

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	29/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC008488
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Halliwell Homes Limited
Registered person address	1 Tape Street, Cheadle, STOKE-ON-TRENT, ST10 1BB

Responsible individual	Mrs Sandra Berry
Registered manager	Mrs Jacqueline Norbury
Inspector	Mrs Angela Whiteley

Inspection date	29/06/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	GOOD
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	GOOD
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	GOOD

SC008488

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children and young people are safe and respected at this home. Mostly they settle quickly in a warm and nurturing environment. They form strong relationships with a diverse staff team who provide opportunities for them to succeed and encourage them to make positive choices.
- A new Registered Manager is in post. She provides strong leadership and is a good role model to staff. She demonstrates a strong commitment to an improvement agenda, which ensures any barriers to children's development are quickly identified and any practice shortfalls are promptly addressed. The homes effective monitoring and quality assurance systems provide the foundations from which children and young people experience good quality care.
- There is strong effective partnership working, particularly with the in-house child and adolescent mental health team and the on-site school provision. These resources provide excellent educational, emotional and psychological support for children and young people and impact significantly on their educational attainment and emotional resilience.
- Staff use specific therapeutic models of care to support children and young people to help them form positive attachments and lessen their disturbing and challenging behaviours. As a result, some move to permanent placements having achieved positive outcomes.
- Staff confirm they are well supported and guided by a competent manager. They value the quality of the training provided, which ensures they have the necessary skills to meet the current and emerging needs of children and young people in placement.
- Effective safeguarding policies and procedures underpin staffs knowledge and practice to ensure children and young people feel safe and protected from harm.
- A number of shortfalls were noted during this inspection. These relate to the notifications of significant events, the Statement of Purpose, supervision records, including those of the manager, children's records, electronic monitoring and the environment. These shortfalls are administrative and have not impacted negatively on the outcomes for children and young people or on the care provided.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1 (Regulation 16 (1))	28/07/2015
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance (Regulation 24 (1) (b))	28/07/2015
The Registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4) (c))	28/07/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure a homely environment is maintained, in particular, that any damage to the home is promptly repaired and redecorated as necessary (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- ensure a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager, to evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- ensure all children's case records are kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. In particular, this relates to records of key worker sessions and missing from home logbook entries (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- ensure information about the child is always recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62 paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children and young people who may be experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A multi-disciplinary team support children and young people with their mental health needs. This home offers education on-site at a registered school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
11/12/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
31/10/2013	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	GOOD
Children and young people are safe at the home. They are protected by high levels of support and supervision, effective assessments and management of risk and strong multi-agency working. They make some good progress and benefit from a warm, nurturing environment provided by a committed staff team. As they settle into the home they begin to develop warm and trusting relationships with staff and feel secure enough to express their views, wishes, feeling and worries. Those new to the home are encouraged to settle quickly through the consistent approach of staff and the clear routines and boundaries that are in place. Staff are persistent in their efforts to help children and young people succeed and make every effort to overcome any initial setbacks. Children and young people benefit from the effective use of individualised behaviour management plans, rewards and incentives and regular specialist therapeutic support. This helps improve children and young people's behaviour and strengthen their emotional resilience and psychological well-being. They begin to develop positive attachments to different people, which can be transferred to new adults when they move to more permanent placements. Children and young people benefit immensely from a strong focus on education. Most children and young people achieve full attendance at school, which impacts positively on their levels of attainment. Learning continues to be supported in the home by staff who help with homework, reading and projects. A head teacher commented on how well a young person has settled at the school and on the, 'excellent progress' they have made. Another teacher commented positively about a student's much improved reading level. Children and young people benefit from detailed health assessments and are in good health. They are well supported in accessing routine and specialist healthcare services. This ensures they receive the services and support to help them maintain good health. For example, children and young people have access to play therapists and psychologists who work collaboratively with staff to ensure a consistent approach to their care. They enjoy a balanced diet and mealtimes are a social occasion where they can chat and share ideas and experiences. Children and young people take part in a range of positive activities, which helps them feel part of a wider community and increases their self-esteem. Some attend rainbows, brownies and the youth club while others go roller skating, horse riding, swimming and use the local library.	

Staff support children and young people to fully participate in all aspects of care planning, which means they know what progress they are making. Children and young people are fully involved in completing the placing authority review forms and their placement plans. Their views and wishes are central to the smooth running of the home and they are given ample to express their opinions and suggestions about special events, food, outings and activities. They also choose how they want to personalise their bedrooms.

Children and young people benefit from clear, safe contact arrangements, which are set out in their care plan. They know when they will see those people who are important to them. Staff have a good understanding of the impact that contact can have on some children and young people and ensure they receive appropriate support and care when contact ends.

Children and young people's identity and family origin are viewed as important in developing positive self-esteem. Where appropriate, this is encouraged by the therapeutic team who support staff to help children and young people prepare life-story work.

Although not ready to embark on independence, children and young people are supported to manage some simple tasks for themselves, which helps them contribute to the running of the home. This means that they take ownership of their home and begin to learn new skills for when the move on from the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	GOOD
Children and young people are safe in this home. They are protected from harm by competent staff that take their safety and well-being seriously and talk to them about keeping themselves safe. Staff fully understand safeguarding policies and procedures and receive regular quality training that enables them to respond appropriately to any concerns about children's welfare. Staff are proactive in communicating with placing authorities and other professionals to highlight any safeguarding issues and contribute well to strategies that help to achieve positive outcomes for children and young people. The manager has developed strong links with the local police and specialist police services, involving them at an early stage to discuss potential issues. A police officer confirmed there is good communication between the police and the home and that staff are undertaking additional training from the police in respect of local missing from home protocols and their support of other behaviour.	

Children and young people generally get along well together. They understand that bullying is not acceptable and have confidence in the staff to deal with any incidents that may occur. Bullying awareness training is being delivered to all staff to ensure they keep up-to-date with practice.

Children and young people receive high levels of staff support and supervision. Consequently, incidents of unauthorised absence and missing from home are rare. When this does occur, staff take practical measures to keep in touch and locate young people and welcome them back on their return. Where necessary, staff follow agreed procedures to escalate concerns and successfully ensure young people's safe return. Arrangements are in place for young people to receive a visit from an independent person to help understand the reasons for their absence.

The home uses electronic monitoring devices on children and young people's bedroom doors to help ensure their welfare and safety. The use of this measure quickly alerts staff to children and young people who may choose to leave the home without permission. Although the use of this measure is not opposed by the placing authority, the arrangement has not been formally agreed by them in writing.

Staff are trained in the appropriate use of physical restraint, which is only ever used as a last resort. There are a large number of restraints recorded but all were appropriate to help children and young people safely regain control after experiencing emotional crisis. Detailed records of each incident and the manager regularly evaluates patterns and trends. These are regularly discussed with the in-house clinical professionals who help to review individual behaviour management plans to ensure children and young people continue to be cared for safely.

Interventions are thoughtful and underpinned by clear care planning and individual risk assessments. Regular individual sessions, target setting and appropriate rewards and incentives are used to encourage children and young people to behave in a more socially accepted way. Sanctions are reducing as children and young people settle into their individual daily routines. When sanctions have been used they are proportionate and age appropriate.

Thorough recruitment and vetting procedures are in place and visitors to the home are routinely checked and appropriately supervised. Improved record keeping ensures practice is safe around the storage, handling, administration and disposal of medication, which safeguards children and young people's welfare. Children and young people enjoy a safe and secure environment as there are effective health and safety arrangements in place.

	Judgement grade
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The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	GOOD
The home benefits from the strong leadership of a new manager who came into post in January 2015. She is suitably experienced and qualified and is registered with Ofsted. She is supported by two experienced deputy managers and a committed and motivated newly formed staff team. Collectively they understand the needs of the children and young people in placement and deliver high quality care. The home is well resourced with sufficient staff on duty to ensure children and young people's individual needs are met and they are kept safe. Recent shortfalls in staffing have been covered by existing staff and the provider is now developing a pool of casual workers who are known to the children, young people and other staff. This ensures children and young people continue to be cared for by staff who they know and can respond effectively to their needs. The staff team has a good balance of gender, age and ethnicity and offers positive role models to children and young people, which meets the aims and objectives of the homes Statement of Purpose. Staff have a range of qualifications and experiences and those not yet qualified are working towards relevant qualifications. Staff confirm they feel well supported by their colleagues and management through regular supervision, training and team meetings. This ensures they have regular opportunities to continue to reflect and develop their practice to help them meet children and young people's current and emerging needs. Staff confirm that records of supervision sessions are kept and copies given to them. However, this good practice is not consistently applied to the managers' own supervision sessions. The Statement of Purpose is generally well written. However, it does not contain all of the required information, particularly in respect of the qualifications and experience of staff commissioned to provide education and the arrangements for professional supervision of those providing education and health care. This means the document is not clear about the care being provided and its underpinning arrangements for the day-to-day operation of the home. Children and young people's records are well structured, stored securely and present a good overall picture of their experiences at the home. Recording is generally of a good standard and children and young people have the opportunity to access their files to receive an accurate description of the time they have spent at the home. Some records of individual sessions could be improved with clearer, plainer language that children and young people will understand and find helpful. Also, all records, including keywork records and missing from care logs must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author. Significant events are usually notified to all relevant agencies in a timely manner, which ensures action is taken to protect children and young people. However, the	

manager did not notify Ofsted about an allegation of harm made against a person working at the home. The manager is able to demonstrate safeguarding procedures and risk assessments were followed by staff to ensure children and young people are safe. Information was shared with safeguarding agencies and professionals and a record kept of the investigation and outcome. The Registered Manager is addressing this administrative shortfall by sending a retrospective notification to Ofsted as the investigation has concluded.

The home is a large, spacious property that undergoes regular maintenance and repairs. Despite this, there are signs of general wear and tear and some recent damage by young people in communal areas requires prompt attention. For example, painting of woodwork, replacing furnishings and the lounge television will provide a more homely, warm and comfortable environment for children and young people to live in. These improvements will ensure the home continues to operate in the best interests of children and young people.

The manager makes good use of regular monitoring and quality assurance visits to ensure children and young people enjoy high quality care. These include monthly independent visits to the home and regular consultations with professionals to review young people's progress along with placing authority quality assurance audit visits. The recommendation identified at the last inspection has been addressed and other shortfalls in practice identified from monitoring visits are quickly addressed by the manager. The manager has a working development plan with realistic targets that help to drive forward further improvement.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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. Wherever 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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