

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025420
Inspector	Elaine Allison
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Quality Protects Children Ltd
Registered person address	Hill House Archway Road Huyton Liverpool L36 9XB
Responsible individual	Anthony Nolan
Registered manager	Anthony Tagoe
Date of last inspection	03/02/2014

Inspection date	09/06/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
-------------------	-------------

This home meets young people's needs to a good standard. Young people's plans are highly individualised and demonstrate that the staff are aware of, and meet, young people's diverse and complex needs. Equality and diversity are clearly valued and promoted in the home. Difference is enjoyed and celebrated and each young person's individuality is promoted to an excellent standard.

The young people are cared for in a warm safe environment by extremely competent and dedicated staff. The service adopts a holistic approach to supporting the young people and their families. There is very good communication between the service and external agencies which ensures a consistent approach is provided when caring for the young people. The young people being cared for within the home have very good personal plans that demonstrate real insight into the health and wellbeing of their diverse needs. Staff use them to enable the young people to build positive relationships, which will assist them to make choices that will keep them safe and provide them with opportunities for meaningful inclusion within society.

Observations of the staff and young people's interactions throughout the visit show that there are good positive relationships between them and a genuine emotional connection. These types of relationships are vital to provide a secure base for young

people to develop resilience and healthy attachments, which in turn support the children and young people to develop all aspects of their health and wellbeing. Staff demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of most risks young people face, and work hard to ensure those risks are minimised and safely managed. They work well together and use the diverse attributes and skills they have to complement each other. This in turn allows them to offer good support to the children and young people.

The service provides an environment where education is a central component to the personal planning and positive outcomes for the children and young people. Strong links between the education base of the provider, and staff, ensures continuity to support the young people to realise their own potential and promote their self-esteem.

Creative management and leadership has created a positive culture that supports staff and has built collaborative relationships with agencies and stakeholders. This supports young people in achieving positive outcomes.

The service, where appropriate, encourages family members to visit the home and to join young people for group or individual meals. This creates a feeling of an open and transparent culture within the service which helps to ensure the quality of the service is maintained for young people.

The arrangements for young people's admission into the home are not adequately monitored to take into account the suitability of a placement for a child or the potential risks and range of needs of other children living in the home.

As a result of this inspection areas of development include the provider responding to young people's request for internet access.

Staff have not had appropriate training to meet individual young people's health needs.

Ofsted have not received reports from the provider about the conduct of the home within the appropriate timescales.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home for six young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and drug or alcohol dependence, who come from many parts of England and Wales. The home is one of several owned by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/02/2014	Interim	good progress
18/09/2013	Full	adequate
30/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
29/06/2012	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure the home makes proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there; in particular Having sufficient information to ensure that are able to meet the young person's needs before a decision about admitting young people (Regulation 11 (1a))	14/07/2014
33 (2001)	ensure a copy of the independent person's report is sent to Ofsted (Regulation 33 (9) (a))	14/07/2014

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the home implements clear procedures for introducing young people to the home, which covers planned, and where permitted, emergency placement (NMS 11.1)
- ensure children take part in appropriate peer activities as agreed by the home staff in a way similar to how a reasonable parent might reach agreement with their children, taking into account any assessment of risk to the child; in particular children have suitable access to social media and the internet (NMS 7.5)
- ensure staff receive guidance and training to provide appropriate care if looking after children with complex health needs (NMS 6.8)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

The majority of the young people are engaged in education and are making good progress. Young people are fully involved in their education choices and as a result, they maintain good attendance at school and other educational settings. This ensures that young people are able to develop academically and achieve in line with their peers. A social worker commented, 'they have managed to get (young person) onto an education programme which seems to be going really well. I think it was because the young person was fully involved in the process of selecting an appropriate education setting.'

Incidents of challenging behaviour are reducing and young people are making good progress living in a group setting. Young people form trusting relationships with staff and this enables young people to discuss any worries or concerns. A social worker commented 'on my visits to the home it is evident that there is a mutual respect between the staff and the young people'. A young person said 'I have always got someone to talk to and they really listen and if they can they will help me with anything'. As a result, they feel safe and emotionally secure in the home.

Where appropriate to do so, young people maintain close contact with their families. This further ensures that young people develop emotional resilience and knowledge and understanding of their backgrounds. A parent commented, 'the staff are great and make me feel welcome when I come here. They have helped not just (child) but also me and our relationship is so much better now'.

Young people have requested internet access at the home; this request has actively been pursued by the manager, however the provider has not followed up this request. A young person commented 'we can't do things that my mates are doing there isn't even a computer here and we can't get onto the internet, unless it's in the office with staff watching us'. This means that young people living in the home do not have the same opportunity as their peers to use a variety of social media networks. As in some cases the young people are placed a long way from their homes this impacts on their friendships outside the home and 'keeping in touch' with family members.

The health of young people is good. All young people benefit from easy access to appropriate medical services and receive appropriate care and treatment, from appropriate services, where necessary. Where young people require help with developing their personal care routines, they make good progress in this regard. As a result, young people develop their independence and increase their self-esteem. Although there had been no instances which placed young people at risk, the service

had not ensured that all staff were equipped with the necessary training or skills to meet these needs.

Quality of care

good

Young people enjoy constructive relationships with staff. Their views are captured through regular house meetings and key sessions. Young people requested a trampoline and one is now in the garden. This demonstrates to young people that their views are listened to and acted upon. Young people know how to complain, one complaint was lodged since the last inspection and this was dealt with appropriately to the young person's satisfaction.

Medication, where used, is safely stored and carefully administered. Detailed records of medication are routinely checked for accuracy. This ensures that any errors are quickly identified and promptly resolved. The staff team promote the health of young people at all times. All medical appointments are up to date and the staff team are diligent in ensuring that young people attend. As a result, young people enjoy good health and any concerns are quickly resolved. Young people are encouraged to develop their emotional well-being because they benefit from regular, high quality discussions with their key workers. As a result, they form strong attachments to the staff team and are able to discuss a range of feelings, worries and concerns.

Complaints from young people are rare. Where they do occur, they are appropriately addressed and resolved. As a result, young people know that their concerns are listened to and acted upon.

Detailed records of key working discussions are held securely in the home. This ensures that staff are able to work consistently and know of any matters affecting the progress that young people make. A social worker commented, 'the staff are passionate about the young people and really care about them, our regular updates from the home are very detailed and show progress made not just notifying us of an incident.' Staff had a range of records to guide them in meeting the needs of the young people in their care. For example, an 'impact case study' which was used to monitor the impact of the work with individual young people and inform future care planning. The use of these had contributed to ensuring young people were safe and looked after and their needs are being met.

Generally, the food for meals and snacks is and nutritious. The home is particularly good at addressing young people's special dietary requirements and cultural needs in the food provided. Storage of food within the home had been adapted to meet the cultural needs of the young people, specifically a separate fridge for Halal food and a separate fridge for young people with a nut allergy. This ensured that young people's identity and cultural needs were addressed and that young people were kept safe.

The home is spacious and well-appointed. Young people take pride in their surroundings. One young person commented 'it's a big house but it still feels like home and we all help the staff to keep it nice'. Young people had been involved in choosing paint colours for the kitchen and one young person undertook the painting of the kitchen. This enabled young people to be involved in decisions about their environment and added to their sense of belonging. Young people enjoy access to local amenities and there is a range of age-appropriate activities for young people to enjoy. These included football, go-karting and attending local clubs.

Keeping children and young people safe good

The service is good at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe. Each young person has a detailed behaviour management plan in place. This contains what strategies are needed to encourage positive behaviour. These plans are effective and young people's abilities to manage their own behaviour have improved as a result of their successful implementation.

The home's recording system is appropriate and ensures that should restraint occur, all appropriate details can be recorded. Positive behaviour is recognised and rewarded in the home. Where sanctions are used, they are fair and proportionate. One young person commented 'when we get a sanction it is fair and we can get rid of the sanction if we show good behaviour'. This ensures that young people are encouraged to display and maintain socially acceptable behaviour.

The home has clear protocols with the local police should a young person go missing. Very good links have been established with the police missing co-ordinator which ensures a speedy co-ordinated response to any missing episode, reducing the risk for young people. Incidents of young people going missing from home have reduced. Staff discuss with young people the reasons they may go missing, such as wishing to maintain contact with their local communities, and do their best to resolve these. When young people do go missing, staff take immediate action, including liaising with the police, to ensure young people's welfare is protected and they return quickly and safely. Staff do their best to balance risk management with providing young people with appropriate individual levels of support and supervision. They remain vigilant to identify and record emerging risks to young people.

When serious incidents occur, the staff team ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety of young people. Furthermore, all required serious incident notifications are made to the appropriate services. As a result, young people's safety is promoted at all times.

Risk assessments outline what measures need to be in place to support the young people in their environment, in the community and in various activities. These ensure that the welfare and safety of the young people is not compromised and is

maintained to a good standard. Regular fire drills take place in both day and evening times. This ensures that young people and staff are practised in safe evacuation. All areas of the home are safely maintained and appropriate checks ensure any defects are identified and resolved. This ensures that young people's health and safety is appropriately promoted in the home.

Managers maintain robust recruitment and selection procedures that help prevent unsuitable people from having access to young people. Managers carefully induct and support new staff into their role to ensure they acquire the skills necessary to care safely for young people.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post since 2009. He is suitably qualified to undertake his responsibilities, with an NVQ 3 Caring for Children and Young People, and a Level 4 qualification in management.

This is a very well-managed home. An experienced manager and deputy work effectively to ensure that all members of staff buy into the culture and ethos of transparency, good childcare practice and addressing and celebrating the differences in young people. This enables young people maintain and retain their sense of identity.

Practice is assessed and reflected upon in supervision, team meetings and by the compilation of monitoring reports. This enables shortfalls to be addressed or areas to be improved. For example, by analysing routines for young people and developing strategies when trigger points for distressed behaviour have been identified.

Regular training is provided for all staff to ensure that they are knowledgeable about their role and have the skills and competencies to fulfil it. Additionally, all staff members receive regular supervision to provide them with day-to-day support in their role and to promote their professional development. Members of staff feel very well supported and believe that the team work in the home is excellent; we have a strong committed team that works well together,' is a comment made by a member of staff. This support is also underpinned by regular staff meetings which enable everyone to reflect on practice and the effectiveness of the service.

Overall, the home's written records are completed and audited to a good standard, being stored with due regard for confidentiality. The well-structured files and care plans give a very good oversight of each young person's progress and history of their time at the home.

Managers in the home provide leadership that helps staff to focus on the needs of complex young people. However, the provider does not consistently plan all admissions to the home. They do not always take into account the vulnerabilities of the group already resident, or whether staff have sufficient knowledge and

understanding of the specific needs of individuals, to ensure their emotional health and wellbeing. Despite this, staff work tirelessly to support young people, while advocating for a more appropriate placement for some.

The provider and manager regularly monitor the operation of the home the quality of care and outcomes for young people, in partnership with young people and the professionals who support them. This ensures the ongoing safety of the young people who live in the home. However, the provider has failed to submit monthly monitoring regulation 33 visits to Ofsted. The quality of the monitoring by the independent person is not evaluative and does not lend itself to be used for improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.