

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	10/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC005751
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Care Afloat Ltd.
Registered person address	158 Birkrig, SKELMERSDALE, Lancashire, WN8 9HP

Responsible individual	Mr Michael Fletcher
Registered manager	Miss Sharon Mangan
Inspector	Mr Anthony Kyem

Inspection date	10/06/2015
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

SC005751

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people benefit from effective support, help and protection as a result they are kept safe and protected from harm.
- Young people are supported to learn. They attend school regularly and make good educational progress at the home.
- Young people enjoy good health and have access to the services they need to promote their physical and emotional well-being.
- The home maintains effective partnerships with other professional agencies to meet the specific needs of young people.
- Young people know how to make a complaint and they have professional advocates to make representations on their behalf.
- The home promotes contact for young people. However, recent concerns about young people going missing from care have limited them having contact with their families.
- Young people do not consistently engage in positive and diverse activities to promote their social skills, confidence, friendships and hobbies.
- The home is managed efficiently and effectively in way that improves outcomes for 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12. Protection of children standard. In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards. This relates specifically to ensuring staff are able to gain entry to any room in the event of an emergency (Regulation 12. (1) (d))	31/07/2015
11. The positive relationship standard. In order to meet the positive relationship standard the registered person must ensure that each child is encouraged to build and maintain positive relationships with others, in particular, by re-establishing family contact at the earliest opportunity (Regulation 11.(1) (d))	31/07/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that children understand what local leisure and other cultural or religious services are on offer for them, support them to access any relevant leisure passes and encourage them to participate in activities in the community and wider, if appropriate. (The Guide 6.6 page 31)
- ensure when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. (The Guide 9.30 page 45)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This section should outline:

- the home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 1 child who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties
- the home is privately owned and managed

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/06/2015	CH - Full	Good
10/02/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
28/11/2014	CH - Full	Outstanding
04/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The home provides care and accommodation for one young person. The young person has only lived at the home since March 2015. Consequently, they are adjusting to life in a new environment. The young person finds it difficult, and at times stressful, living so far away from home. Staff understand how frustrating this can be for young people. They provide reassurance and facilitate contact for young people. However, there have been a recent safeguarding issue that has prevented home contact from taking place. Young people report, 'Sometimes, staff can be alright, other times we fall out. I'm trying to control my anger but I want to be at home, with my mum. I haven't got my mums shoulder to cry on...I haven't been feeling too good recently and I get stressed with not being at home.' The young person's grandmother reports, 'The only thing I can say, is the care system isn't really helping. It's making it worse. She isn't happy up there. She feels isolated. She has issues and that's why she's there. She is a needy child and they need to work from that perspective...Her attachments are with family.' Young people generally enjoy good relationships with staff, most of the time. Their overall progress and experiences are generally positive. Young people despite, not wanting to live at the home make good progress, in relation to their individual starting points across most aspects of their welfare, physical, social, emotional and behavioural development. Young people benefit from good quality care that promotes their needs and keeps them safe from harm. The young person's social worker reports, 'Extremely pleased with all aspects of care...She wants to live with her mum but she can't move, it's not safe for her. I can't fault the placement... She was really settled. The plan is for her to move back to Birmingham. Contact needs to be set up again; it's something we need to look at. She's high risk at home and low risk there.' Young people attend alternative educational provision regularly. They enjoy good attendance and engagement in school. The home works closely with their schools to promote their educational achievement. The young person head teacher reports, 'She has in general, had good to excellent behaviour in school...with intensive work she has the potential to pull up her grades. There is no reason why she shouldn't achieve, at least 5 GCSEs at the end of her school career.'	

Her social worker reports, 'She's excelling at school and there are some positives.'

Young people have up until recently enjoyed many positive activities at the home. For example, attending the gym, Zumba classes and going to pop concerts, with staff. The young person attributes their lack of current engagement to feeling 'stressed' with being so far away from home. Staff continue to encourage their participation.

Young people have access to the services they need to promote their physical and emotional well-being. They are actively encouraged to attend their routine health appointments. This includes weekly therapy, to promote their positive health. Young people are taught about key health issues and have access to information and advice from staff, to promote their sexual health. There are no current issues with substance misuse or self-harm.

Staff promote young people's independence. Young people are allowed to take reasonable risks to promote their growth and natural development taking in account, their needs and levels of maturity. The young person, due to previous risk taking behaviour has had their unsupervised free time temporarily, removed. This has been done to promote their safety and minimise the risk of them going missing from care. Free time can be earned back and risk assessments are regularly reviewed. Young people have good self-care skills and they enjoy cooking with staff.

Young people know how to make a complaint and their complaints are treated seriously. Details of the home's complaints procedure are included in the home's welcome pack which is given to young people on their admission. The young person has an independent advocate to make representations on their behalf. Consequently, their rights are promoted effectively.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people benefit from effective support, help and protection. Staff do their utmost, to keep young people safe from harm. Risks associated with young people are identified clearly and strategies are in put in place to minimise these risks. Specific risk taking behaviours, such as going missing from care and risk of child sexual exploitation are all known and understood by staff. Staff consistently place the safety of young people at the centre of their practice, irrespective of the challenges this presents. Staff try to anticipate young people's behaviour and they have a good	

understanding of their needs and vulnerabilities. Staff understand how young people's past experiences and presents feelings and emotions can be communicated through difficult and unpredictable behaviour. Staff provide young people with appropriate support to help them manage their feelings and behaviours safely. Young people are also engaged in therapy and anger management.

Young people are kept safe because of the actions staff take, to protect them. The use of restraint is rare and it is only ever used to protect young people from harm. However, a recent restraint has led to the young person making a complaint. This has been reported to the appropriate authorities for investigation. The home has taken appropriate action and the young person's advocate is involved to help and support them. There has been one restraint since the young person admission.

The use of sanctions and police involvement is kept to an absolute minimum. However, due to the young person's increasingly unsafe behaviour police involvement at the home has increased. The police report, 'The home in my opinion is well run and until previously has not had a lot of dealing with the police. They have recently had a young girl housed there who has had to be arrested on several occasions for assaulting staff. The staff are always co-operative and are very good at information sharing.'

One recent incident requiring police involvement could have been prevented. Staff were not able to gain entry to the young person's bedroom due to there being a latch on the bedroom door. The door latch has since been removed to ensure staff can gain access in an emergency. Young people live in a safe and supportive environment that contributes to their safety and well-being. Young people are protected from abuse and all other forms of significant harm. Allegations of abuse are managed professionally and staff are trained in child protection.

Where young people are considered to be at risk of child sexual exploitation the home works pro-actively with other safeguarding agencies to protect them. Staff who work with young people are vetted carefully to protect them from unsuitable people. Significant incidents and concerns are reported to the appropriate authorities. There is good communication between the home and the placing authority, including schools, police, health workers and the families of young people.

There have been three episodes of young people going missing from care. Staff follow the local authorities procedures and protocols for reporting young people missing. They maintain effective partnerships with the police to ensure there is a well-coordinated response to promote young people's safe return. However, return home interviews are not undertaken independently. These are currently completed by staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
Requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. Outstanding repairs have been completed and the young person in placement at that the time of the last inspection was supported to move onto a more specialist placement to promote their safety. Their transition was well-planned and managed by staff. The home employs a well-qualified, suitably trained and experienced Registered Manager who exercises effective leadership of the home's operation. The manager has held their position since, their registration with Ofsted, in 2007. Staff benefit from good support from the Registered Manager. They receive regular, professional supervision to support them, in caring for young people. There are good arrangements for staff training and development. Staff benefit from good quality training so they have the right skills and knowledge to meet the diverse needs of young people. Most staff, are suitably qualified and those who are not qualified are currently undertaking appropriate training to help them achieve a recognised qualification. Staff have all completed induction and mandatory training at the home. The home is managed efficiently and effectively in way that improves outcomes for young people. The Registered Manager routinely reviews young people's progress at the home. They understand the home's strengths and areas for improvement and development plans are in place. Independent monitoring activities take place each month. Young people, staff and the placing authority are routinely consulted as part of this process. Visits are used to form an accurate opinion about the standard and quality of young people's care. A report is produced for the home following each visit. Combined, with the manager's rigorous monitoring activities, there are effective arrangements in place for reviewing and improving the quality of young people's care. The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose and delivers a good quality service for young people and their families. Staff maintain effective partnerships with other professional agencies in order to meet the specific needs of young people living at the home. They work pro-actively and positively with other services to secure improved outcomes for young people. The manager and staff champion the needs of young people. They know how to escalate concerns and challenge professional decisions if they believe they are not in the best interests of 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*.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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