the rota, and two serious incidents were not notified to Ofsted in line with regulation 40 of the	

Children's Homes Regulations (2015).

Managers and staff state that recruitment for new staff is an ongoing activity. Parents' one concern, raised with the inspector, is of staff leaving the home and the introduction of new individuals to the young people. Figures provided by the independent visitor show that agency staff are used every month, and that their use increased in June 2016 and peaked at 20.5% agency cover in August 2016. During the inspection, the manager was not able to evidence that regular individuals are used or show how they are supervised in their role.

Two medication administration errors identified by staff were not reported to Ofsted. In each case, the parents were informed and the young person was reported not to have been harmed. The manager's failure to report the matters to Ofsted does not ensure that the regulatory body is informed of potential welfare issues affecting young people.

The responsible individual and manager have a comprehensive development plan and a clear strategy to improve the service provided to young people and their families. Good progress has been made over the past 12 months, including changing the shift pattern of staff to be in line with young people's needs. Staff now work longer day shifts, which means there are no handovers during the day thus young people do not have to return to the home halfway through the day so that staff can end their shift. As a result, young people have better opportunities to enjoy activities away from the home.

Staff receive good training opportunities. As part of the manager's initiative to improve and value the role of a care support worker, staff are now required to complete a care certificate as part of their induction and to lead into their diploma level 3 award. Staff receive further specific training to support young people's health and behaviour needs. The managers and team leaders provide regular professional supervision to the permanent staff team. Staff said that the managers are approachable for advice, and that they feel supported by them.

Feedback from placing authorities is positive. The manager is praised by two authorities for aiding the successful transition of young people moving into the home. A team manager comments that his young person 'is safe, happy and well looked after' and a social worker said that her young person 'has really developed and moved on' since living at the home.

The manager can demonstrate how attending the home enhances young people's lives. Every young person has their own targets, and staff review them quarterly and set out how young people have improved. The manager uses the targets individually and as a whole to discuss with staff their success and how to improve further.

The manager has been in post from September 2015 and has been registered with

Ofsted since May 2016. He has the skills and experience for the role and is currently working towards the necessary professional qualification within the given timeframe. The manager leads the home with positivity and professionalism. He works well with outside agencies and families, as well as staying in touch with the young people.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance, 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017