

SC025395

Registered provider: Nugent Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a charitable organisation. The home provides care and support for up to 19 children and young people who are no longer able to live at home. The home operates over two houses. One provides care and support for three children and young people who have a learning disability.

The registered manager has been in post since before 2007.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 November 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

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

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2018	Full	Good
17/10/2017	Full	Good
27/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/08/2016	Full	Good

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
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– that the premises used for the purposes of the home are located so that children are effectively safeguarded; that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12(1), (2)(c)(d))	24/01/2020
The registered person must ensure that– within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes– a description of the measure and its duration. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iv))	24/01/2020

Recommendations

- Ensure that the home complies with relevant health and safety legislation (food hygiene, etc.) ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
In particular, enhance the young people's understanding of how to store food safely and the timescales for its safe consumption.
- Ensure that a child's bedroom is not generally entered without their permission. Usually rooms should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for permission. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.20)
In particular, ensure that a record is made of any room search.
- Ensure that the registered person specifies the procedures to be followed and the

roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on their return to the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)

- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

In particular, ensure that the sanctions are proportionate and fair.

- The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and external monitoring (including under regulation 44 and 45) to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents. They are responsible for implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information must be recorded in a way that is helpful to the child. The home's records on the child provide a significant contribution to their life history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraphs 14.4, 14.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people thrive in this warm, caring and nurturing home. Children and young people receive high-quality individualised care that is making an important difference to their lives.

The manager and staff have a detailed understanding of the progress that each child or young person is making and the priorities for their care. They identify when children and young people are struggling and have a strong commitment to understanding and working through the difficulties to improve things.

The manager and staff have brought stability to the children and young people's lives. Consequently, children and young people are making excellent progress in their health and emotional well-being, building healthy relationships, growing in confidence and taking steps to manage their feelings. Children and young people enjoy the same opportunities and experiences as those in their peer group and enjoy spending time with their friends.

Staff are committed to ensuring that children and young people take part in activities that are important to them, such as boxing club. The staff seize on every opportunity for children and young people to take part in fun learning activities to build their skills and knowledge.

Children and young people take part in meetings and the decisions affecting their lives, including about seeing their family and the plans for their education and future. Staff spend considerable amounts of time with children and young people to prepare them for the meetings. The support that children and young people receive enables them to express their views and to understand what is going on.

A key strength is the support provided to help children and young people to achieve in education. The manager and staff are strong advocates for children and young people. They use every opportunity to support their learning, such as creating a file so that a young person can understand a family member's pregnancy and its impact upon her. This has proven so successful that the family member has asked for a copy of the information.

Several young people are completing apprenticeships and are doing very well. One young person asked staff to help them to improve their maths skills so that they can achieve the exam results that they need to pursue their chosen career path. Overall, children and young people have individual aspirations and goals that they are working towards with the support and guidance of staff.

Staff make sure that children and young people have the skills, opportunities and emotional resilience that they need to become independent adults. This includes encouraging and supporting children and young people to cook, shop, manage money,

make appointments and use public transport independently and safely. Children and young people relish the opportunities to spend time with their families and friends. Staff ensure that all visits are managed sensitively and safely so that the children and young people get the most out of them.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The manager and staff have created a home in which children and young people feel safe and are protected from harm. Children and young people have a strong sense of safety and well-being. They see the manager and staff as people whom they can trust and talk to when they are worried or have a problem.

The staff's knowledge and safe, professional practice protects children from harm. Guided by dynamic risk assessments and plans, staff act to reduce the dangers to children and young people's safety. The quality of care that the children and young people receive has helped them to become increasingly safe from the risks of criminal exploitation, social media and the inappropriate use of technology.

There have been several recent incidents of young people being missing from home. Staff generally respond quickly and help the young people to return home safely. However, on some occasions the information in the home's 'snatch pack' and the young people's risk assessments conflicts. Also, they do not contain specific information on to when to report the young people as missing. This may hinder staff's ability to locate children and young people quickly.

Staff have the skills and confidence to help each child or young person to manage their feelings and frustrations safely. They know each child and young person extremely well and treat them with warmth, understanding, kindness and respect.

Physical interventions are rarely used. However, when they are used, staff do not always record their duration. This does not promote transparency. Sanctions are used, yet they are not always proportionate. This leads to inconsistencies in how issues of poor behaviour are managed.

Since the last inspection, the home's environment has deteriorated. The home was due to be refurbished, however, this project has been delayed whilst awaiting the release of funds. As a result, several young people's bedrooms require redecoration and upgrading. Some young people are storing food incorrectly in their bedrooms, for example open packets of cereal, and this may pose a health risk.

Several health and safety issues were observed. This included issues within the mother-and-baby area, diffusers missing from lights, a damaged telephone socket and poor-quality remedial work to damaged walls. These shortfalls had not been identified through monitoring of the service and are now detracting from the warm, family environment that the home is striving to maintain.

Young people are protected, as the recruitment and vetting of staff new to the home are

secure and visitors are required to sign in and out the premises.

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

The manager is very experienced and qualified. She provides clear and effective leadership. She is passionate about providing each child or young person with the best possible care and support to improve their lives.

Staff share the manager's vision and high expectations for children and young people. Together, the manager and staff have created a warm and supportive atmosphere. They actively promote tolerance, equality and diversity. As a result, children and young people feel accepted, safe and comfortable to be themselves.

Young people's privacy is usually well respected. However, staff do not record when they have carried out a search of a child or young person's bedroom. Neither do they always ensure that they have consent to do this.

Monitoring reports by the home's registered manager and independent person are informative, but would benefit from a more-critical oversight of the language used in some records. The language used to describe some young people's behaviours is inappropriate and is not helpful to the child or young person when they access their records now or in the future.

Staff have regular opportunities for professional one-to-one supervision. They have good opportunities to attend a wealth of training throughout the year. Staff said that the recent training on attachment and loss was insightful and had provided them with some new ideas on how to support specific children and young people.

The registered manager provides staff with appropriate guidance and support. She makes sure that staff provide children and young people with a very good standard of care. Staff are knowledgeable, experienced, skilled and motivated. They are resilient and do not give up trying to make a positive difference to children and young people's lives. The staffing arrangements and levels meet the needs of the children and young people and provide them with continuity of care.

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 whom 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: SC025395

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Nugent Care

Registered provider address: 99 Edge Lane, Edge Hill, Liverpool L7 2PE

Responsible individual: Sarah Swanson

Registered manager: Benedicte McKeown

Inspectors

Chris Scully, social care inspector

Mandy Nightingale, her majesty's inspector

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