

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	22/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC023636
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Childhood First
Registered person address	Childhood First, 210 Borough High Street, LONDON, SE1 1JX

Responsible individual	Mr Stephen Blunden
Registered manager	Mr Gary Yexley
Inspector	Liz Driver

Inspection date	22/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
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

SC023636

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home provides a safe environment designed for small group living and learning.
- The highly experienced and knowledgeable Registered Manager works effectively in partnership with the staff team. He understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home and takes action to develop the service further.
- The children receive therapeutic care delivered by staff with suitable and specialist therapeutic qualifications and knowledge. Children develop meaningful relationships with staff they trust. They enjoy time spent with staff.
- Children make very good progress, in some cases excellent progress emotionally, educationally and socially. They also make very good progress with their physical and mental health.
- A stable and consistent staff team have the needs of the children at the centre of their practice. They strongly advocate for the children. Children feel safe and supported at this service.
- Educational needs are supported and met. Children achieve very good attendance and achievement levels.

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 make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and	30/09/2015

disposal of medicines received into the children's home; in particular make clear to staff the protocol for managing medication errors (Regulation 23 (1))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; in particular training around equality and diversity (Regulation 33(4)(a))	30/09/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

This section should outline:

The home is registered to accommodate up to 10 children of mixed gender aged 5 to 10 years old. They transition on at the age of 14 years old. The home specialises in the treatment of children who present with severe emotional and behavioural problems. The home is a specialist residential therapeutic community providing care and treatment to psychologically traumatised children. It is operated by a charitable organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
04/08/2014	CH - Full	Good
29/01/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress
18/09/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Children make very good progress across all aspects of their needs. They attend the organisation's school located close by. Attendance levels are excellent. Children make very good progress with the support of the care staff both during the school day and after school with their homework. Children say they enjoy going to school. As a result of the therapeutic treatment, children make very good progress in making healthy attachments, processing feelings and relating to others. A significant part of the home's therapeutic ethos is for the children to gain confidence in living together with others. This aspect of the treatment and care is very successful. Children receive individualised psychotherapy sessions once or twice weekly, for a minimum of a year and often longer. All psychotherapy reports are included into placement reviews and information shared with a range of professionals involved in their lives. The service is collaboratively working with the local childhood and mental health services in relation to a research project about how mental health services can be improved. This has enabled the service to integrate the core findings into their referral process. The staff team provide a wide range of activities that the children enjoy, such as the cycle track on site, local clubs and social events, such as swimming and the cinema. All activities are age appropriate and risk assessed. Children have a strong voice in choosing activities they wish to participate in. One child said 'I really love being outside and riding the go kart I made around the large garden'. The staff encourage children to make healthy life style choices, from exercise to healthy eating. Meal times are very social occasions with staff promoting social skills such as good table manners. Children respond extremely well to this practice. Trained staff safely administer medication. Written procedures enable staff to deliver safe practice, although there is not an easily accessible protocol for the management of medication errors. The occurrence of errors is very low and those that do occur are minor in impact on children. Staff work hard to facilitate positive contact for each child and their family. There is a community room which is made available for family contact. The home has a dedicated placement and family support worker who works directly with families providing a supportive relationship.	

Transition arrangements are in general well planned. However, the service challenges local authorities if they are slow in forming a smooth transition plan.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Safeguarding policies and procedures are clear and robust. Staff members are aware of the procedures and of their implementation in practice. Children are kept safe by a staff team who demonstrate very good knowledge of safeguarding practices. Staff are trained in recognising actual or potential harm or abuse. A designated member of the senior staff team leads on safeguarding in relation to referrals and seeking advice from external safeguarding authorities. The senior leadership team keep under review safeguarding records and that are clear and informative. a Staff members have a good knowledge of e-safety and child sexual exploitation. Staff supervised children's use of the internet at all times due to their ages. Staff support children to understand the risks associated with all forms of social media. Risk assessment around e-safety and child sexual exploitation informs staff how to manage individual and group risk. Behaviour management systems ensure children are safely managed. A calm and skilled approach is adopted to diffuse evolving incidents. Children respond well to clear boundaries set by staff. Overtime children develop more appropriate ways of communicating their feelings to others. Children are encouraged to raise matters that concern them in group and individual meetings or key worker sessions. Individual risk assessments inform the staff of the behaviour management strategies to be used. They contain the child's preferred method of control, if needed. Reflective work with the child and staff is firmly in place and overseen by the Registered Manager and senior leaders. No incidents of children going missing have occurred. A procedure is in place if such an incident occurred and this is known by staff. The staff employ a restorative approach to incidence of bullying or unkindness. There is a clear system for reporting, recording, tracking and responding to incidences of bullying. Children are clear in what to do if they feel they are being bullied. One child said 'we talk about bullying in group meetings; I am not bullied here as staff are always around keeping us safe'. Children live in a safe environment where all health and safety checks are carried out. Recruitment arrangements are robust. Only those adults assessed as suitable	

to work with children are appointed.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The Registered Manager has over 20 years' experience of working in therapeutic residential work, with 10 years as a senior manager. He has very suitable psychoanalytic qualifications. He is currently completing a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare. Staffing is a strength of this service. The staff members form caring and professional relationships with the children. Children respond extremely well to these relationships. The staff are suitably trained to deliver therapeutic care in line with the home's stated therapeutic ethos as set out in the statement of purpose. They also receive specialist training so they can meet the needs of the children. Although staff have not received equality and diversity training, children are treated with dignity and respect. Monitoring of the service is good. Auditing systems in place address any areas that require improvement and inform future planning. Senior managers and leaders across the organisation, together with the Registered Manager, have clear oversight and input into the structured quality assurance processes. They know the strengths and weakness of the home and have development plans they are working with. An independent visitor provides an objective view with recommendations that the Registered Manager actions. The home's statement of purpose meets the required standard. It contains clear information that enable professionals to have a clear overview of the service when making placement decisions.	

The home is well equipped, well maintained and homely. Facilities are up to date and meet the needs of the children. The garden offers a large area for children to play football and ride their bikes. The Registered Manager and staff continually strive to improve this setting to benefit children.

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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