

SC008273

Registered provider: Searchlight Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 February 2018

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: 21 March 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:

- The young person is making great progress in key areas of his life.
- The young person has made significant progress in his education and has achieved excellent grades in his GCSEs.
- The staff team has developed effective working relationships with a range of partner agencies.
- Professionals speak positively about the staff and the support they provide for the young person.
- The staff have strong relationships with the young person and know him very well.
- The young person enjoys living at the home and feels well cared for.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Ensure that sanctions used are fair and proportionate.
- Ensure that the level of independence offered to the young person takes into account his age and stage of development.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/01/2017	Full	Good
09/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/11/2015	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
The registered manager must ensure that no measure of control or discipline which is excessive or unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) may be used in relation to any child. (Regulation 19(1))	13/04/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home's support. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27). Specifically, ensure that staff review boundaries in place to ensure that these are not unreasonable and give young people age-appropriate freedoms.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young person is making great progress in different aspects of his development and, in particular, in his education. The young person's college tutor said, 'The young person did much better than expected in his GCSEs, due in no small part to the residential staff supporting his revision and working closely with his school. He is making good progress on his college course and staff have again supported this.' The young person is rightly proud of his achievements and has developed ambitions for his future.

Staff have supported the young person to develop many useful independence skills. For example, the young person has learned how to budget, and can cook meals for himself and do his own laundry. The young person continues to receive high levels of support from staff. The staff have implemented a plan to help the young person to begin to manage with less input from them. This is in keeping with his age and stage of development. The staff have prepared the young person for the changes that this plan will bring, and are working in collaboration with his college tutor and his social worker. This shows that they consider most of the young person's needs well and take steps to

help him to develop the skills he will need to live independently.

Although the young person enjoys spending time in the community with his friends, the boundaries around this do not reflect the young person's age and stage of development. Staff implement these boundaries because they care and want to protect the young person and others. However, some boundaries are disproportionate and unnecessary, and have the potential to stop the young person from being able to enjoy age-appropriate freedoms. A recommendation is raised to ensure that this aspect of his care is reviewed with the young person and his social worker, to enable the young person to make further progress as he moves closer towards independence.

The young person has developed very positive relationships with staff. The inspector observed warm and good-humoured interactions between the staff and the young person. The young person is relaxed and feels entirely comfortable in his home. He has developed a sense of belonging and knows that staff care for him and want the best for him. The young person enjoys living in the home. He told the inspector, 'For the first time I have had my own bedroom, I have my own man cave, I get to play on my Xbox'.

The registered manager and the staff team have actively chased for services to be put in place to support the young person's emotional well-being. The young person attends all routine health appointments and is encouraged to eat healthily and participate in physical activity. As a result, the young person enjoys good health.

The young person knows how to complain and is able to raise any worries with staff. He has access to an independent advocate and can raise with them any issues, when required. When the young person does raise concerns, the staff listen and take action. Consequently, the young person feels valued.

The young person enjoys different leisure activities. He has been a long-standing member of the army cadets, which he attends regularly. He also enjoys playing football. Participating in different leisure activities has enabled the young person to develop confidence and learn new skills while having fun.

Staff support the young person to see his family. As a result, the young person maintains links with people who are important to him.

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

The young person feels safe and is safe. Staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping young people safe, and know how to escalate concerns should they need to. Managers and staff follow procedures and respond to all safeguarding matters robustly. This protects young people from harm.

Staff compile detailed risk assessments that describe strategies and actions for staff to implement in response to a young person's risky or challenging behaviour. Staff follow the guidance contained in these risk assessments and this promotes the young person's

safety and well-being.

The young person does not go missing from home. However, staff are aware of the action to take, should he do so. There are no concerns relating to the young person being at risk of child sexual exploitation, grooming or radicalisation. Nevertheless, staff consider these factors during one-to-one sessions with the young person. Consequently, the young person learns about these potential risks and how to keep himself safe.

Staff implement boundaries and the young person is clear about what is expected of him. For the most part, the young person manages his behaviour exceptionally well. Staff praise the young person, which helps to reinforce his positive behaviour. When he does not behave in an acceptable manner, the staff implement sanctions. Sometimes these sanctions are disproportionate and excessive, given the young person's age. For example, when the young person is late home on occasion, the staff curtail his free time over a number of days. A requirement is raised so that managers and staff review their approach to sanctions in order to improve their relevance and effectiveness.

The staff team has good working relationships with professionals and agencies. Staff share information readily and take appropriate action when concerns are raised.

Timely health and safety checks ensure that a safe physical environment is maintained for the young person to live in. Robust recruitment practice prevents unsuitable people from being able to work at the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has suitable experience of managing residential services for young people. She holds relevant qualifications for this role, including the level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare.

A committed and passionate staff team has high aspirations for the young person. It is very clear that the staff care a lot about the young person and are invested in his success. They provided excellent support to the young person during his GCSEs, enabling him to achieve very good results. The staff continue to support the young person in his college placement and on work experience placements. Staff attend meetings and keep abreast of the young person's progress. When difficulties arise, they work with the young person to help him to overcome these. The manager and staff understand the progress that the young person is making in all aspects of his development. This means that they target support effectively to help him to reach his full potential.

The registered manager has excellent knowledge of the young person and his needs and this is filtered down to the staff team. Staff advocate for the young person well. For example, the staff have given consideration to the young person's wishes for when he turns 18 years of age. They have supported the young person and advocated for him so that his wishes are taken into account and accepted by his placing local authority. The young person is actively involved in making decisions about his future plans.

Thorough internal and external monitoring systems help the manager and staff to maintain good standards of care. The manager understands the strengths and needs of the home, and is committed to the home's ongoing development.

An effective and dedicated manager supports staff development. All of the staff receive regular practice-related supervision and annual appraisals, in line with the organisation's policies. As a result, staff have the opportunity to reflect on their practice and performance. Staff receive training which helps them to keep up to date with the knowledge and skills required to meet the young person's needs effectively.

The staff develop effective working relationships with partner agencies. Professionals report positively on the staff and the quality of care provided for the young person. An independent reviewing officer said, 'On balance, this has been a really good placement for him.' Furthermore, the young person's advocate said, 'My experience of and communication with staff at the home has been positive.' Good collaborative working promotes young people's welfare and safety.

The home has recently appointed a new deputy manager. The deputy manager has the same passion and drive as the registered manager, and has actively taken the lead in promoting tolerance, equality and diversity in the home. The managers are open to new suggestions and ways of working, and are striving to develop practice in line with the young person's needs.

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: SC008273

Provision sub-type: 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

Sarah Junor-Fitzpatrick: social care inspector

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