

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	29/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC005553
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Dalepeak Limited
Registered provider address	Richard House, 9 Winckley Square, PRESTON, PR1 3HP

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

Inspection date	29/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC005553

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff and their peers. They live in a supportive, nurturing and caring environment, which enables them to make good progress within many aspects of their lives.
- Young people report that they are happy and well cared for by the staff. Young people confirm that they get along well with each other and the staff, and are making some positive changes within their lives.
- The manager and staff have forged positive and effective links with partnership agencies. They work efficiently with a range of safeguarding, education, health and social care professionals to ensure that young people's known and emerging needs, risks and vulnerabilities are appropriately managed.
- The staff are passionate about making a positive impact on young people's lives. They speak warmly and affectionately about young people and are clear about their roles to ensure that young people's needs are met consistently.
- The home is managed well. Staff and young people are very well supported by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. The manager is very visible and maintains suitable oversight of the quality of care to ensure that young people's outcomes improve. The manager can demonstrate and articulate the positive impact his service has had on young people's lives.
- Areas for improvement relate to young people's risk assessments, evaluating physical interventions and consequences, and completing direct work with young people around their known and specific needs.

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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard (1) In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that children are protected from harm. (2) In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure that– (b) 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. This is with particular regards to ensuring that the risk management plans clearly identify young people's individual and known risks and how the staff will support, manage, supervise and monitor young people during these times.	31/01/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. In order to achieve this the staff should complete meaningful direct work with children which enables them to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)
- The registered person must ensure that all incidents of discipline are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)
- The registered person must ensure that any child who has been restrained

should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint. Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)

- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record that reflects their voice on a regular basis. This is in particular regards to young people being involved in devising their individual risk assessments and crisis management plans, and signing their physical interventions and consequence records. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.9)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a limited company and it provides care and accommodation for up to five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. This provider enlists the support from a clinical therapist within their care planning for young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Outstanding
26/02/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
16/10/2014	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with staff. The core staff team is skilled in developing positive and nurturing relationships with young people and staff encourage young people to maintain positive and respectful relationships with themselves and each other. Young people clearly benefit from this care, support and encouragement from the staff, who evidently want what is best for them and understand their needs. As a result, young people make good progress in many aspects of their lives. Young people say that they are happy, comfortable and kept safe by the actions that staff take within the home. Professionals are complimentary about the care and support that is offered to young people. Professionals confirm that this support has enabled young people to grow, develop and improve their behaviours quickly. One professional wrote, 'I can see the difference in 12 weeks with [name]. They have a lot more self-belief and more understanding on how different situations can have a negative impact on your life.' Staff value and promote young people's contact with those who are significant to them. Staff facilitate contact in line with young people's care plans and advocate strongly for these contact plans to be put into place when they are not. This helps to make sure that young people's relationships are sustained and nurtured so that they have a positive sense of self and well-being. Furthermore, young people benefit from appropriate contact with their family, friends and other people who are important to them. Young people are encouraged to express their wishes and views freely. Young people have expressed a wish not to take part in group house meetings to discuss any changes to their plans or the home. As such, staff have been creative and use individual consultation meetings. These individual discussions afford young people the time and space to speak freely about what they would like to take part in or what they would like to happen. Young people confirm that staff listen to them and respond promptly to any matters that they raise. Staff promote positive childhood experiences and provide opportunities for young people to have fun. Young people are encouraged and supported to maintain their own individual interests and talents, such as playing the guitar, and are provided with the opportunities to do this. Young people's health and well-being is taken seriously by the staff. Accidents are managed appropriately and young people are supported to seek medical attention	

as required. Staff are aware of young people's individual healthcare needs and ensure that these are addressed promptly. When young people require additional health support, such as child adolescent mental health services, staff are proactive in seeking this. Staff are able to identify any changes in young people's presentation and behaviours and request the appropriate medication reviews. Following the requirement made at the last inspection, staff who are suitably trained store, administer and record controlled medication appropriately.

The staff value education for young people. They work well with all agencies to ensure that a suitable education provision is in place to aid with young people's learning and development. All four young people benefit from a suitable education package and three are making progress with their individual goals. Two young people who joined the home in May and September 2016 are yet to receive a full-time, permanent education provision. These young people are being taught sufficiently within the home on a daily basis by private tutors, funded by the placing authorities, while the manager and education services pursue more permanent education placements. This support and education enables these two young people to maintain their learning while preparing them well for their return back into an education provision suitable for their needs.

Two other young people attend mainstream school. While one young person has received a trophy for making great strides forward and their excellent attendance rates, another young person's refusal to attend school has dramatically affected their attendance and attainment levels. The manager acknowledges this decline in this young person's progress, identifies the triggers for this and is working tirelessly with partner agencies to rectify this. One professional confirmed this by saying, 'They support us the best they can. They use rewards and sanctions if [name] does not come in, but it is very much about [name]. The staff do what they can but [name] knows that they are in control as they know that neither the school nor the staff can make them come in. We just keep trying.'

Young people are helped and supported to learn and develop their life skills satisfactorily. A new independent living plan, which has been created by a member of the staff team, is supporting staff to gauge and enhance young people's skills and abilities in line with their age and capabilities. This base line assessment identifies young people's knowledge and skills are to ensure that the right support can be offered in the areas which require further development.

The large detached home is situated in a residential area. It has easy access to a range of facilities and amenities to meet young people's needs well. The home is maintained to a good safe standard and has benefited from some recent internal and external work. For example, the games room has been painted, a new bath panel has been fitted, and painting and gardening to the exterior of the property have been undertaken. A new maintenance process is now in place to ensure that any further outstanding maintenance requests are completed in a more timely way.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people report that they feel safe and are kept safe due to the actions that the staff take. Staff are clear about their safeguarding roles and responsibilities and have a thorough understanding of the whistle blowing policy and procedures. Staff receive regular training and updates to keep them abreast of any significant changes in safeguarding practice. Complaints and allegations are managed effectively. The manager addresses any concerns made against the home promptly and appropriately. When allegations are made, he ensures that the information is quickly shared with the relevant safeguarding agencies, police and Ofsted. This ensures that thorough and complete investigations are concluded in a timely manner. Consequently, young people's safety and welfare is promoted. Young people come to the home with a history of concerning behaviours including self-harm, going missing, sexualised behaviours and fire setting. The staff are clear about the young people's level of risk and vulnerabilities and can verbalise the actions that they take in supporting young people during these times. That said, the present written risk management plans follow a generic format and do not cover all young people's individual and known risks sufficiently. Consequently, the manager cannot be assured that the staff will consistently support, supervise and safeguard young people with their particular behaviours. Staff contribute well towards young people's individual risk management plans. Staff provide appropriate support and guidance to young people during times of increased anxiety and crisis. They use their knowledge of young people's risks and vulnerabilities well to promote their safety and well-being. When staff are concerned about young people's safety, they take appropriate action to make sure that young people receive the support that they need, including increased supervision, supervised spends and accessing additional support. Young people's risk assessments are reviewed and updated regularly following any significant incident. However, the manager has missed an opportunity to include young people in the development and review of these plans. As a result, young people are not fully aware of these plans and committed to them, they do not see the progress that they are making within these particular areas, and they do not have a full understanding of how they are being supported by the staff to manage their emotions and risk-taking behaviours. Staff provide young people with the care and control to which they are entitled.	

Staff offer them opportunities to relate to adults who are able to demonstrate emotional commitment combined with professional integrity and safe boundaries for behaviour. Positive behaviour is consistently prompted and rewarded. Staff use age-appropriate behavioural techniques which reflect the young person's age, understanding and seriousness of the behaviour. Consequences are used fairly; however, the effectiveness of these measures requires swifter evaluation by the manager to ascertain and ensure that these are effective.

Staff are clear that physical intervention is very much used as a last resort and are more comfortable using their positive relationships with young people to diffuse difficult situations. As a result, there is minimal use of physical intervention. On the rare occasion that staff have needed to apply this practice, the manager reviews these interventions promptly to ensure that these have been safe and appropriate. While the manager ensures that de-briefs with staff take place following the incident, there are no records to confirm that young people have been given the opportunity to speak and write about their thoughts and feelings about these incidents.

The manager and staff work hard to protect young people from harm and as a result, some young people have reduced some of their risk-taking behaviours, such as going missing from the home. While staff do their utmost to protect young people during these times and follow the protocols in place, the manager and staff have missed opportunities to develop young people's knowledge of the risks associated with this and other risk-taking behaviour. There was very little documentary evidence of any direct work taking place with young people to help address their individual and specific risks and vulnerabilities. As a result, young people aren't offered the opportunities to fully consider, learn and reflect on their behaviours in an effort to change and improve these behaviours further.

A variety of health and safety checks and robust safe recruitment practice ensure that young people's health, safety and welfare are promoted.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager is very experienced and well qualified to undertake his role. He is supported in his role by a competent, dedicated and motivated deputy manager who shares his desire to improve the experiences and progress for young people. The management team is highly visible and they sustain positive relationships with the young people and staff.	

The manager is clearly aware of the strengths and areas for development of his services, he learns from his internal and external monitoring and has a clear plan in place to promote continual improvement. His monitoring of young people's progress and development is good and the effective feedback that he receives from the external independent visitor ensure that the experiences and progress of young people continue to improve.

The manager is committed to ensuring that the staff deliver good quality care and support to young people at the home as outlined in the home's statement of purpose. This document and the young people's pictorial and child-friendly Welcome Book provides clear information about the services and support on offer. This ensures that young people, their families and placing authorities know what they can expect to receive when they move into this home.

The manager is making suitable efforts to maintain a consistent staff team through a period of change. Agency staff, staff from a sister home and sessional staff are used to cover shifts within the home when full-time staff are unable to do this. The staff receive good quality support from the management team, which enables them to provide a positive and caring environment for young people. Regular formal and informal supervision, and annual appraisal provide staff with the opportunity to discuss their work and care and well-being of young people regularly. Staff confirm that the managers offer an open door policy and are always available to them. This enables staff access to additional support and guidance as and when they need it.

Staff benefit from a wide range of training and all but one member of the staff team have the required childcare qualification. Suitable plans are in place to ensure that others achieve this within the required time frame. The staff's training is enhanced with a training programme which is designed and organised to support the staff in meeting the specific needs of the young people. For example, staff report that they have found recent training in supporting young people who display sexually harmful behaviours really useful and insightful. This training and support ensures that the core staff team, which is suitably trained and experienced deliver a good standard of care.

The manager and staff are persistent in their efforts to promote positive outcomes for even the most challenging of young people. The manager ensures that young people's care plans are reviewed regularly to ensure that their current and emerging needs can be met. If this is not the case, the manager is proactive and appropriately assertive in raising his concerns with partner agencies and requests meetings to ensure that suitable strategies are identified swiftly.

The manager has nurtured some positive working relationships with his partner agencies. Education colleagues, the designated officer, and colleagues from youth offending teams and specialist teams established to work alongside young people at risk of child sexual exploitation speak positively about the care and support that the manager and staff provide to young people. One professional said, 'The staff

have been good. They bring him to appointments and they are quite good at supporting [name]. He seems settled there. He is happy and he gets along with the staff.' Another added, '[Name] is making good progress. He was going missing from care all the time. He has been missing once since he has been there. The staff dealt with this and he has not been since. He is now saying that he wants to stay there.'

Young people's records and case files are detailed and thorough. They are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that they provide a comprehensive picture of young people's needs, progression and future objectives. The manager is committed to ensuring that he and his staff team have the most up-to-date information about the young people. When this is not the case, the manager professionally and appropriately challenges agencies in order to achieve full and complete records. This is because he wants to be assured that he and his team are providing appropriate care and support to meet young people's individual 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 children looked after 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 that 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 children looked after 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