

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	11/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC005553
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Dalepeak Limited
Registered person address	Richard House, 9 Winckley Square, PRESTON, PR1 3HP

Responsible individual	Mr Andrew O'Reilly
Registered manager	Mr John Allen
Inspector	Janine Shortman-Thomas

Inspection date	11/08/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC005553

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people are cared for by well trained, suitably experienced and highly supportive staff. Staff are committed to helping young people achieve their individual goals and aspirations and have made a significant contribution to making a difference to young people's lives.
- Admissions are subject to improved assessment and matching. As a result, young people are well matched and their diverse ranges of needs are met.
- Young people's needs, views and wishes underpin all aspects of their care. Staff provide young people with opportunities and support which enable them to influence the running of the home and be involved in the decisions affecting their lives.
- Young people confirm they feel safe and extremely happy living at this home. They share strong attachments with staff that provide them with solid stability and support.
- Staff know how to keep young people safe and ensure their behaviour, risks and vulnerabilities are routinely considered and provided for. Strong links with external safeguarding agencies ensure staff are up-to-date with current themes and trends such as child sexual exploitation and radicalisation.
- Family members and professionals are extremely complimentary about the care and support delivered in this home. They confirm that their children are provided with consistent care by staff who have a detailed understanding of their needs.
- The manager and staff team have developed extensive, strong links with partner agencies which are used effectively and promptly when required.
- Leadership and management is strong. The Registered Manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and a clear focus on driving improvement to ensure young people receive outstanding individualised care and support.
- One shortfall is identified at this inspection which relates to improving the systems for the storage and recording of controlled medication.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. This is with particular reference to updating the current arrangements for the safe storage and recording of controlled drugs to ensure they are carried out in accordance with current legislation and guidance. (Regulation 23 (1)(a)(c))	24/09/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation and it provides care and accommodation for up to seven young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/10/2014	CH - Full	Outstanding
19/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
07/08/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	outstanding
Young people receive unique care and support that is specific and individualised to meet their assessed needs. This is making a significant difference to all young people's lives, especially for those who have recently joined the home. For example young people are much safer and benefit from improved emotional well-being and physical health, as a result of the care and support that is afforded to them. The homes improved referral and admission processes mean that young people's needs are effectively considered before a placement is offered. An impact assessment, which considers the needs of the individual as well as those already in placements, is completed in conjunction with the placing social worker. This ensures the home can meet the identified needs of the new admission without detriment to those already living in the home. This has resulted in a well matched group of young people who make excellent progress in relation to their individual needs. One social worker reported, 'The manager would not allow the placement to commence without all the relevant documentation. We completed the impact risk assessment together on the first day. When I left, I knew she would be safe and they would be able to care for her well. It felt very professional.' Young people are well supported to be healthy and live a healthy lifestyle. Their individual needs are immediately assessed when they arrive at the home and are closely monitored throughout their placement. The home has strong links with a range of healthcare services. Staff ensure young people are quickly registered with routine health services and are supported to access any specialised services they may require. This ensures young people receive immediate care and support to address any pre-existing health needs as well as identifying any emerging emotional and physical health needs which they may have. Procedures for the management and administration of medication are generally robust. All staff are trained and ensure young people receive their medication in line with their individual's plans. Systems for recording the administration and storage of medication are in place and are suitable for the majority of prescribed and non-prescribed medication. However, the arrangements for the storage and recording of controlled medication have not been updated and do not reflect current legislation and good practice guidelines. This has not compromised the	

safety or care of any young person and the manager demonstrated a keenness to address this issues quickly.

Staff value the importance of education and have high aspirations for all young people. They provide good support for young people who maintain exceptional attendance rates at school and are making good progress academically. Positive working relationships with teaching staff ensure any issues or concerns are dealt with immediately to ensure appropriate support is provided and further difficulties avoided. Young people are proud of what they have achieved within school and were confident and enthusiastic to share these experiences with the inspector throughout the inspection.

Young people were seen to be happy in the home and had lots of conversations and interactions with staff and each other. Staff talk fondly about all young people and are confident in their delivery of exceptionally good care. Staff work hard to develop and maintain constructive, trusting and supportive relationships with young people who say they feel valued, respected and safe. When issues or concerns are identified within any relationships within the home, staff work proactively and effectively to address these. For example, staff have undertaken anti-bullying workshops with young people to raise their awareness of their actions and behaviours and how these may impact on others. This action was taken promptly when on one occasion an area of concern was identified during the managers monitoring and evaluation of relationships within the home. This increased knowledge and understanding gained from this workshop and positive role modelling by staff has assisted and supported improved relationships. As a result, there is a calm, respectful and harmonious atmosphere in the home

Young people are aware of their rights and know how they can complain. All young people present during the inspection were able to highlight at least one member of staff who they trust and could talk to if they had any concerns. One young person said, 'The staff are very easy to get along with. They understand they have a job to do but they still have a laugh and joke with you. They are extremely easy to talk to and trust.'

Staff ensure young people are central to their care planning. Young people are actively encouraged and well supported to participate in and influence, decisions affecting their lives. Staff make good use of positive relationships and regularly incite meaningful discussions with young people. This enables them to express their views and opinions about their care. This inclusive approach means that young people take ownership over their lives and plan positively for their future.

Young people are involved in developing care practice within the home. Their

views on how to improve things are routinely sought as part of everyday life as well as a range of quality assurance processes. For example, staff spoke to young people about their feelings and experiences when they were new to the home, particularly focusing on their fears and uncertainties. They have used this information to develop a child-friendly welcome book which supplements the information already provided in the existing children's guide.

Staff are proactive in their efforts in helping young people maintain positive links with important people in their lives. They maintain close links with young people's families and ensure regular, safe contact is actively promoted and facilitated, regardless of the distance. One family member commented, 'They actually come and get her. At her previous place I had to put her on a coach but now someone is always with her now. I am chuffed to bits with this because she is much safer.'

Young people are encouraged to develop appropriate peer relationships and widen their friendship group outside of the home. Staff take a parent-like approach to ensuring these friendships are positive and safe. They get to know young people's friends and liaise with their parents. This enables young people to visit their friends' houses as well as enjoying activities with them and their families, an arrangement which is openly reciprocated by the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
Young people say they feel safe. This is because the manager and staff give young people's safety and welfare the highest priority. This means safeguarding practice is robust. There have been no safeguarding allegations or concerns since the last inspection. Managers maintain strong links with external safeguarding agencies and professionals, including the police and Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). The manager regularly attends a range of local safeguarding forums which ensures the homes safeguarding practice is current, relevant and up-to-date. The LADO said, 'The manager is extremely proactive in working with partner agencies. He utilises the knowledge and resources from safeguarding forums to inform and develop staff practice.' This ensures young people are protected by staff who understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Staff are trained in a range of safeguarding topics. This means they have a very	

good understanding of current themes, including child sexual exploitation and radicalisation and know how to keep young people safe. They have a comprehensive understanding of young people's needs, risks and vulnerabilities. These are detailed in young people's individual care plans and risk assessments. Staff are consistent in their implementation of well thought out strategies, which are designed to effectively manage and reduce young people's risk taking behaviour. As a result young people do not engage in risk taking behaviours such as going missing from home.

Young people feel they are supported and encouraged to improve their behaviour. They benefit from clear boundaries and expectations which are consistently applied by all staff. Staff talk to young people about behavioural expectations and fully involve them in setting their own targets, goals and rewards. The effectiveness of this approach is evident in how young people take increased responsibility for their own behaviour. Consequently, sanctions are rarely used and there have been no incidents of physical restraint.

Young people benefit from living in a safe, comfortable and secure environment. The location of the home is taken into account when considering young people's placements to ensure they are not exposed to any unnecessary risk. Young people are well protected by a range of health and safety risk assessments and checks, which are completed by appropriately trained staff. They know how to safely evacuate the home and could explain this in detail to the inspector.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The home is effectively managed by a suitably qualified and experienced Registered Manager who has been in post since August 2010. He is well supported by a committed and very capable deputy manager and senior residential care worker. Together, they efficiently support a stable and well established staff team who provide young people with a high standard of care and support. All staff complete and are up to date with their mandatory training including first aid, safeguarding and behaviour management. All staff have, or are in the process of, completing a relevant child care qualification. Young people benefit from being cared for by a sufficient number of competent	

staff who are committed to meeting their individual needs. Staff confirm that managers provide them with good support in their everyday practice, as well as regular formal supervision. All staff have their performance appraised annually. Cumulatively, this ensures they have the necessary skills and attributes to deliver a high standard of care for young people. In addition to these processes, good use is made of monthly team meetings, verbal handovers and written shift plans as a means to keeping care practice relevant to meeting young people's current and emerging needs.

The manager makes good use of a range of quality assurance processes including monthly visits by an independent person. The views and opinions of young people, their families and professionals are taken into account and used to assess the standard of care provided in the home. This information is used effectively to address any identified shortfalls and improve the services and support young people receive. For example additional swimming lessons for one young person were sourced and this has now increased their skills and confidence in the water.

A multi-agency approach is taken to meeting young people's needs. Staff work collaboratively with a range of external agencies, including local schools, social workers and healthcare professionals. These links are used effectively to ensure young people are provided with the right services and support to meet their holistic needs. The manager has developed positive links with family members and keeps them regularly updated of their child's progress. Feedback from family members and professionals highlights communication as a major strength. One safeguarding professional commented, 'They always attend meetings, and always come with very good quality information. They clearly know the young people and understand their needs.' One family member reported, 'They keep me informed of what is happening and the way they work with (Name). They are doing a wonderful job and things are definitely looking up for her.'

Suitable action has been taken to address the requirements and recommendations raised at the previous inspection. The processes for assessing young people's needs and matching placements have been improved to ensure relevant information about young people is gathered and rigorously assessed prior to them joining the home. The manager has now completed additional safeguarding training and procedures for notifying relevant agencies about significant events have been improved.

Young people's case records are detailed and clearly identify their individual needs, strengths and vulnerabilities, as well as highlighting their achievements and future plans. The manager is proactive in his efforts in ensuring relevant documentation is provided by the placing authority. For example, if social workers do not provide

updated information when required, he has appropriately challenged and escalated this as a concern. This has ensured young people's records are fully up-to-date and relevant to their care needs.

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*.

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