

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC006011
Inspector	Elaine Clare
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Care Afloat Ltd.
Registered person address	158-160 Birkrig Digmoor Parade SKELMERSDALE Lancashire WN8 9HP
Responsible individual	Michael Fletcher
Registered manager	Peter Josiah Mahon
Date of last inspection	16/12/2014

Inspection date	26/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Young people receive good care in this home. The Registered Manager is established in his role and is well-trained and qualified. The home received no requirements and one recommendation at this inspection. They received one requirement and two recommendations at their last inspection in December 2014.

The requirement was to ensure that the roof tiles were fixed and this has been completed. The recommendations were to improve attendance at school, and repair the lock on the bathroom window. The home has complied with the recommendations and the young people have been making steady progress to attending school more regularly. One young person has a 90% attendance rate, their highest while being in this placement or previous known attendance from other placements. He states, 'I'm doing really well'.

Young people enjoy professional relationships with staff. Staff receive a good variety of training and have a good and comprehensive knowledge of working with young people. The organisation has a policy that it will not fund staff to undertake their Diploma in Children and Young People. This essential qualification for all care staff working at children's homes has to be self-funded via a student loan. This may potentially prevent quality staff remaining with the organisation and as a result, young people will not be able to benefit from making relationships and building trust with staff.

Young people have access to the organisation's own school and educational placements. For example, The Engine room; a musical classroom. They are supported with attendance and provided with educational tools such as books, games and the internet.

Young people enjoy activities that they have chosen. For example, playing for a local

football team and attending the gym. Staff support young people, and risk assess activities so they can enjoy new experiences and learn from them at their own pace. Young people recently put on their walking shoes and did a charity sponsored walk for Red Nose Day. This gives young people a sense of achievement and it benefits their community. Young people are enabled to move towards independence, both through small steps and other larger achievements.

Young people have their health needs met and promoted by staff. Young people are supported by staff to learn about their own needs and specific areas of their own care to help them become more independent in dealing their own health issues, including smoking and the occasional cannabis use.

Young people at the home have very different and specific needs. Staff have created comprehensive plans and risk assessments, and these have been shared with the young people. The home ensures that young people can take part in and attend review meetings of their plans.

The manager continues to ensure that the young people live in a well-cared for environment, which is safe and secure. Where young people go missing, the home try to ensure they maintain contact on a regular basis and young people return within set timescales. If they do not return, the home ensures the local police protocol is used, and clear information is available for each young person on where they might be. Young people are able to voice their opinions and complain if they are unhappy.

The home has an experienced manager who has supported the team to change ideas and working practice to ensure young people needs and complex issues are addressed through supportive, trusting relationships. The manager ensures the home is always reviewing its practice and developing to provide young people with a good place in which to live.

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
16/12/2014	Full	good
27/02/2014	Interim	good progress
10/12/2013	Full	good
19/12/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

Recommendations

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

- ensure there is a good quality learning and development programme which staff and volunteers are supported to undertake. It includes induction, post-qualifying and in-service training to enhance individual skills and to keep staff up-to-date with professional and legal developments; in particular consider that staff do not have to self-fund their essential qualifications (NMS 18.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.