

SC022464

Registered provider: PIC Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is one of several owned and managed by a private company. The home provides care and support for one young person who has emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 28 to 29 March 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
---	--

How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
---	---------------------------------

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- The independent person's monthly reports are not sent to HMCI in a timely manner to enable the regulatory body to be satisfied that the conduct of the home promotes the young person's well-being and that the young person is effectively safeguarded in the home.
- Records in the home are not consistently up to date and do not fully reflect the young person's current situation.
- The young person's education is not being effectively supported to ensure that barriers are overcome and that he can access education.
- The safeguarding practice in the home needs to be more robust to ensure that all risks are fully documented and that steps are taken to address them.
- The home's statement of purpose has been updated but has not been sent to Ofsted.
- The home's development plan has not been updated.

The children's home's strengths:

- The registered manager and staff team are motivated and committed to providing the best care possible to the young person. They are fully focused on providing care that is reflective of the young person's needs.
- The young person said that they are happy, safe and settled at this home. They said that members of staff are supportive and are generally good listeners.
- Health needs of the young person are generally well met.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
21/01/2016	Full	Outstanding
12/01/2015	Interim	Not judged

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
8: The education standard The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff— understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child overcome any such barriers; help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment; help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8 (1)(2)(a)(iii)(iv)(viii))	23/06/2017
16: Statement of purpose 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. The registered provider must keep the statement under review and, where appropriate, revise it. They must also notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(1)(3)(a)(b))	23/06/2017
12: The protection of children standard The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—	23/06/2017

that staff— - assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; - help each child to understand how to keep safe; - have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; - understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; - take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare; - are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. Also, that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation (1)(2)(a)(i)(ii)(iii)(v)(vi)(vii)(b))	
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— - lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; - understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; - use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(f)(h))	23/06/2017
44: Independent person: visits and reports The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))	23/06/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that the registered manager makes best use of the independent and internal monitoring of the home to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- Ensure that the registered person has a workforce development plan which can fulfil the related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('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: requires improvement to be good

Young people develop positive relationships with the staff and can identify the staff members with whom they get on well so that they can talk to staff about some of their worries. The young person spoken to as part of the inspection described being happy at the home. They enjoy a range of leisure activities, including ice skating and going to the cinema.

Prior to coming to live at this home, the young person had not been in any formal education since March 2016. The young person is now enrolled at a school and he has an adequate statement of educational need in place. However, he has struggled to engage either in his new school with peers or at home in the one-to-one home tuition that has been arranged after recent periods of exclusion. Currently, he has six hours of tuition per week, when a member of staff from school attends every other day for two hours.

While it is positive to note that the young person has engaged during some of these sessions and that staff have tried to encourage his engagement through other activities, such as going to the library, there was limited information in the home to demonstrate what action staff had taken to support the young person to re-engage in education. The current arrangements are still well below what is required. Having poor attendance at school and having alternative arrangements that do not ensure that young people receive a suitable education are having a negative effect on the young person's educational development and therefore their future outcomes of gaining qualifications and securing employment. The drift in arranging meetings to identify the barriers to his learning and in taking steps to address the barriers exacerbates this.

The young person's health and well-being is well promoted in the home. His healthcare plan identifies his health needs and he is well supported in this area, with records demonstrating that all relevant health and developmental checks are in place and up to date. The young person's emotional welfare is a key focus, with referrals having been

made to access appropriate specialist support from Barnardo's. Similarly, Catch 22 is continuing to work with the young person and staff concerning the risks and dangers of the young person going missing and who he may be associating with.

While in placement, there have been two occasions when staff have suspected the young person was under the influence of alcohol, and one occasion when they suspected he was under the influence of cannabis. He was offered medical attention and NHS Direct was contacted. Staff ensured that the young person was monitored until seen to be safe and well. Risk assessments are in place that identify the strategies to advise staff to seek medical advice and to monitor through the night, if applicable. Staff have also sought further advice and support for the young person from Add-Action and the young people's drug and alcohol team.

The staff encourage and support the young person to adopt a healthy lifestyle and to undertake key-work sessions that address his health, development and well-being. Staff also encourage a healthier approach to meal planning and shopping, with the young person reporting that meals are good and that he enjoys opportunities to be active outside of the home.

There are good systems for administering, storing and disposing medication. Medication records are well maintained, and members of staff have regular training in medication procedures. This means that young people receive their medication safely and in line with their prescription.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

The young person said that they are able to talk to staff and that they would be comfortable to approach staff if they had any concerns or worries. The young person was also clear that they knew how to complain if needed, and that they know how to escalate their concerns if they are not happy with the response. This offers reassurance that their views and concerns are listened to and acted on.

The young person said that members of staff have spent time explaining how to keep themselves safe. They said that staff also give good advice about how to avoid risky situations where they may be bullied or left vulnerable to exploitation. However, on occasion the young person has returned home with unexplained injuries and staff were unable to establish how these occurred.

Risk assessments vary in quality. Some do not include enough information about all known risks, such as who the young person may associate with or where the young person may go when missing from the home. This prevents staff from developing a full understanding of all of the young people's behaviours that they may have to deal with. The location risk assessment has been updated and it now accounts for all known potential risks in the locality.

Staff follow a system of praise and reward, as well as using sanctions and consequences.

This helps young people to begin to understand the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. Positive regard builds up young people's self-esteem. It also ensures that negative behaviour does not become the sole focus of attention.

The staff get to know young people well and help them to develop ways of managing their frustrations. Staff update and review behaviour support plans to reflect any changes, and because of staff support the current young person has been able to start to recognise and manage their feelings and behaviour more constructively.

Young people arrive at the home with histories of going missing and of drug misuse. Some of these risks reduce overtime although being missing from home remains a significant concern for the currently placed young person. When the young person leaves the home without permission, staff respond diligently. They are proactive in searching for him and contact the other children's homes in the organisation to see if he is with some of their young people. This has resulted in him returning home safely a short while later. The staff's prompt action reduces risk and helps protect the young person from harm. Missing from care risk assessments are regularly reviewed, but have not been updated with new information about his known friends and associates.

Sound recruitment processes help to maintain a safe workforce. This prevents unsuitable people from working in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

A suitably qualified and experienced registered manager manages the home. He also manages one other children's home in close proximity to this home. He divides his time between both homes and regularly undertakes shifts in each home to ensure that he is accessible to the young people and available to support staff. The pending appointment of a deputy manager will assist in strengthening the management oversight and leadership of both homes.

The registered manager ensures that the home runs effectively and in the best interests of the young person. The culture and ethos of the home reflect a child-centred approach and a commitment to improving outcomes for the young person. The registered manager has taken effective action to address the two requirements made at the last inspection. Consequently, action has been taken to address the damp in the lounge, kitchen and utility room, and the home now presents as comfortable and homely. The registered manager has also taken steps to ensure that the detail within records is sufficient, especially with specific reference to the young person's healthcare plan.

The home has sufficient permanent, experienced and qualified staff to promote the safety and well-being of the young person. Rotas show that there is a good level of continuity of care. Should it be necessary, cover is arranged from within the organisation from staff who know the young person and the home well.

Staff said that the manager is approachable and supportive. Staff receive regular supervision, which enables them to reflect on their practice and performance. This aids

their development. There is a centralised organisation training matrix and one specifically for the home. It reflects training required, training completed and any forthcoming training. The training covers a range of issues such as radicalisation, supporting young people as an appropriate adult, child sexual exploitation and basic break away and de-escalation training. All new staff complete an induction course as well as safeguarding training. All staff at the home either have the relevant childcare qualification at diploma level or are enrolled on the course. Overall, this means staff members have good opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in order to care effectively for young people.

The registered manager has developed more effective internal monitoring and was able to share the detailed report that he was compiling for the six-monthly review. He recognises that this helps him to drive up standards for young people and provides him with a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. This supports the registered manager to ensure continuous improvement by making use of the information available to him.

Monthly external monitoring takes place. This reviews whether children are safeguarded effectively, and whether the conduct of the home promotes young people's well-being. However, the reports from these visits are not routinely sent to HMCI in a timely manner to enable the regulatory body to keep abreast of the independent person's findings and the home's response to these.

The quality of record-keeping overall still varies. The manager is introducing a series of revised reporting formats to make recording of information more straightforward and accessible. This includes trialling a new care plan. However, these are yet to be embedded, so the benefit of this initiative is yet to be established. The manager also acknowledged that there remains further work to be completed on the home's development and workforce plan as it had not been updated since April 2016 and is now not current.

The manager and staff work well with partner agencies. There are sound collaborative working relationships with other professionals including the police and the young person's social worker that help promote the young person's welfare.

The home's statement of purpose is due to be updated so that it details the home's ethos, the outcomes the home seeks to achieve and its approach to achieving them.

The manager ensures that they report significant events to Ofsted. This allows the regulator to carry out its monitoring function because it is appropriately informed of important developments or incidents.

Five requirements and two recommendations are raised to secure improvements. Notably, the registered manager must ensure that the young person is supported to overcome the barriers to their ongoing education, and that steps to address this do not drift. In addition, all risk assessments need to be of a good quality with regular review; the oversight and updating of records is needs to be more robust. The external reporting

must be submitted to Ofsted, as must the revised statement of purpose.

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: SC022464

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: PIC Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: 2 North Street, Haydock, St Helens, Merseyside WA11 0TW

Responsible individual: Carol Fletcher

Registered manager: Gregg Dinsmore

Inspector

Paul Gillespie, social care inspector

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, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding 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 1231, 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 <http://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 <http://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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017