

SC007290

Registered provider: Adeza House

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This private home provides accommodation and support to up to four young people who are between 11 and 17 years old, and who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties or mild mental disorders. The company owns another children's home in the area.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 September 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: 4 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Leaders, managers and staff fulfil their roles with high professionalism and genuine care for young people.
- The home is managed effectively.
- Leaders, managers and staff work in partnership with other professionals to plan and deliver effective care.
- Young people are listened to. They receive individualised staff support of a high standard.
- Young people have their needs met and are making good progress across different areas of their lives.
- Staff are skilled at forming positive relationships with young people.
- The risk management practices are proactive and collaborative keep keep young people safe and promote their welfare effectively.
- Staff support young people to maintain positive and safe relationships with their families and friends.
- A well-planned induction into the children's home enables young people to settle with ease.
- Staff prepare young people well for their transition to adulthood.
- The independent person's detailed and child-focused reports contribute effectively to the evaluation of staff practices and their impact.
- Leaders, managers and staff are aware of the home's strengths and areas for development, and take action to improve this children's home.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Monitoring of incidents is variable.
- Records of sanctions are not stored in an easily accessible manner.
- The complaints procedure does not provide information on dealing with complaints about the management of the home.
- Staff do not consistently follow the guidance provided in individual children's risk assessments.
- The staff recruitment policy is incorrect.

- The practice of recording children's information in the home's logbook undermines efficient maintenance of children's case records.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2016	Full	Good
30/12/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/09/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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
The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard requires the registered person to—(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13.2(h)) In particular, the registered person must monitor significant events effectively. In particular, the incidents relating to medication or when children are absent without authority or go missing.	01/12/2017
Storage of records The registered person must ensure that the following items, which may be kept in electronic form, are kept in an accessible manner—(h) records of the use of measures of control, discipline or restraint (see regulation 35). (Regulation 38(h))	01/12/2017
Complaints and representations The registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate. (Regulation 39(2)) In particular, the registered person must update the procedure to include information about dealing with complaints against the management of the home.	01/12/2017

Recommendations

- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the

home ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28). In particular, the registered person should ensure that staff implement reporting procedures consistently and in line with the individual children's risk assessments.

- As set out in regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimise potential risks to them ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1). In particular, the registered person should review the staff recruitment policy to bring it in line with safe practice. The policy must make clear that they take all reasonable steps to obtain full information about a prospective staff member to minimise potential risks to children. In particular, the policy must specify that they do everything they can to obtain an up-to-date Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check, before a staff member starts working with children and young people.
- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3). In particular, the registered person should review the current practice of recording children's information in the home's logbook before transferring it into the children's case records at a later date.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people receive good care from skilled staff. Leaders, managers and staff work in partnership with other professionals to plan and deliver effective care. Young people have their needs met. As result, they begin to develop feelings of safety, security and positivity. With the emergence of these feelings, their self-esteem and confidence increase. They begin to engage more positively with people and services that are available to promote young people's positive outcomes.

Young people have made good progress across different areas of their lives. One young person who recently left said that the home has helped them to change their life.

Staff are skilled at forming positive relationships with young people. They welcome young people with a well-planned, week-long induction into the children's' home. This enables young people to have a positive experience of moving into the home. As a result they begin building positive relationships with staff from the start.

Staff know young people very well and understand what is important to them. They use young people's interests creatively to nurture positive relationships. They enable young people to share their views, wishes and feelings while doing something that they enjoy.

For example, staff carried out 'return to care interviews' while making pancakes with a young person in the kitchen or walking with them at the park. For one young person in particular, being able to talk about their feelings has been a major achievement. This has had a positive impact on this young person's communication skills and social engagement. Other young people have also made significant progress in their emotional, social and psychological well-being. They are more relaxed and are able to deal with their anxieties in more positive ways.

Staff support young people to maintain positive and safe relationships with their families and friends. Staff build positive relationships with young people's families in line with the young people's care and placement plans. One young person has recently returned to live with their family. The positive changes in the young person's behaviours made this possible. Another young person was looking forward to being reunited with their family.

Young people described the home as a good place and said that the staff were nice people. Positive relationships between young people and staff underpin young people's more constructive behaviours and increased safety.

Young people's educational attainments are varied, but they have all made some progress. Many young people come to the home with a history of disengagement with formal education and poor learning skills. Their case records evidence clearly that managers and staff have explored every possible option for promoting each young person's learning progress and positive educational outcomes. This has included arranging for extra individual tuition over the summer break. Some young people have made good progress academically, and attend further education establishments.

Young people have good opportunities to choose from a wide range of recreational activities that they enjoy, such as horse riding or going to a football match to support their favourite club. A young person talked about the happy memories that they had of the time when they lived in this home. In particular, they remembered having holidays abroad, visiting interesting places and enjoying birthday parties in the home. Young people enjoy having fun together and develop friendships.

Staff prepare young people well for their transition to adulthood. They help young people to develop the life skills that they need in order to live independently. Since the last inspection, two young people have moved successfully on to semi-independent accommodation.

Regardless of the reasons for the placements ending, young people who left talk positively about their relationships with staff and the impact of this home on their lives. For example, a young person whose placement was terminated by the home said that this was still the best home that they knew. This young person had many placements before living in this home for over two and a half years. The home provided this young person with stability, safety and positive experiences for a significant part of their childhood. Another young person who used to live in the home visited recently to enquire about any employment opportunities. This young person responded to the positive experience that they had in this home by wanting to provide the same for other

young people who were in a similar situation to the one they had been in.

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

Good arrangements are in place to protect young people from the risk of harm and promote their welfare.

Staff receive training on various safeguarding topics on a regular basis. They have a good understanding of a wide range of risks that young people might face, and know how to protect them. Staff use every opportunity to talk with young people about their safety. Effective key working plays a significant part in promoting young people's increased safeguarding awareness and safer behaviours. Staff encourage and support young people consistently to engage in constructive, positive and safe behaviours.

Risk assessments are individualised. Staff use safeguarding strategies that are specifically tailored to address the vulnerabilities of particular young people, and follow these in practice. However, on one occasion, staff members did not follow the young person's risk management plan regarding safeguarding this young person from the risk of child sexual exploitation. The written plan required staff members to report this young person immediately to the police, if their whereabouts was unknown. The staff members continued to speak to the young person on the phone and did not report them to the police straight away, which meant that the police were not informed for over two hours. The young person returned to the home of their own accord the following morning, appearing safe and well. However, it is important that young people receive consistent responses from all staff members, all the time.

Staff recruitment files contain all the required information to demonstrate that all checks have been completed. The records evidence sound staff recruitment practice. However, the home's written policy on staff recruitment is incorrect. The policy currently allows for people to start working at the home with old criminal records checks that were obtained by their previous employer. This shortfall has not placed young people at risk of harm and leaders and managers stated their intention to amend the policy without delay.

Staff provide a safe, nurturing and orderly environment. The home is free from bullying and intimidation. Young people are clear about the house rules, such as smoking, alcohol, drugs and weapons not being allowed on the premises. They know what is expected from them, and know what they can expect from staff. Young people sign a behavioural contract with the registered manager. In addition to clarifying behavioural boundaries, the contract gives young people a sense of ownership, responsibility and control.

Leaders and managers have created a culture in which staff listen carefully to young people and respect their views and feelings. Leaders, managers and staff take into account what young people say about their needs. For example, when a young person told them that he found it much easier to trust male staff, they requested a male mentor from the local authority and addressed the gender imbalance on the staff duty

roster. This young person's key worker is a male staff member and there is another male staff member who works with this young person on a regular basis. Female staff members have continued to build positive relationships with this young person. While being sensitive towards this young person's expressed views, staff have continued to gently challenge these views and provide a positive model of professional care that does not relate to gender.

Young people are confident that staff will always be there to protect them'. This includes the young people who find trusting adults really difficult. All young people report having at least some staff members who they could talk with about any issues. This is particularly important when young people struggle to engage with their social workers or other care professionals.

The risk management practices in the home are proactive. An example of this is that staff talk with young people about recognising and protecting themselves from radicalisation, extremism and terrorism on a regular basis, and before any concerns arise.

Staff respond decisively and appropriately when risks are identified. This includes low-level risks. For example, staff discovered that a young person created a computer password that included the name of a known terrorist. Staff liaised with the young person's local authority and completed a radicalisation risk assessment. They spoke to the young person about this terrorist, the harm that he has done and the consequences of associating with him and his ideology. The young person said that he had done it as 'a joke', without understanding what it really meant. Following the home's intervention, the young person apologised and changed the password.

The risk management practices in the home are collaborative. Leaders and managers work closely with local authorities during the admission processes, placement planning meetings and other statutory meetings, and on an ongoing basis, to identify risks for each young person and agree safeguarding strategies. Other professionals, for example from the police or from health or education, contribute to the risk management plans as appropriate.

The home has developed close links with the local police force's lead officer for safeguarding children and young people from child sexual exploitation. An example of the effective joint safeguarding practice relates to a young person who was admitted to the home with a recognised high risk of being vulnerable to child sexual exploitation. In partnership with others, staff were able to keep this young person safe. They helped the young person to adopt safer behaviours in and outside the home's protective environment. The risk reduced significantly to the point that the young person was taken off the risk register.

The risk management practice in the home is effective overall at keeping young people safe. When the behaviours that put young people at risk were not reducing due to the risks in the locality, leaders and managers worked closely with the placing authorities to help young people to move out of the area. Meanwhile, they kept the young people as

safe as possible.

Leaders, managers and staff have detailed knowledge of the risks in the local area. They keep the general risk assessment regarding the location of the home up to date. In addition, they complete a specific locality risk assessment for each individual young person at the point of considering their referral to live in this home.

Health and safety in the home is good. Required checks take place regularly to ensure that the physical environment remains safe and hazard free.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been successfully managing this children's home since its beginning, almost 20 years ago. The registered manager has appropriate qualifications, experience, leadership attributes and management skills. The home is managed with efficiency, care and commitment to children. The registered manager is also the registered provider for this and the other children's home owned by the company.

The registered manager has ensured that the home is appropriately resourced to fulfil its statement of purpose. The recent restructuring reflects the registered manager's intent to continue to develop this children's home further. For example, in addition to the deputy manager's position, the registered manager has created four new posts for team leaders. The registered manager has successfully recruited staff to these posts. This has greatly strengthened the management capacity in the home. It has also freed the registered manager to focus more on ensuring the quality of the provision and developing strategic initiatives to improve the home further.

The ways in which some of the records are kept currently are not conducive to easy collation of information and effective monitoring. The information about some significant events, such as sanctions, is only kept on the individual case files. Although this enables good monitoring of the use and effectiveness of the behaviour-control measure with regard to the level of individual children, it does not support monitoring in terms of the level of the home as a whole. At the inspection, the registered person had to arrange for staff to look through numerous individual files in order to produce basic information on the sanctions and the frequency of young people going missing from the home and being absent without authority. This included 10 files that have been archived.

Monitoring of the records of incidents is an area for improvement. On one occasion, the registered manager failed to monitor records relating to an incident. This incident related to medication. The information recorded on the medication records, the incident record and the young person's statement did not match. The registered manager had not identified and reconciled the inconsistencies. However, it was clear that since that incident, the arrangements for the storage of medicines and monitoring of medication have improved, and are now good.

The registered manager ensures that policies and procedures are subject to a periodical review, and are kept up to date with the developments in the social care sector.

However, the home's complaints procedure requires further revision. It does not specify clearly how complaints made against the registered manager are dealt with. This is particularly important, as the registered manager is also the register provider, and is closely related to the only other director of the company.

Staff duty rosters show that appropriate staffing levels are maintained at all times. Staff either have a relevant qualification, or are working towards obtaining it. In addition to the registered manager, three other staff members are qualified social workers. Some staff have additional qualifications, such as in nursing and law. They are therefore able to use their specialist knowledge to further enhance the strength of the team.

All staff receive good-quality supervision on a monthly basis. The minutes of these meetings demonstrate the home's commitment to reflecting on the effectiveness of the care practices and on developing staff competencies. Regular formal reviews of individual staff performance and a comprehensive training programme underpin the professional development of staff.

Leaders, managers and staff are keen to learn from others and share what they know about effective practices. They work closely with the placing authorities and other services to remove any barriers to young people's progress. Social workers receive regular monitoring reports that provide clear information about the progress that the young people have made. This progress is recorded by using the quality standards for children's homes as a comparison/guideline. Social workers talk positively about their partnerships with the home and the staff's contributions to the statutory meetings. One social worker commented that staff are very proactive in sharing information and advocating for young people.

The registered manager has introduced a new electronic system for record-keeping. She hopes that the new electronic system will address the weaknesses that are present in the current recording practices. Although the new system is not currently in full use, the transferring of young people's case records and other information is in progress.

Staff use a logbook, in which they write what is happening at the home. Key workers are responsible for transferring the information that relates to particular young people into their individual files at a later time. This is not an efficient way of keeping records. In addition to unnecessary duplication and delay, this recording practice increases the risk of confidentiality being breached. For example, when this log is shared with the placing authorities there may be information relating to other young people for whom they do not have parental responsibility.

The organisation has access to a consultancy company that provides evaluation of the practices and expert advice on health and safety, and employment law. This arrangement is new. It is an improvement on the previous arrangement that relied solely on the staff's own levels of knowledge.

An experienced external professional conducts regular independent monitoring visits to the home. Through detailed, evaluative and child-focused reports, this independent

person strengthens the quality-assurance processes in the home and contributes to its continued improvement.

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 differences 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.

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: SC007290

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: n/a

Responsible individual: Felix Pacquette

Registered manager: Deborah Pacquette

Inspector

Seka Graovac: social care inspector

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