

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	10 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC020545
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Castle Homes Care Ltd
Registered person address	80 Hammersmith Road LONDON W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Shelley Whiting
Registered manager	Lucy James
Inspector	Andrew Hewston

Inspection date	10 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in effectiveness
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

SC020545

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff consistently care for young people well. Detailed planning helps to provide a good service to the young people. All young people state that they have developed while being at the home in areas such as becoming more independent and becoming more healthy.
- The staff have worked hard to make sure that the vast majority of young people attend education. However, a few young people are not accessing full time education despite this commitment.
- Good behaviour management, including the use of incentive charts, has helped young people to understand their own behaviours as well as to enjoy the rewards. Staff have worked hard to respond to challenging behaviours. However, staff do not consistently evidence the way that they use restorative justice approaches.
- Good systems make sure that young people are safe. Staff are aware of how to respond to child protection issues. Young people who previously went missing now do so less, as they have become aware of the risks regarding this behaviour.
- Staff are preparing young people in readiness for leaving the home. Good links ensure that the necessary services are in place to support them after the move.
- An enthusiastic staff team is keen to support young people. The team are well supported by the management and are continually developing their skills. They have an excellent awareness of the young people and how to work with them.

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 recommendation(s):

- Ensure that young people are in full-time education while they are of compulsory school age unless their personal education plan contained within the care plan or other relevant plan states otherwise. The home must aim to support full time attendance at school unless the child's relevant plan indicates this is not in their best interests ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.14).
- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are 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 46, paragraph 9.38).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a large private organisation. It offers care for up to five young people primarily with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is set within a residential environment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10 February 2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
29 September 2015	Full	Good
25 March 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
3 October 2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people enjoy strong and effective relationships with the staff team. They are consistently positive about the adults who look after them: 'they have just got it, giving me different strategies to work with to help me get through stuff.' Staff have a detailed awareness of the lives of the young people, both prior to their admissions and while they are at the home. This helps to support young people's development. A new key-working system helps to improve the structure of meetings, with worksheets and targeted discussions in addition to more general meetings. Young people highlight key workers as offering a dedicated role that helps them: 'It's good that I have someone special that I know will go to my meetings and stuff, and get my ideas across.' Care is in line with detailed placement planning, giving staff a good awareness of the differing needs of the young people. Young people are involved in their planning from admission, stating likes and dislikes of food and completing an awareness of how their cultural needs are best met. This further supports their placement. Staff promote relationships between the young people and their families, where appropriate. This has led, in one case, to contact with family members that they have not had for a considerable period, giving them an increased awareness of their own background. When links with families are not strong, staff ensure that young people contact their social workers to keep the connection with their locality. Young people enjoy a good range of activities, both within the home and the community. One young person stated that 'the staff are pretty much up for anything', discussing a recent ice-skating activity that they were all involved in. The home's games room is well resourced, and includes board games and consoles to allow young people to play both independently and with others. Good health arrangements are in place, and all attend a range of appointments to support both their mental and physical health. Risk assessments relating to young people's health are regularly updated, and staff have a good awareness of changes to these. Staff make sure that all health concerns raised within placement plans or	

reviews are responded to swiftly. A young person was extremely supportive of staff championing the need to have them on the correct medication, highlighting the fact that they were now able to sleep properly and were much happier. Health information is available around the home, promoting a healthy diet and forming part of independence planning. Medication administration is robust, and regular audits help to support this.

The vast majority of young people attend educational placements on a full-time basis. Staff have been diligent in attempting to get all young people involved in programmes that support their educational developments. A social worker was complimentary about the level of support given to promoting achievement. Some have made exceptional improvements in their level of attendance, from consistent refusal a year ago to attending full time at the time of the inspection. However, despite the staff team's commitment a few young people continue to struggle to overcome barriers that impact on their learning including full time attendance.

Accommodation is pleasant and comfortable, with any damage swiftly responded to. Personalisation of bedrooms is encouraged, and some have a wealth of photos and posters. They are supported in choosing their own wallpaper and are involved in decisions regarding the decor of the home.

Young people are consistently listened to and their views considered, including on planning activities, menus and care planning. Fortnightly young people's meetings ensure that young people talk about the home and the way that they live together. The registered manager feeds back to these discussions, showing the young people that their views are considered and acted upon. Information regarding advocates is available, and young people are also able to discuss the home with the independent visitor.

Detailed workbooks and practical exercises in cooking and cleaning help to develop young people's independence skills. Those planning to leave the home are well supported by the staff and their social worker, with visits being made to new premises. Young people are positive about how they have been helped in readiness for their move.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are kept safe through effective policies and procedures, and staff's knowledge of these. Health and safety checks are completed in line with expected timescales. A good system ensures that risk assessments are examined by staff when they are updated. Young people state that they feel safe, although they acknowledge that they feel unhappy when others are involved in damaging the home or being restrained. One young person stated, 'I just don't like to think that the staff might get hurt.' Where safeguarding incidents occur they are responded to swiftly, with good joined-up working with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the local authority designated officer. Records are detailed, with a clear chronology showing the staff's response and the effective way that young people have been kept safe. Staff have a good awareness of child sexual exploitation. A number of young people are at risk in this area. Staff have worked well to decrease this risk and no concerns have been raised relating to young people's behaviour since they have been in residence. Incidents of young people going missing from the home have decreased significantly since the last full inspection. When they occur, they are responded to well and are fully recorded. Staff ensure that the placing authorities are aware of their responsibilities at these times. Young people who self-harm are supported through risk assessments and staff having a good knowledge of what to do in such an event. Staff work well with mental health professionals, and the home has seen a decrease in these behaviours. Differing behaviour management systems are used to promote positive behaviour. Sanctions records are generally punitive, and there is a lack of recording of restorative justice responses that are used and described by staff. Sanctions are effective in encouraging young people to go to school, with clear boundaries in place. A good reward structure includes immediate rewards and longer-term goals, achievable through meeting targets that young people are involved in developing with their key workers. This ensures that they increase their awareness of the effects of their behaviour and work to decrease these. Where behaviours require physical restraint, these are completed by trained staff and recorded fully, with	

effective monitoring of records by the registered manager. Assessments of the event ensure that lessons are learned to decrease the need for restraint. Differing techniques help staff to respond to specific behaviours, showing the ability of the team to develop in line with the individual needs of young people.

Recruitment systems ensure that young people are safe, with all necessary checks being completed. Young people are involved in the process, interviewing staff with their own questions and feeding back to the main panel.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
An enthusiastic and committed registered manager leads the home. Her level 3 qualification is complete and she is half-way through the level 5 in leadership and management. The staff team have responded to the actions required from the last inspection. One requirement regarding safeguarding has been fully met. The two recommendations have led to improvements in the care of the young people, but have not been fully met, as not all the young people are in full-time education and some sanctions need additional information. These recommendations are to continue, but at this point do not have a significant impact on the care of the young people. Monitoring systems support the management team's awareness of the running of the home and help to look at trends in practice. The home's development plan links well with the six-monthly monitoring, giving common goals to develop the home. Monthly monitoring further supports the development of the home, with action points being responded to swiftly by the staff team. Regular monitoring of records and assessment of young people's needs allow staff to be aware of the development that the young people make. All have moved forwards since they have been at the home, some making significant progress in areas such as education, reducing self-harming behaviour and mental health. The manager challenges poor practice well, and has high expectations of the services that work with young people. She ensures that admission documentation is in place quickly and is up to date. Social workers state that the home shares	

information well and that review reports are completed prior to the meetings. Good links are developed with health professionals, the organisation's school and local police, who assisted with the development of the locality risk assessment. These links all help staff to work effectively with the young people.

The home's statement of purpose gives a clear picture of life at the home. Those placed receive care in line with the expectations of the statement, being highly individualised and from a staff team that constantly strives for improvement in those that they care for.

The young people's guide gives a good overview of the statement, with additional information to support young people should they wish to raise concerns to external bodies. Young people are aware of how to raise concerns through the complaints system. Complaints made are thoroughly examined by the manager. She responds on an individual basis to the young people. This includes explaining her process and ensuring young people are told of the outcome.

The home is well staffed. Just under half the staff have started in the period since the full inspection, allowing the management to develop a team that is keen to learn the policies and procedures, as well as developing their care practice. All new staff are enrolled on the level 3 qualification. The majority of staff have completed this. A range of training courses are available from the organisation, both face-to-face and online. The manager has championed her expectation that some more complex courses, such as safeguarding, are delivered in person, to allow greater discussion and improved learning for staff.

Staff are positive about the level of support that they receive. Supervisions are regular and useful, and additional advice is offered to staff at all times by the manager. New staff also have a mentor to support them through their initial time at the home, giving guidance in areas such as paperwork and basic shift expectations. Staff meetings include discussions, primarily about the young people but also regarding developments within the organisation and managerial expectations.

The manager has a good awareness of the need to inform differing bodies following significant events. Ofsted is made aware of incidents that have occurred, with notifications being completed soon after each event. Updates to these ensure that bodies are kept up to date with the way that the home has acted in supporting the young people.

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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016