

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	23/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC006011
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Care Afloat Ltd.
Registered person address	158 Birkrig, SKELMERSDALE, Lancashire, WN8 9HP

Responsible individual	Michael Fletcher
Registered manager	Peter Mahon
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	23/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. The home has experienced some significant challenges since the last full inspection with young people displaying some highly disruptive and destructive behaviour. The three young people who have moved on from the home have not experienced positive endings to their placements and have not had significantly positive outcomes. Some placing authorities have expressed dissatisfaction about the way in which the home has communicated with them and the level to which the young people are prepared for their transition into adulthood. The home's only neighbour has made a number of complaints about young people's anti-social behaviour. Some young people have tried to deliberately force the end of their placement by demonstrating extremely challenging behaviour in order to ensure a move to their preferred placement. Examples of such behaviour are setting off fire extinguishers, spraying graffiti outside the home and forcing their way into the office and taking staff belongings. Other young people have been missing from home for an extended period because this is not their preferred placement. The home caters for young people who live a long distance from their home authorities and this presents challenges when young people wish to be closer to their home and families. The home is pro-active in supporting contact visits for young people over long distances. Young people whose placements have now ended have been involved in drug and alcohol misuse and have had involvement with the criminal justice system through causing damage to the property, theft and threats of assault. They have consumed alcohol on the premises and concealed drugs paraphernalia and weapons in their bedrooms. Staff find it difficult to manage situations where young people's behaviour is extremely challenging and have resorted to containment measures such as locking doors and turning off the electricity supply to the young people's bedrooms. Such techniques do not lend themselves to developing trusting positive relationships with young people and this results in them lacking respect for the staff and the home. Although staff are trained in behaviour management, their skills do not extend to	

fully understanding the impact of a young person's past experiences on their present behaviours. This results in them missing opportunities to communicate with young people and minimises their impact on the de-escalation of incidents.

A serious safeguarding incident was not reported immediately to the host authority and the placing authority which caused a delay in a strategy meeting taking place. This did not directly impact on any young person safety due to the young person having moved on from the placement by the time the allegation was made.

Good progress has been made with the young person currently in placement in addressing her risks. Specifically her risks of missing from home, gang involvement and potential child sexual exploitation have significantly reduced since being placed. The home has implemented a system to record the progress of young people from their starting points which clearly evidences reducing risks and progress towards targets.

In recent months, as the young people's placements have neared their end, their engagement in education has become minimal resulting in them not making progress in this area. For the young person currently in placement, there is a plan to engage her in education but this has not yet been fully implemented and as such she is participating in an extremely limited amount of education.

The home has made a concerted effort to address the issues raised at the previous inspection and has made good progress in these areas. Despite the extensive damage caused by young people in the home the reparations have been undertaken and the home is in a good state of repair and provides a homely environment for the young people. Young people are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms and display their art work around the home.

The home now better evidences the extent to which young people engage with staff on a day-to-day basis and young people's engagement in activities has improved and is evidenced by photographs in the home. Young people have taken part in a variety of activities including Go Karting, cinema, DVDs and pamper nights. The home have identified a restaurant which caters to a young person's cultural diet and have taken her for a meal there.

Although young people have continued to misuse alcohol and drugs and have continued smoking, there is evidence that work has been completed to address these issues through key worker sessions and via the youth offending service. Young people have also been provided with therapeutic support to help them address some of their emotional needs. Additionally young people's engagement in health appointments has improved resulting in their health needs being met.

Managers at this home have an understanding of the challenges of the recent months and acknowledge that young people have not had positive moves from the placement. They understand the impact this has had on staff morale and have provided additional support to the staff team to address this. The manager has

plans in place to settle the current sole occupant in placement before carefully matching and introducing another young person.

Despite the good progress made against the set requirements, the young people who have moved on from this home have been involved in a number of serious incidents which have impacted significantly on their progress and experiences in the home resulting in the judgement of declined effectiveness.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A private company owns and operates the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/07/2015	Full	Requires improvement
26/03/2015	Interim	improved effectiveness
16/12/2014	Full	Good
27/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress

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
8: The education standard In order to meet the education standard the registered person must ensure that staff help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (2)(x)	31/03/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that the homes day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and protect each child effectively from harm. Specifically this relates to drug and alcohol misuse (2)(b)	15/03/2016
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that staff take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. Specifically that child protection concerns should be reported immediately to the local safeguarding services and the child's placing authority (2)(a)	08/03/2016
11: The positive relationships standard In order to meet the positive relationship standard the registered person must ensure that staff understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children (2)(ix)	31/03/2016
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard children should have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home	31/03/2016

(1)(b)	
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Recommendations

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

- Staff should have the skills to respond to each child's individual behaviour. Where necessary they should manage conflict, maintain constructive dialogues and react appropriately if challenged by a child in their care. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 39, paragraph 8.14)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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