

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC008273
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Searchlight Care Services Ltd
Registered provider address	Marcus House Estates, Marcus House, Stoke On Trent ST3 5XA
Responsible individual	Denver Underwood
Registered manager	Marianne Roberts
Inspector	Matt Hedges

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. One young person has lived at the home for several years. He is due to leave the home later this year. Staff recognise that this is causing him understandable anxiety and are offering him caring and sensitive support. Staff listen to the young person's views and encourage him to express them. They have also made sure that he has access to an independent advocate. This support helps to empower the young person. It also means that his opinions influence the planning of his move. Despite the uncertainty of the upcoming changes, the young person continues to make good progress in key areas of his life. He has maintained 100% attendance at school. As a result, he is making progress academically. For example, he achieved better grades than expected in some recent exams. A teacher stated, 'He has shown the right attitude.' This progress is due to the support he receives from staff. Another education professional commented, 'The support from staff has been excellent.' There have been some incidents since the last inspection. Staff have managed these well. They have strong relationships with the young person and understand the risks that he encounters. Staff have developed good working relationships with a range of other agencies. This includes education and social care. The staff also liaise well with the police, sharing information appropriately when this is required. This joint working helps to reduce the risks that the young person faces. He is safer as a result. The management team offers good oversight. Managers are aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and are committed to enhancing the quality of care that the young person receives. Some monitoring processes have improved, as has the overall quality of record-keeping. The response to the majority of the shortfalls from the last inspection has been good. Significantly, there is now clearer guidance for staff in relation to safeguarding procedures. The management team has also challenged other agencies effectively. This has helped to secure specialist mental health support for the young person. These improvements help staff and provide the young person with the support that he needs.	

In contrast, the management team has yet to resolve a small number of shortfalls. Records of 'sanctions' are much improved. However, they still do not include details of the steps taken to avoid the use of the measure. Overall, practice in this area has improved. This is a recording issue only.

An independent person visits the home every month. The management team is working with him to improve the quality of the reports produced following these visits. These improvements are yet to be embedded. Consequently, reports still do not show that the visitor seeks the views of the young person's family. Nor do they always contain adequate depth or analysis. Finally, the reports do not always arrive at the home in a timely way. These shortfalls prevent the management team from making best use of this process. However, this has had no effect on the young person or the support that he receives.

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and operated by a private organisation. The home is registered to provide care for two young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. However, the home only provides care for one young person at any one time, unless the two children are siblings and it is considered appropriate for them to share a bedroom.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/01/2017	Full	Good
09/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/11/2015	Full	Good
26/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 within the given timescales.

Requirements	Due date
The registered person must ensure that, within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v))	03/04/2017
The registered person must help the independent person, if they consent, to interview in private such of the children's parents and relatives as the independent person requires. (Regulation 44 (2)(a))	03/04/2017

Recommendation

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

- Ensure that the registered person actively seeks independent scrutiny of the home and makes best use of information from independent and internal monitoring. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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 that 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. Whenever 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 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.

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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