

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	24/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC014848
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Cornerways Children's Services Limited
Registered person address	Ashcombe Court, Woolsack Way, Godalming, Surrey, GU7 1LQ

Responsible individual	Sara Milner
Registered manager	
Inspector	Jennie Christopher

Inspection date	24/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. The home has been without a Registered Manager since September 2015. A new manager has been appointed and is due to start in April 2016. In the interim, the home has been well run by the two deputy managers and responsible individual. Young people continue to make good progress, despite significant obstacles, while living in the home. Staff form extremely positive relationships with young people, providing nurturing care in a therapeutic environment. All young people are engaged in education within the organisation's school or local colleges. Close links with education staff and the organisation's therapist ensures those who are struggling to attend or engage in education are supported to return as soon as they are emotionally able. Since the last inspection, one young person has moved in to the home from the organisations sister home. The move has been positive, allowing the young person to live with a more age-appropriate group with needs and preferences similar to hers. Planning prior to her move was extremely robust and well thought through with the social worker, therapist and staff in both homes. However, there is no formal record of this decision making process as to whether there would be an impact on the current group living in the home. Three young people have moved from the home since the last inspection. The endings were not planned, but were deemed to be in the individual's best interests at the time. One has returned to her family and one has moved to the organisations sister home, initially as a break. It was identified that this was a more suitable placement to meet her needs. Staff from the home still visit her to utilise their positive relationships at this time of transition. It was deemed the home could not meet the needs of the third individual. The home supported the placing authority with an assessment of her future needs and what would likely be a positive next placement for her. As an interim measure they supported her in a lone placement while a new home was sought. A young person is due to move from the home in the coming week to a foster-	

care-supported semi-independent placement. While she is ready to move on, she has been in placement for several years and staff have been giving helpful emotional support to facilitate this. A comprehensive moving on plan has been implemented by the home, therapist, child and adolescent mental health team and social worker, to enable her transition to be as smooth as possible. She has made tremendous progress throughout her placement and her emotional well-being has significantly improved. Staff and young people were preparing for her leaving party at the weekend and have bought her many presents. A living picture photo booth has been created for the occasion to ensure she has many photographic mementoes to take with her.

Young people's relationships and interactions with staff demonstrate they feel safe within the home and can approach staff with their worries or concerns. Staff are confident in processes to follow should they be worried or concerned for a young person's safety or well-being. There are currently on-going investigations into disclosures of historical abuse. Staff are providing an extremely secure environment for young people to work through the emotions this is evoking. Recording of investigations is now much more robust and clear as to what action has been taken and who has been informed.

Many young people in the home self-injure as a coping mechanism. This is managed in differing ways depending on individual care plans. All young people have access to the organisations therapist or a wider team of therapists specialising in different techniques. Staff benefit from regular consultations with the therapists, in order to implement consistent strategies in response to self-injury. Some individuals within the home have a history of being sexually exploited, and again are working through this with their therapists and staff in a safe environment. Those who misuse substances have the opportunity to meet with substance misuse specialists. All young people have recently attended a smoking cessation clinic.

Consistency in approach to behaviour management has led to no restraints being required since the last inspection. Sanctions are rarely used, favouring logical consequences. The approach is effective and young people respond well to it. Further consideration is required as to how these interventions are recoded in line with regulations. There have been no complaints since the last inspection and any issues within the group are responded to swiftly and with a restorative approach.

Since the last inspection the management team have responded proactively to the requirements and recommendations set. Documents, including pathway plans and consents for medical treatment are now available on all young people's files. Staff are proactive in seeking missing plans from placing authority social workers. There has been a significant improvement in care plans reflecting agreements and strategies identified by therapists in response to negative and self-injurious behaviour. In particular a red card system for one individual is now used with great effect, in order for them to indicate to staff when they are struggling with the situation. Finally, all placing authorities running away or missing from care policies

are available within the home and referred to in the missing from care policy.

Reports produced by the independent visitor in line with Regulation 44 are robust. The registered individual consults with the visitor to identify any change in approach to the reporting processes in order for them to meet the organisation's needs. There have been no reports in relation to Regulation 45 forwarded to Ofsted for several months. The last was due in September 2015. This is recognised as an issue, however the registered individual and deputy managers have been monitoring the service on a monthly basis.

Recruitment practices have been strengthened in response to concerns with references for an individual who has since had their employment terminated. Referees are now specifically asked to confirm they are the person with authority to provide references for the organisation they are employed by.

The responsible individual acknowledges she has not been able to complete all the developments she would have liked to since the last inspection, due to providing a management role within the home. She does however have several ideas of how she would like to develop the service in the upcoming year, some of which have been added to the service development plan. Once the new manager is in post she will take the opportunity to develop this further.

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private organisation which has another home within the area. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 6 young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Most young people living in the home attend the organisations school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/07/2015	CH - Full	Good
03/03/2015	CH - Interim	declined in effectiveness
06/11/2014	CH - Full	Good
29/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

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 complete a review of the quality of care at least once every 6 months. The registered person also must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed on (Regulation 45 (1)(4)(a))	31/03/2016

Recommendations

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

- ensure all young people's files contain their pre-placement impact and risk assessments (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards, April 2015, Page 56, and paragraph 11.4)
- ensure the behaviour management strategy is understood and applied by all staff. This must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. This is with specific regards to natural consequences, their use and how these are recorded as measures of control. (The Guide to Quality Standards, page 46, paragraph 9.34)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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