

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	03/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC006010
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	03/09/2015
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	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

SC006010

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- There are effective arrangements for reviewing the quality of young people's care. The performance of the home is monitored efficiently and effectively, by a well-qualified and experienced Registered Manager, who exercises effective leadership of the home.
- Staff maintain effective partnerships with other professionals to meet the needs of the young people in their care. Young people benefit from continuity of care so they have consistency and stability in their lives.
- Young people benefit from effective support, help and protection. They become increasingly safer because of the actions staff take to support and protect them.
- Staff work effectively as a team and are consistent in their approach. They provide young people with effective boundaries to promote their positive behaviour.
- Young people without education are actively supported to resume some form of education, training or employment to improve their life chances and opportunities for the future. Staff work closely with their personal advisors to secure a smooth transition to adulthood.
- Staff don't give up on young people easily, irrespective of the difficulties they present. Young people receive the support they need to move on from the home in a planned and supported way.
- This has been a difficult and often challenging placement due to the young person's disruptive behaviour. However, staff have managed these challenges effectively and prevented a breakdown in the placement.
- The young person who lives at the home did not wish to contribute to this inspection.

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
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None.

Full report

Information about this children's home

- The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one young person who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.
- The home is privately owned and managed.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
07/10/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
17/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
26/04/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The young person who lives at the home makes slow, but sustainable progress in relation to their starting point. They present with some difficult and often challenging behaviour, which staff manage safely and effectively. Staff demonstrate a real commitment and determination to work through the challenges, the placement presents. Young people benefit from well planned, personalised care that promotes their needs effectively. The home offers the young person stability with appropriate rules and boundaries to promote their positive behaviour. The young person is now approaching adulthood and is soon to move on from the home to a new placement. The young person wants to live independently and they are being supported to make their transition a smooth and supported one. Staff maintain effective partnerships with their social worker and personal advisor to promote their readiness for independence. The young person's personal advisor reports, 'In the short time I have been involved I believe they have managed his behaviour accordingly. They maintain regular contact with myself and our service. I have no concerns from my short involvement.' Eligible care leavers are actively encouraged to pursue education, training or employment. Education has proved difficult for the young person to sustain, despite good support and encouragement, from staff. Staff remain committed to the young person's education and they have secured an appropriate training course which the young person starts this month, in building and construction. Staff consistently reinforce the value of young people's education and they encourage them to have realistic and attainable aspirations and goals. Staff promote contact for young people and abide by any restrictions imposed by the placing authority. Currently, the young person chooses not to have contact with their family but they do have regular contact with their friends and peers. Staff allow the young person to take appropriate risks to promote their growth and natural development. This includes the opportunity for the young person to have overnight stays. This arrangement has led to a positive reduction in the frequency with which young people go missing from the home. Staff strive to build positive relationships with the young people. They encourage them to participate in positive activities and contribute to the running of the home.	

However, despite their best efforts the young person keeps adults and other professionals at arms distance, and often proves difficult to engage. However, staff preserve and try their best to make positive inroads. They recently encouraged the young person to go the local gym, which is something they have not done previously. Additionally, the young person attends a youth club on a regular basis with their peers. The young person is approaching adulthood and they prefer to spend their free time with their friends.

A specialist worker visits the young person on a regular basis. Their engagement is sporadic and very much dependent on their mood, at the time. These sessions provide the young person with an opportunity to talk about their feelings and issues. Additionally, they provide an opportunity for staff to receive advice and support to help them meet the specific needs of the young people.

The specialist worker reports, 'I can't fault the quality of his care. He has been difficult to work with given his limited engagement. The staff have helped him with his behaviour...He doesn't want to develop attachments with anybody. He's nearly eighteen and he knows he's moving on.'

Young people are registered with and have access to the health services needed to promote their positive health. Staff advise them about key health issues and they encourage them to lead and maintain a healthy lifestyle. As a result, young people make informed lifestyle decisions and learn to take some responsibility for their own health. Young people have access to and benefit from specialist services, to promote their psychological and emotional well-being. Medical consent is in place so staff are clear about what health decisions and responsibilities are delegated to them.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Staff help young people to manage their conflicts positively. Staff are consistent in their approach and they provide the young person with clear boundaries to promote their positive behaviour. As a result, the young person exercises greater self-control and has made considerable improvements in their behaviour. Staff understand how young people's feelings and emotions can be communicated	

through difficult behaviour. Staff know young people well, they anticipate issues and identify triggers that help them understand and manage young people's behaviour. Risk associated with young people are well known and understood by staff. The use of clear risk assessment and effective behaviour management strategies promote the safety of young people.

The use of sanctions are kept to an absolute minimum. However, when used, sanctions are used proportionately to encourage young people to reflect on the consequences of their negative behaviour. The use of restraint is exceptionally rare, and if used at all, it is only ever used as a last resort to protect young people from harm, accident or injury. There have been no restraints since the previous inspection. Staff adopt a sensible and non-confrontational approach.

Staff receive effective support from a specialist worker to help them understand the rationale and thinking behind young people's behaviour. As a result, staff are supported effectively and they have the opportunity to debrief following incidents of disruptive and challenging behaviour.

Staff are trained in child protection so they know how to deal with allegations and report suspected abuse. There are no current issues with child sexual exploitation. However, staff are trained in child sexual exploitation so they know how to protect young people from all forms of significant harm. Staff are selected and vetted carefully to ensure young people are protected from unsuitable people.

Staff follow the local authorities' joint protocols and procedures for reporting young people missing from care. They maintain effective partnerships with the police and take appropriate action to locate young people, if they are absent or are missing. As a result, there are effective systems to promote young people's safe return. Staff undertake return home interviews with the young people on their return. The manager has requested that independent visits are conducted on behalf of the placing authorities to ensure they meet their own statutory responsibilities.

Significant incidents are notified to the appropriate authorities charged with a duty to protect young people. This ensures information is shared between services so that the right action is taken by the right people to support and protect young people. The home maintains effective partnerships with all professional agencies to keep young people safe from actual harm.

Young people benefit from a warm, comfortable and homely environment. The home is consistently maintained to good quality standards for young people. Environmental safety is managed effectively to promote a safe environment for the young people. Repairs are undertaken promptly and there is an effective program for redecoration and repair. The accommodation provided for young people shows they are valued and contributes to their self-esteem, safety and sense of belonging.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home employs an experienced, well trained and qualified Registered Manager to oversee the day-to-day operations of the home. The manager has worked at the home for many years and has a good knowledge of the young people. The manager effectively prioritises their needs and ensures the home is properly staff and resourced to meet them. Staff report they are well lead and managed. The home is managed efficiently and effectively. Staff benefit from effective support and regular high quality supervision. Staff are effectively supported and they have access to relevant training to develop their knowledge and skills in caring for the young people. Most staff are suitably qualified and those who require an appropriate qualification are being trained. Consequently, young people are cared for by well trained, suitably qualified and experienced staff. The home meets the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. Development plans are in place to sustain the home's continuing development and improvement. Requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed. Risks associated with aspects of the physical environment are now reviewed to promote a safe environment for young people. A new boiler is installed and the water temperature is now regulated to protect young people from the risk of scalding. The performance of the home is monitored independently by a well-qualified, experienced social care professional. The manager learns lessons from feedback and takes appropriate action if there are identified shortfalls. Quality assurance system are effective, in identifying the home's strengths and areas for improvement. Combined, with the manager's own monitoring activities there are effective systems for monitoring the performance of the home. The home maintains effective partnerships with the placing authority, police and other professional agencies to ensure young people have access to the support they need to stay safe. The manager is able to escalate concerns and holds others to account if they feel that support is lacking or decisions are not in the best interests of the young people. Consequently, the needs of the young people are championed effectively. The home actively contributes to young people's review meetings and prepares regular progress reports for the placing authority. As a result, the placing authority is well informed and the home is able to influence decision making in order to improve young people's progress and experiences.	

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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