

SC006921

Registered provider: Five Rivers Child Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home may provide care and accommodation for no more than five young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home has access to an on-site school and a dedicated psychology service.

Inspection dates: 16 to 17 August 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children benefit from high-quality care. They make good progress and respond well to the nurturing care, constant encouragement and praise they receive from staff.
- Comprehensive care planning demonstrates a strong understanding of children's needs. Children engage with staff to identify their own meaningful targets.
- Children benefit from the on-site school. Children participate in education and they enjoy learning. An example of this is reading for pleasure.
- Children grow in confidence and maturity. Scrap books assist with their life story work, and collate fond memories of their life at the home.
- Children participate in a wide range of activities, which include going away on a summer holiday.
- A clinical psychologist ensures that children and staff receive weekly support. There are improvements in children's emotional and mental well-being.
- Independent living skills are encouraged. Older children benefit from a semi-independence programme, which enables them to manage their own budget.
- Children feel safe and there are effective safeguarding arrangements. Staff help to raise children's awareness regarding internet safety and the dangers of grooming, and child sexual exploitation.
- There are strong and compassionate leadership and management arrangements. The registered manager has 33 years' experience of working within teaching and residential care.
- Children receive care from an experienced, culturally diverse staff team. Staff feel valued and they demonstrate a commitment to the role. They benefit from a wide range of training opportunities.
- Feedback from professionals and parents is considerably positive.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Minor shortfalls do not impact on the high-quality care provided to children. Shortfalls relate to improving documents, record-keeping, staff appraisals and outdoor activities.
- There was one occasion when the restraint record had an incorrect date and the initials of a child were not detailed.
- Records do not consistently demonstrate that children are supported to develop understanding and empathy towards others.
- Records do not evidence that all aspects of complaints and poor behaviour are always challenged and discussed.

- Staff appraisals do not take into account the views of children and professionals.
- The children's guide does not help children to understand the therapeutic way that staff work with them.
- The home should consider a child's request for more outdoor equipment for the garden. This will enable the children to further enjoy the garden.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/01/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that children are supported to develop understanding and empathy towards others. Poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.11)
- Ensure the children's guide helps children to understand the statement of purpose of the home. This refers particularly to the therapeutic nature of the care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- Ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to identify effective practice and respond promptly where there are issues and trends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- Ensure that children are able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22)
- Ensure that staff appraisals take into account, where reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member over the year and children in the homes care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)
- Consider a child's request for more activities for the garden. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 31, paragraph 6.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children benefit from high-quality care. They make good progress in relation to their starting points. Children have the opportunity to thrive and they respond well to the nurturing care, constant encouragement and praise. A child described the home as 'good'. They only thing the children would like is more outdoor activities for the garden. Parents describe the care as 'brilliant'. A parent explained that their child was 'happy' and has 'been able to excel'. An independent reviewing officer confirmed that the care was 'absolutely life changing'. A number of parents and professionals confirm that 'nothing could be improved'.

Children actively participate in individual and collective decision-making. House meetings enable them to influence menus, activities and life at the home. House meetings also provide an opportunity to celebrate children's achievements. They also provide a space

to discuss current affairs. Examples are the Manchester bombing and the Grenfell tower fire. Children know how to complain and there has been one complaint since the last inspection. However, the records did not evidence that all aspects of this complaint had been addressed. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on.

Comprehensive care planning demonstrates a strong understanding of children's needs. Children engage with staff to identify what they want to achieve. This results in them having clear and meaningful targets. Plans detail the children's likes, dislikes, incentives and goals. A social worker praised the 'child focused' way that staff work. Children benefit from regular key-work sessions, which enable them to address a range of personal issues. Topics covered include sexual health, the law and sexual consent, and how to prepare for their statutory reviews.

Children benefit from the on-site school, which enables them to receive personalised educational support. This is a valuable resource for children who are unable to attend mainstream education. Children make good progress, which is formally recognised by them receiving certificates regarding their attendance, work and behaviour. Children can also access books outside of school hours, which enables them to read for pleasure. Staff display a good understanding of the importance of further education and training. Older children have successfully enrolled in college and obtained apprenticeships.

A social worker described how a child was 'much more sociable', 'more mature' and had 'grown in confidence'. Staff help children to develop a positive self-identity, positively working to raise children's self-esteem and self-worth. Scrap books assist in the children's life story work, and collate fond memories of their life at the home. A child recognised their growth, explaining that staff 'helped me to become who I am now'.

Staff make good efforts to promote equality and diversity. Children eat an international menu and racist language is challenged. Children receive support to practise their faith, an example being going to church. Staff act as positive role models and they encourage children to be proud of who they are. There is a good understanding of gender identity. Birthdays are celebrated and children receive gifts of their choice, an example being a mobile phone.

Children participate in a wide range of activities. This includes trips to the cinema, bowling, ice skating, meals out, clothes shopping and arts and crafts. In the home, the children enjoy baking, pampering sessions and watching their favourite box sets and movies. Children have recently returned from their summer holiday, which they greatly enjoyed.

Children lead relatively healthy lifestyles. Children eat a balanced diet and they receive assistance to maintain a healthy weight. They have the opportunity to exercise in the home and at the gym. There are improvements in children's personal hygiene, and emotional and mental well-being. Children can discuss their feelings every week with the clinical psychologist. Staff also encourage the children to attend appointments with the children and adolescent mental health service. Children are up to date with all their health appointments. They benefit from having a doctor's surgery a few doors away. Staff securely store, administer and audit medication.

Children can maintain contact with their family and friends, if it is in their best interests. Family members and friends are also able to visit the home. Staff can also assist with supervising their time together. Staff build trusting relationships with parents. An independent reviewing officer praised 'the flexible and creative way' that staff worked with a child's family 'in quite difficult circumstances'. A parent confidently stated that they had 'no worries with leaving my daughter and walking away'. This parent appreciated that staff are 'warm', 'welcoming' and that 'they listen'.

Children receive encouragement to develop their independent living skills. They take turns to cook meals and assist with household chores. Older children benefit from a semi-independence programme, which enables them to manage their own budget and purchase their own food. They learn practical skills, examples being how to write a letter, complete an application form and make an appointment. A child felt that this was 'amazing', confirming they had 'learned quite a lot'. Staff help older children to make the transition into supported living within the community. A social worker praised this area of work, stating that a 'new placement was successful thanks to the staff team'.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Children feel safe and there are effective safeguarding arrangements. The home provides a stable base for them. Since living at the home, children's behaviour and their mental health have stabilised. There are less challenging incidents and fewer episodes of children going missing from the home. Occasionally, children argue amongst each other. This can result in unpleasant name calling. However, records do not always indicate that staff have challenged and discussed these events with children, or consistently evidence that children are supported to develop understanding and empathy towards others.

Staff tend not to sanction children, preferring to use a positive reinforcement model. There is a personalised system, which rewards good behaviour. Children enjoy the opportunity of earning extra money or meaningful treats. An example of the latter is a day out with the registered manager, clothes shopping, or going to a place of interest.

Occasionally, staff have to physically intervene to protect a child from causing harm to others. There was one occasion when the incorrect date was recorded in the restraint log and the initials of the other child were omitted. These omissions do not enable the registered person and staff to identify effective practice and respond promptly where there are issues and trends.

Staff help to raise children's awareness regarding internet safety and the dangers of grooming and child sexual exploitation. A social worker stated that they would recommend the home 'for girls with child sexual exploitation problems'. Staff additionally use a child sexual exploitation measurement tool to inform their thinking, when there are concerns. Children also receive relevant education and support to prevent radicalisation and violent extremism.

Children receive support to manage their mood swings. They learn to identify what makes them angry and how they can calm down. They establish their own coping strategies, which include talking to someone, listening to music, and walking away from the situation. Children also learn how to manage their anxiety and stress. Their coping

strategies include deep breathing and dancing. Children express remorse at their emotional outbursts. A child explained, 'I hate the bad behaviour I have shown.'

There are good health and safety practices. The home has a good risk-management system, which addresses individual and environmental risks. The updated location risk assessment comprehensively details the full benefits of and threats from the area. Extensive certificates further confirm the safety of the premises. Voice alarms are on each door, which enable staff to monitor movements throughout the house. Staff undertake regular health and safety checks. Robust recruitment practices protect children, which ensure that unsuitable people do not work with them.

Staff benefit from a wide range of safeguarding training, which informs their knowledge on important issues. There are good partnership arrangements with the designated officer, local police and the British transport police. This ensures allegations and missing episodes are managed efficiently. Leaders and managers acknowledge when they are unable to meet children's complex needs. They work with placing authorities to ensure a smooth transition to the next placement.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Effective leaders and managers ensure that children benefit from a high-quality service. An independent reviewing officer confirmed 'I have been consistently impressed with the quality of the care.' There are strong and compassionate leadership and management arrangements. This includes good consideration of the welfare of staff and the impact of the work on their well-being.

The home's statement of purpose summarises the service and clearly details the guiding principles, aims and objectives. Children have their own guide, which is available in audio and in an extensive range of other languages. However, the children's guide does not include any reference of the model of therapeutic care that staff follow. For example, it does not include the six fundamental elements, which are playfulness, love, acceptance, curiosity, empathy and consistency.

The registered manager is a qualified teacher and has relevant management qualifications. She has been in her current role for over five years. The registered manager has 33 years' experience of working within teaching and residential care. The management structure is strengthened by strong deputy and senior arrangements. A parent described the registered manager as 'fantastic'.

Children receive care from an experienced and culturally diverse staff team. Staff say that they feel valued and they demonstrate a commitment to their role. Staff take pride in children's achievements. There is good peer support. Staff take pride in the way that they work, seeing themselves as a 'family'. An example of this is a staff member fondly referring to the registered manager as 'Mum'. A child described staff as 'nice'. A parent stated that staff were 'very patient and tolerant'.

Staff benefit from a wide range of training, which includes the required vocational training. Team meetings provide an opportunity for reflective clinical supervision with the organisation's psychologist. A staff member explained that this 'helps with forward thinking and gaining insight'. Staff also have regular individual supervision sessions,

which a staff member describes as 'helpful'. Staff have their performance formally appraised every year. However, the appraisal system misses the opportunity to take account of the views of children and involved professionals.

Children benefit from a quality-assurance system, which is focused on enhancing their quality of life. Comprehensive monthly monitoring reports highlight the home's strengths and identify areas for further improvement. The registered manager completes an extensive evaluation of the quality of care. This take into account how they meet the quality standards and their plans to achieve positive outcomes. The organisation is currently introducing a paperless computerised record-keeping system.

Leaders and managers have effectively addressed the recommendations from the last inspection. Children benefit from improvements in the record-keeping and documentation. Children are able to contribute to their records. They receive better protection from the identification of local risks, as detailed in the location risk assessment. The updated safeguarding policy provides clear guidance on referring child protection concerns at weekends and during the absence of the registered manager. Restraint records are now streamlined to avoid confusion and the potential to miss emerging trends.

Children live in a spacious, detached house in a quiet residential area. Shops, amenities and a park are a short walk away. The premises are currently being refurbished, the aim being to create a well-maintained, homely atmosphere. Children benefit from redecorated rooms. They can relax in the television lounge and their artwork is on display on the walls. Mealtimes are a social occasion, where staff and children eat together in the kitchen/dining room. Children have their own telephone booth, which includes the contact details for organisations that can help them. A separate room is available for meetings. The registered manager and staff have an open door policy, which enables children to approach them easily when they are in their offices. Children benefit from a very large back garden, which has a trampoline and garden furniture. A child requested more outdoor equipment to enable them to further enjoy the garden. They gave an example of being unable to use the stationary bat and ball game, as it was broken.

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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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: SC006921

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Five Rivers Child Care Limited

Registered provider address: Five Rivers Childcare, 47 Bedwin Street, Salisbury SP1 3UT

Responsible individual: William Crosby

Registered manager: Naome Muzeremwi

Inspector

Sharon Payne, social care inspector

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