

SC008484

Registered provider: Brookfield House

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is run by a private company. It provides care and accommodation for up to six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is managed by a registered manager who is qualified at NVQ level 4. The registered manager has been in post since February 2015.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 October 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 15 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2017	Full	Good
13/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/10/2016	Full	Good
02/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; (Regulation 40(4)(a))	23/11/2018
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. The independent person's report may recommend actions that the registered person may take in relation to the home and timescales within which the registered person must consider whether or not to take those actions. This report must be submitted to Ofsted on a monthly basis. (Regulation 44(1)(4)(a)(b)(5))	23/11/2018
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(f))	23/11/2018

The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))	23/11/2018
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— help each child to achieve the child’s education and training targets, as recorded in the child’s relevant plans; understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers; raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child’s education or training provider and the child’s placing authority; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible; help each child who is above compulsory school age to participate in further education, training or employment and to prepare for future care, education or employment; help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child’s relevant plans. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(i)(iii)(vii)(viii)(ix)(x))	23/11/2018

Recommendations

- Children should be provided with appropriate furniture, such as a lockable cabinet, drawers and wardrobe. Damaged items should be replaced or fixed quickly. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations’, page 16, paragraph 3.19)
- Where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from a

children's home placement, their placement plan should include a strategy to minimise this risk. If the child is looked after, their care plan (arranged by the local authority) should include such a strategy. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.24)

- Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulation including the quality standards', page 47, paragraph 9.38)
- There may be circumstances where children's homes staff assess that restriction of contact is necessary in the interest of the child, to safeguard and protect their welfare. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.16)
- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)
- Children living in residential care usually live in a group environment, and so it is particularly important that they can spend time away from other group members. Staff should respect children's privacy and ensure that their bedroom is private. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.17) This specifically relates to unprotected bedroom windows overlooking a main road.
- The registered person should provide a clean environment for young people. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.3) This is with specific regard to the smell of urine in the living room.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people confirm that they are aware of their individual care plans, including their individual goals and targets. Basic key-work sessions are recorded and demonstrate some of the work undertaken to help young people make sense of their lives. However, this work is not sufficiently reviewed. For example, some records are duplicated, contain incorrect information or do not fully capture concerns that require addressing. It is essential that the registered manager understands and recognises the impact of the quality of care provided in the home and consistently reviews young people's plans. A requirement is made to address this matter.

Education attendance and attainment are inconsistent. Delays in out-of-area local

authorities completing Education, health and care plans for individuals have resulted in several young people not having a permanent educational placement. For example, one young person was admitted to the home in January 2018 and only secured a full-time permanent education placement in the Autumn term of 2018. It is acknowledged that the registered manager escalated concerns regarding the outlined delays; however, this had little impact on how the concerns progressed. Although young people without an educational placement have received some private tuition in the home, these extensive delays have negatively impacted on them. For example, one young person has not yet commenced year seven secondary education. Therefore, they have missed the opportunity to form friendship groups at the beginning of the school year. A further young person has not commenced year 11. This is a critical year for students to undertake mock and formal examinations. It is inevitable that delays can occur on occasion. However, the manager must take effective action to ensure that delays are time-limited and suitable full-time alternative education is provided in the interim period. A requirement is made to address this matter.

Young people are supported to have regular contact with important family members. Overall, staff provide supervision where necessary and in accordance with the local authority's contact plans. However, where contact with family and/or friends increases the risks to young people, suitable action is not taken. For example, there are no plans in place to restrict young people's contact when they engage in antisocial behaviours. Consequently, young people's welfare is not consistently monitored, and this results in them struggling to fully engage in the placement. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

Recreational activities are consistently provided by the home. Young people are supported to take part in community-based activities such as, football, ice skating, cycling, visits to the park and an annual summer holiday. Young people also benefit from an indoor snooker table and computer/music suite during the winter months.

Young people enjoy the use of large individual bedrooms and are supported to decorate them in a style of their choice with pictures and posters reflecting their interests and personality. However, damaged bedroom furniture is not repaired or replaced within a suitable timeframe. For example, some wardrobes do not have doors. Likewise, young people with a bedroom facing a busy main road have their privacy compromised. This is because window coverings are not provided to protect young people's privacy while spending time in their bedroom. Furthermore, insufficient action has been taken to address the smell of urine in the communal living room. In order to offer a warm and welcoming environment, the registered manager and staff should regularly monitor the home for damage, privacy and cleanliness. Recommendations are made to address these areas.

Regular consultation with young people takes place in the home, for example young people's meetings, one-to-one sessions, monthly consultation surveys and Ofsted annual young people's surveys. Feedback is good. Young people confirm that they have established good relationships with staff and feel that they are listened to in the home. Records of young people's meetings confirm that they are supported to present their own agenda and discuss any changes they feel would benefit the home.

Records relating to the work undertaken with young people such as key-work sessions,

risk assessments and behaviour management plans do not demonstrate if young people were involved in their development. Young people do not regularly comment on, or review, their individual plans or sign to say that they agree with the content. Consequently, the registered manager and staff have not developed a narrative with young people in order to engage and involve them in the planning for their care. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Basic risk assessments are in place for each young person. Assessments outline current risk-taking behaviours and the actions to be taken by staff in the event of young people exhibiting such behaviours.

Some young people have a history of being reported missing from home. Although placement plans detail this behaviour as a concern, there is little evidence of the work being undertaken with young people to reduce this behaviour. For example, when a young person continually absents themselves from the home, a clear strategy should be in place to monitor and address these concerns effectively. Consequently, some young people fail to engage fully with the service and continue to absent themselves, placing them at risk. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

Since the last full inspection in November 2017, records relating to the use of physical intervention have improved. Records now provide clear detail of why a physical intervention was necessary, the type of intervention used, the duration of the hold and the debrief with young people once they have regulated their emotions. One young person said, 'Sometimes staff hold me in case I hurt somebody. I am calmer now, so it doesn't happen very often.' Newly developed graphs highlight the reduction in such interventions and are a good data source to enable managers and staff to pinpoint triggers for escalated behaviours.

Behaviour management plans are in place and identify some strategies for managing challenging or inappropriate behaviours. For example, young people receive sanctions for negative behaviour, which may include going to bed early or reduced use of the home's electronic devices. However, sanctions are not always representative of the behaviours exhibited and are not consistently restorative in nature. Consequently, young people do not learn about the impact that their behaviour has on themselves or others. A recommendation is made to address this matter.

There are several shortfalls in the safeguarding and management of young people with risk-taking and challenging behaviours, as identified within this report. The registered manager must ensure that the day-to-day care is arranged, delivered and reviewed to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. A requirement is made to address this matter.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has been in post since February 2015. She is qualified at NVQ level 4 and has undertaken a leadership and management qualification at NVQ level 2.

Since the last inspection in November 2017, four staff have left the service and two new staff have joined the team. Staff have received a suitable induction and are suitably supported in their day-to-day role by the registered manager and assistant manager.

All staff have undertaken mandatory training, which is regularly refreshed. Additional training has been provided by the company and includes understanding child sexual exploitation, drug misuse and healthy relationships. One staff member said, 'We are given the tools we need to do our work with young people. If we need additional training, we can request it and it will be arranged.'

Notifications of serious events in accordance with regulation 40 are deficient. The registered manager failed to notify the regulatory body of suspicions and/or concerns relating to child sexual exploitation. As a result, there is no external oversight of how concerns are being addressed and managed by the registered manager, staff and local authority. A requirement is made to address this matter.

Evidence of external monitoring visits taking place is available in the home. Reports are provided to the registered manager for review and action plans to address identified shortfalls are submitted to the external visitor. However, copies of these reports are not submitted to Ofsted in accordance with the regulation. For example, the last report received by Ofsted was for April 2018. The failure to submit the external monitoring reports means that the regulatory body cannot evaluate the care provided in the home or the areas of concern or development. A requirement is made to address this matter. Regulation 45 internal monitoring reports are received by Ofsted in accordance with regulation and timescales.

At the last inspection in November 2017, one requirement and three recommendations were made to secure improved practice in the home. The registered manager has made some progress in addressing these matters. Records of restraint are now thorough and regularly reviewed. Missing from home reports contain appropriate details of staff actions to secure a young person's safe return. However, the registered manager has failed to address the requirement regarding notifications of serious events. For example, notifications of suspicions or concerns regarding child sexual exploitation are not forwarded to the regulatory body in accordance with this regulation. This requirement is therefore restated. Furthermore, behaviour management strategies require further improvement to ensure that young people learn about the impact of their behaviour using restorative justice.

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: SC008484

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Brookfield House.

Registered provider address: 139 Bramhall Moor Lane, Stockport SK7 5AQ

Responsible individual: Judith Power

Registered manager: Emma Ward

Inspector

Maria McGranaghan, social care inspector

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