

SC006294

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for four children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The registered manager has been in post since 2009 and has an appropriate qualification.

Inspection date: 19 February 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 7 August 2018

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 good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.

The response of the home to the education difficulties for one young person has not been good enough. Although the registered manager had frequent contact with the placing local authority, they did not escalate their concerns and the required action was not achieved. As a result, one young person missed an opportunity to begin a college course, and remains out of education. A requirement is made.

One placing authority has failed to carry out essential tasks throughout the placement of a young person. The registered manager did not escalate concerns, despite being advised to do so by the independent visitor. As a result, the local authority continued to perform poorly. This means that the appropriate plan for one young person was not

identified quickly enough.

When children and young people are not in education, members of staff do not engage them in structured activities during the day. Children and young people become used to doing nothing productive. This affects their confidence and makes it more difficult for them to return to education. A recommendation is made.

The home needs a great deal of work to make it homely and welcoming. Communal areas need redecorating and some furniture should be replaced. Some of the children's and young people's bedrooms need repair and redecoration. One young person said, 'the whole place needs refurbishment'. Without such improvements, the young people do not feel that they are valued. A recommendation is made.

The registered manager has not always been aware of deficiencies in how members of staff record significant incidents. When important direct work has not taken place, the registered manager does not always know. As a result, children and young people are not helped to understand the significance of their actions. A requirement is made.

When children and young people go missing, members of staff follow protocols closely. This includes looking for them in the local community. Members of staff update risk assessments. However, members of staff do not always have discussions with children and young people that help them to understand their risks. As a result, some children and young people continue to go missing regularly.

The home tries to engage children and young people in activities. However, there is not enough consideration to what will interest everyone. During school holidays, insufficient thought is given to planning suitable activities and events. Children and young people have little to look forward to, and become bored.

Members of staff have positive relationships with some of the children and young people. Staff encourage children and young people and praise them when they do well. As a result, some children and young people are making progress in the placement.

The registered manager undertook group-living assessments for children and young people who have recently moved into the home. These assessments are detailed and identify risk. As a result, children and young people who have moved into the home since the last inspection are safe.

The registered manager has collected feedback from a range of people connected with the children and young people. This feedback informs the registered manager about some aspects of the home. Gathering feedback was a requirement at the last inspection. It has been met at this inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2018	Full	good
15/08/2017	Full	requires improvement to be good
10/03/2017	Interim	improved effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff– seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation. (Regulation 5(a)(b)(c)(d)) In particular, the home must challenge the local authority about the plans for education for young people.	29/03/2019

The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that– helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to– understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(f)) In particular, the registered manager must ensure that staff record key information in the young people's case files in such a way that progress is easy to monitor.	29/03/2019
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Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, the home should be maintained to a level that means that children and young people feel valued.

- Where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school roll for some other reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. If no education place is identified by the placing authority, the registered person must challenge them to meet the child's needs under regulation 5 (engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC006294

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Dove Adolescent Services Limited

Responsible individual: Barbara Whittaker

Registered manager: Amanda Farnaby

Inspector

Jane Titley, social care inspector

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