

SC008488

Registered provider: Halliwell Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. This home offers education on site at a registered school.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 April 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: 22 February 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:

- Educational attendance and progress has improved for children from their starting points. One child is now attending a mainstream school.

- Children are in good health and have access to local health services. The staff are proactive in seeking advice to support children's health needs.
- Children are able to build trusted relationships with the adults who are looking after them.
- Children enjoy a range of recreational activities tailored to their individual interests.
- Children are encouraged to contribute to the running of the home, through regular house meetings and key worker sessions.
- Partnership working is effective.
- The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She uses monitoring and inspection activity to improve practice.
- Concerns in relation to allegations are shared with the appropriate agencies.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Some sanctions imposed to address poor behaviour are not always restorative in nature.
- There is a lack of senior management oversight of physical intervention that involves the registered manager.
- Training records do not make it clear what training the staff have completed or what training needs updating.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/06/2016	Full	Requires improvement
04/02/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
29/06/2015	Full	Good

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Regulation 12(2) details sanctions that are prohibited in behaviour management. 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 regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.54)
- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. This specifically relates to ensuring that when the registered manager is involved in a restraint the record is reviewed and evaluated by a senior manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraph 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff, including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the interim inspection there has been one new admission to the home. Prior to the move the child was given the opportunity to meet some of the staff, through planned introductions. This ensured a smooth transition and has helped the child to settle. That said, it is still very early days; he has only been living in the home for a week, and relationships with the other children and staff are not fully established.

The children have a range of complex and challenging needs, including attachment difficulties. This makes it difficult for some children to build trusting relationships, but the support given enables them, over time, to form positive relationships. Observations throughout the inspection confirm that interactions between the children and staff are warm and friendly. Overall, the children are responding to clear, consistent and

appropriate boundaries. This helps them to feel safe and secure.

Children know how to complain. Records of complaints confirm that their complaints are treated seriously and responded to clearly. Children's views and opinions are central to the day-to-day running of the home. Regular key-working sessions, house meetings and one-to-one time with staff ensure that children are given the time and space to discuss any concerns they have. One child recently requested a compliments book, which she has used to express her positive views about individual staff members. For example, she has written, 'I think [the manager] always tries to make me and [X] happy and tries to help us.'; '[name of staff] can be really funny and can be firm but fair to everyone.' The children have also exercised their choices in relation to the new play equipment for the garden. These activities enable children to communicate their wishes and feelings.

All the children are attending school; they are learning, and making good progress from their starting points. Education staff are planning to transition another child to mainstream school. There is regular information sharing between the staff and education professionals. For example, the on-site school staff give a handover to the care staff at the end of each school day. This ensures that a consistent approach is maintained between home and school staff.

Children benefit from good health and they have access to local health services when they need them. A range of agencies work with the staff, such as child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) and the looked after children's nurse. In addition, the staff have regular consultations with the in-house clinical team, where they are able to talk about the children. This helps the staff to understand and respond appropriately to children's emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Children enjoy a range of recreational activities tailored to their individual interests, which include playing football, going to the cubs and swimming. This provides them with the opportunity to try new experiences, make friends and increase their self-confidence. Children also have a range of materials, including books, games and drawing equipment, which can help to enhance their learning and development.

Staff support the children to maintain contact with their families. This includes transporting and supporting them during visits. In addition, children from different faiths are aided to follow their religion in line with their wishes. Staff are positive role models, which is reflected in their age, cultures, backgrounds and ethnicity.

At the time of the last inspection, major improvements to the maintenance and décor of the home were under way. This work is now complete, and the children are now provided with a good standard of accommodation. The children's bedrooms have been personalised to their individual tastes. One of the children proudly showed off the large unicorn that she had chosen to have painted on her bedroom wall. The home feels more settled, with the children taking pride in their home environment.

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

Staff working in the home are clear about, and follow, procedures for responding to concerns about the safety of the children. Investigations into allegations or suspicions of harm are shared with the appropriate agencies, including the local designated officer (LDO). An allegation made by a child during the inspection received an immediate response from the manager.

Clear risk assessments provide guidance to staff on how to manage each child's identified risks such as self-injurious behaviour. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that they are up to date. Good staffing levels mean that over time children are supported to reduce the risks that their behaviours pose. Incidents of challenging and risky behaviour, in most cases, are handled well. Appropriate action is taken when incidents of self-harm occur, including accessing mental health services. This promotes the welfare and safety of vulnerable children.

When a child's behaviour poses a risk to themselves or others, staff use physical intervention to help keep them safe. The number of physical interventions are relatively high for some children, but the records show that these are mainly guided holds. It is much clearer from the records to see why physical intervention was necessary, which improves the manager's ability to fully evaluate any intervention used. However, there was one occasion when both the registered manager and deputy were involved in a physical intervention; on this occasion there was no senior management oversight of the record to ensure appropriate practice.

Following the last inspection, the staff now record when a sanction has been imposed. However, practice in relation to sanctions and behaviour management strategies needs to be clearer. For example, the children have a reward chart in place to target certain negative behaviours, including swearing. However, rather than using a restorative approach when this target is not achieved, a sanction is imposed.

There have only been two incidents of children being reported missing since the last inspection. When they go missing it is for the shortest time, and they are located quickly. Since the last inspection, the manager has revised the missing-from-home records. There is now a central record in place, which gives the manager a clear overview of the numbers of incidents. This will enable the manager to promptly identify any patterns or trends, and take action to prevent further episodes of missing.

Staff appropriately challenge incidents of bullying behaviour. Bullying is regularly discussed in the children's meetings and individual key-work sessions. A key member of staff helped one of the children to design a poster on bullying. This demonstrates that the manager and staff take bullying seriously and are helping children to understand the impact of bullying.

Sufficiently robust recruitment and selection processes ensure, where possible, that staff employed are suitable to work with children. Regular health and safety checks ensure that the home environment is physically safe and secure.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by a permanent, suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. She is assisted in her role by a very experienced deputy manager. The management team has addressed the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection; the quality of care report has been forwarded to HMCI. In addition, consent is in place from the placing authorities for the use of door alarms on children's bedroom doors.

The majority of the staff team have a suitable childcare qualification. At the last inspection a number of new staff had been recruited, and these staff have now commenced employment. This ensures that there are a sufficient number of staff to meet the needs of the children and provide continuity of care. There is effective support and challenge through regular supervision and team meetings. Training, development and induction activities ensure that staff can meet the specific needs of the children. However, the training matrix does not make it clear what training the staff have completed, or what training needs updating.

The home is well resourced and is achieving its aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose. The document has been revised to reflect the current management arrangements.

The manager and staff have developed effective working relationships with other agencies, such as health and education professionals. The manager monitors the progress that individual children make, and where there are concerns a care planning meeting is held to review the care plan. This ensures an ongoing assessment of need.

In the main, the manager recognises the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has kept the number of new admissions to the home to a minimum. This has helped to provide some stability for the two children already living in the home. The manager and staff acknowledge that the home went through a very challenging time last year, but they are committed to driving forward the improvements they have made.

Case records generally reflect the children's everyday lives and the work that is undertaken with them. There is a clear sense from the records as to how the children are progressing. Children are provided with the opportunity to access and contribute to their records if they wish to.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC008488

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Halliwell Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 1 Tape Street, Stoke-on-Trent ST10 1BB

Responsible individual: Karen Mitchell-Mellor

Registered manager: Lorraine Aston-Donley

Inspector(s)

Michelle Bacon, social care regulatory inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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