

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	08/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC016600
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Bridge Communities Limited
Registered provider address	Sutton Dipple, 8 Wheelwrights Corner, Cossack Square, Nailsworth, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 0DB

Responsible individual	Joanne Scott
Registered manager	Sarah Womersley
Inspector	Nicola Lownds

Inspection date	08/03/2017
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 judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Young people make good progress in this home. They start to make positive choices about their future and learn to keep themselves safe. Leaders and managers engage young people exceptionally well to make decisions about their care and what they want and need from the team to help them to progress. The team is strong and delivers a high quality of care consistently. Young people have good, supportive relationships with the team. Leaders and managers place a strong emphasis on making this young people's home. Young people conveyed that they valued and respected how their care is delivered. Leaders and managers carefully consider the impact to young people who already live at the home, when planning for someone new to move in. The registered manager forms a plan with the young person and other key people to ensure that everything is in place for a successful transition to the home. Leaders and managers do not always form the placement plan as soon as the young person moves in and this is a recommendation from this inspection. The team comes up with creative ways to ensure that education is accessible to all young people. Some young people successfully engage in school and college. Leaders and managers work closely with the virtual school to ensure that alternative education resources are available for young people who may find this difficult to attend. Personal tutors are also used to support education. The team plans young people's education around the time of day when they are most motivated to learn. For one young person the team successfully sourced a work experience placement and this has improved attendance in education, which was previously poor. The team understands the child protection policy and follows it in practice. Leaders and managers have strong relationships with professionals from a large number of local agencies who help to protect young people from harm. When young people go missing, the team acts instantly to instigate missing-from-home protocols, searching known locations and areas including a staff presence at the train station to prevent young people from leaving the area. Leaders and managers ensure that independent return home interviews are conducted within 72 hours, and have an agreement with the local authority to provide this service for all young people who live here.	

When the team is concerned or the young person discloses abuse and exploitation, leaders and managers act swiftly to protect young people. They have close links with the police child exploitation unit and local officers who can share local knowledge and work collaboratively to keep young people safe.

Young people start to make safe choices about their lifestyle, and drug and alcohol misuse decreases over time. A new reward system which young people are responding to helps support young people to make healthy choices. Alongside this, the team talks to young people about the risks of drug and alcohol misuse. The registered manager engages support services who can offer specialist support, which includes visiting the home and spending time with the team and young people.

The team supports young people to behave in a positive way and uses different strategies to help to calm young people when they become anxious or their behaviour starts to become negative. The team is very good at this; the positive relationships staff build with young people support their approach. Restraint is not used as a behaviour management strategy.

Leaders and managers have made good progress to meet the recommendations from the previous inspection. A joint protocol with the police is developing, which aims to improve evidence of the work they are already undertaking with their local police force. All staff have completed training about radicalisation. Leaders and managers have improved the training programme to include some bespoke training to meet the needs of young people, in areas such as emerging personality disorder, mental health and attachment theory.

One member of the team has been recruited since the last inspection. They have undergone a suitable induction process to ensure that they have the skills for the role. Leaders and managers follow safer recruitment guidance when recruiting new staff. All references are verified. However, the quality of these verifications cannot be measured as they are not recorded in any detail.

The registered manager has good, effective monitoring systems in place to review the quality of care. This monitoring assists leaders and managers to identify areas of development for the home to improve the care that young people receive.

Information about this children's home

This private children's home is registered for up to five young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home provides individual support and preparation for independent living and offers an educational outreach service to support young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/11/2016	Full	Good
01/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/11/2015	Full	Good
10/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that when children and young people are new to the home, leaders and managers produce a written care plan immediately, taking into account the information that they already gathered from the child and other professionals. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.2)
- Improve the quality of reference verification by recording discussions held with previous employers on the human resources file. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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 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 that 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 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.

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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