

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC008274
Inspector	Jo Stephenson
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Searchlight Care Services Limited
Registered person address	Marcus House Parkhall Road Stoke-on-Trent Staffordshire ST3 5XA
Responsible individual	Denver Alex Underwood
Registered manager	Philip Alan Mann
Date of last inspection	05/03/2014

Inspection date	16/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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Young people are provided with an extremely safe, settled and stable home. Staff deliver immensely personalised care to young people that reflects their social and emotional needs. Young people make exceptional progress in all aspects of their development. This is because they receive outstanding care that promotes their welfare, well-being and safety.

Staff ensure that young people's views, wishes and opinions are central to the routines in the home and the care planning process. Young people are consistently asked for their thoughts regarding the quality of care provided by the home and regularly participate in bespoke one-to-one sessions with staff. As a result, young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff. This further promotes and supports their development.

Young people say they feel safe in the home. Staff focus internal care plans on identifying potential risks to young people's safety. They ensure risk assessments are in place and regularly reviewed. This ensures that young people develop the skills necessary to take increased responsibility for their own safety as they mature in the home.

The Registered Manager regularly and effectively monitors the quality of care for

young people. Systems are in place to identify the strengths of the service and include regular consultation with young people and placing authorities. Areas for improvement are immediately actioned and form the basis of the home's development plan. This ensures that practices in the home continually evolves to meet young people's changing needs.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is one of five children's homes owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care for two young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2014	Interim	good progress
28/11/2013	Full	outstanding
22/01/2013	Interim	good progress
08/08/2012	Full	outstanding

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people are confident and articulate in expressing their views and opinions. They complete regular one-to-one sessions with staff to discuss their backgrounds, frustrations and the progress they make. Young people are encouraged to voice their anxieties and concerns and work with staff to identify means of addressing these. As a result young people experience improved self-esteem and develop the emotional resilience they need to promote their development. This is because they learn the social skills necessary to mature and grow.

Education is embedded in the routines in the home and young people make outstanding progress in this area. Young people say they enjoy school and are proud of their achievements. Their attendance is 100 per cent and they participate in educational activities and clubs outside of the school day. Subsequently, young people view education as a priority in their lives. They strive to continually achieve their full potential and set realistic goals for themselves. Subsequently, young people experience educational success. This supports young people's self-confidence, social interaction skills and well-being.

Young people enjoy good health and all of their physical and psychological health needs are met. For example, if required, young people are able to access specialist health support such as mental health services. They have a healthy diet, take regular exercise and do not present any behaviours that may have an adverse impact on their health and well-being. Young people discuss general health issues with staff, such as puberty and personal care. This means that young people are prepared for the health issues that may affect them in the future, and start to take responsibility for decisions about their health.

Contact between young people and their families and friends is facilitated and supported in line with their needs and wishes. Young people have clear contact arrangements in place. Staff ensure that young people understand the detail and limitations of these. They work with placing authorities to make sure contact between young people and their families remains positive and appropriate. This means that young people are not isolated from those who are important to them.

Young people have active and eventful social lives outside of the home, with the support of staff if required. They engage fully in community events and make good use of local amenities and facilities. For example, young people are members of local clubs and social groups and enjoy varied activities such as theatre trips. Young people use their regular meetings with staff to voice their activity choices and discuss the development of the home. Subsequently, young people are the focus of the home. This further supports their personal growth and emotional resilience.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people enjoy strong and meaningful relationships with staff. The home provides a calm, safe and relaxed atmosphere that young people flourish in. Staff consult with young people in all aspects of their care and this is a considerable strength of the home. Young people participate in regular one-to-one sessions with staff. These are detailed and cover a varied range of topics relevant to young people and their progress. Sessions form the basis of personalised internal placement plans that are supported by statutory care plans provided by the placing authorities. As a result, young people experience a comprehensive and integrated approach to meeting their care and welfare needs.

Education is paramount to the culture and ethos of the home. Young people, who were disengaged from education prior to their admission to the home, now have 100 percent attendance. This is because staff work in effective partnership with education providers. This means that young people are supported and empowered to reach their potential. Barriers to education are effectively challenged through personalised education plans that provide young people with the bespoke support they need. Educational achievements are celebrated on a daily basis and ingrained in the objectives of the placement. As a result, young people understand the importance of education and are enthusiastically encouraged to achieve their ambitions.

Young people have extremely healthy life-styles. Staff ensure that young people's primary health needs are effectively monitored. For example, young people attend regular dentist and opticians appointments. When young people require more specialist support to address their emotional health needs, staff ensure these services are accessed without delay. Furthermore, young people openly discuss any health and well-being concerns they have in one-to-one sessions with staff. As a result, young people experience an inclusive approach to meeting their health needs.

Staff support young people to pursue their personal hobbies and interests. For example, young people make use of local 'keep fit' and swimming facilities. They are members of local youth clubs and staff encourage young people to try new activities. This means that young people are able to expand their social circles, learn new skills and develop their social interaction skills. They establish appropriate attachments with others and make lasting friendships. This further promotes young people's self-confidence and development.

There have been no complaints from young people, or others, since the home was registered. However, staff ensure that young people fully understand the complaints procedure in place and how to raise any concerns they may have. Young people say they are confident that any issues that they have will be addressed by the Registered Manager.

The home is well maintained and suitably located in a residential community. Staff ensure that young people are provided with a warm, comfortable and homely environment. Young people say they are fully involved in the internal decoration of the home and say this gives them a sense of pride in their surroundings.

Keeping children and young people safe **outstanding**

Young people are safe and say they feel safe. Staff ensure detailed risk assessments are in place to protect young people from harm and promote their well-being and safety. Staff work in partnership with placing authorities to identify the vulnerabilities of young people and put strategies in place to reduce known risks. This collaborative approach to managing young people's personal safety enables them to take age appropriate proportionate risks that support their growth and development.

The home has 'missing from home' protocols in place with local police, although there have been no such events since July 2010. Staff have a comprehensive understanding of the varied child protection issues that potentially impact on the safety of young people. This is because they participate in regular refresher training in safeguarding to ensure their knowledge remains relevant to the needs of young people. As a result, young people remain extremely safe in the home.

Staff devise comprehensive behaviour management plans that incorporate the personal development goals of young people. Plans deliver incentives and rewards that encourage young people to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Physical restraint is extremely rare and only ever used as a last resort. Records are appropriately completed and include young people's comments and views. This further promotes young people's welfare and safety.

Young people benefit from working with an extremely stable and long standing staff team and this is a considerable strength of the home. The Registered Manager adheres to robust organisational recruitment procedures and staff files contain all necessary disclosure and barring service vetting checks and previous employment references. This means young people work with suitably selected staff and this further promotes their safety and welfare.

Staff maintain health and safety records to a very high standard. Young people regularly participate in fire tests and drills and understand the fire procedures in place. This means that in the event of a fire, young people understand how to exit the home safely.

Leadership and management **outstanding**

The home has a permanent manager in post who has been registered with Ofsted since December 2008. The Registered Manager holds suitable qualifications for this position and has considerable experience of managing children's residential settings. The service has a strong commitment to improving outcomes and the quality of care for young people.

Young people and placing authorities are clear about the support the home provides and the home meets the aims and objectives detailed in the Statement of Purpose. This means that young people live in a home that has been assessed as being able to meet their needs and this promotes their well-being. Social workers and other professionals say they 'can't fault' the exceptional progress young people make in the home. They regularly compliment the Registered Manager and staff team for their commitment and dedication and these comments are retained in records in the home.

Staff have an extensive range of skills and are competent in identifying the welfare and care needs of young people. The Registered Manager ensures that mandatory training is refreshed and this is supported by effective staff supervision. This means that young people work with experienced and knowledgeable staff whose practice and performance is continually monitored. This promotes young people's development.

The Registered Manager has established excellent multi-agency partnership links with other professionals and placing authorities. Staff produce detailed progress reports prior to statutory review meetings. This means that placing authorities are provided with a comprehensive account of the progress young people make. Staff encourage young people to attend their review meetings and voice their opinions and wishes. As a result, young people are actively involved in decisions about their placement and their future.

Robust and effective systems are in place to monitor the quality of care and outcomes for young people. Systems identify patterns and trends and this information is used to continually improve the service. The Registered Manager takes account of young people's suggestions during the review and evaluation of the home's development plan. This means that young people are fully involved in the development of the home and because of this they make excellent progress and continually achieve positive outcomes.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.