

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	17/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC025420
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Quality Protects Children Limited
Registered provider address	Hill House, Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB

Responsible individual	Anthony Nolan
Registered manager	Anthony Tagoe
Inspector	Elaine Allison and Michelle Edge

Inspection date	17/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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

SC025420

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are happy at this home and feel safe. They are confident that staff care about them and will listen to them. This is because staff develop positive relationships with them and promote positive behaviour.
- Young people are making good progress from their starting points. This is reflected in the views of professionals. Young people benefit from consistency and structure. These give them a sense of emotional security.
- The strong commitment by staff to consistent, strong attachments and trusting relationships has meant that young people have continued to make positive progress.
- Young people who are new to the home are given high levels of support to help them to settle and become familiar with the expectations of the home.
- Managers ensure that partnership working is effective in making sure that young people are provided with the support necessary to meet their assessed needs.
- Young people's cultural and religious needs are very well catered for by a well-informed, diverse and multicultural staff team.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard, the registered person must ensure that: (1)(a) children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14(1)(a)) In particular, ensure that each young person has a local authority care plan.	28/12/2016
32: Fitness of workers The registered person must ensure that individuals working within the home have the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform, and that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect to each of the matters in schedule 2. (Regulation (32)(3)(b)(d)) In particular, ensure that a training matrix is developed to give an accurate reflection of staff's training needs, and that staff recruitment is fully robust.	28/12/2016
33: Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that all employees: (a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development; (b) receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))	28/12/2016

Recommendation

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

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20) ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and managed. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Good
12/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/06/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people experience a good standard of care. They establish meaningful relationships with the staff, which are the basis of their individual progress. Comments from young people are overwhelmingly positive. They consider that staff are 'great and always there'. Young people make good progress in important areas of their lives. They thrive in a homely environment that is organised around their individual needs. Young people enjoy living at the home. Professionals highlight the significant impact that the staff have had on young people and the achievements that they have made to date. A social worker commented, 'I am very happy with the care provided by a very capable staff team.' Staff understand that the barriers and challenges that young people face are linked to their life experiences previously. This insight enables them to help young people to manage their behaviour, social interactions and education. It has resulted in one young person moving smoothly back to his family home. There is also some timely, well-planned work being undertaken to ensure that a young person's transition back into education is successful. A key strength of the home is the relationships between staff and young people. There is clear mutual respect and genuine warmth in the home. A young person commented, 'The staff make this a good place to live and the other lads helped me to settle in.' Staff and young people spend time at the home, and it is evident that there is a harmonious and familial atmosphere. There is also a very real sense of young people having ownership and responsibility for decisions in the home. Young people's identity needs are given a high priority by staff, and staff advocate on behalf of young people. 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 <i>Halal</i> food. Young people are also supported by staff to attend their specific places of worship to ensure that their religious preferences are provided for. Bilingual staff continue to enable young people from different ethnic backgrounds to communicate effectively. When English is not the first language of young people, in the absence of interpreters staff use innovative methods of communication, for example using computer applications to have a two-way conversation with young people. Opportunities to undertake shared activities and experiences with staff are encouraged, from playing table tennis in the games room to shared meals out in local restaurants. This approach benefits young people when they experience	

difficulties in their lives, as there are adults whom they trust and can talk to. Young people say that they feel supported by staff and report that they could speak to staff if there was something upsetting them.

The manager and staff work hard to explore young people's backgrounds and needs. Young people grow in maturity, because staff have great respect for their previous experiences and reasons for behaviour. They have an in-depth understanding of how historic neglect impacts on young people's self-esteem and their abilities to make attachments with others. Staff's high regard for the mental and emotional health of young people is reflected in detailed key-working sessions and the responses of young people in this inspection.

Compatibility assessment and planned transition periods are crucial in assessing and monitoring the matches between the young people who live at the home. While young people have very different interests, they get on well. Individuality is embraced by the staff and both young people receive support to pursue their own separate interests.

Education is well supported. Young people benefit from individual education packages that reflect their learning needs and challenge any barriers that they face. When young people do not have suitable school placements, staff work in partnership with specialist education agencies to reduce disruption to young people's learning. Staff work closely with the education provider and the local authority to ensure that young people make meaningful progress with their education.

The manager ensures that young people are registered with doctors, dentists and opticians. They attend their routine health appointments with good support and encouragement from staff. Young people have access to the services that they need to promote their physical, emotional and psychological well-being. This includes specialist drug and alcohol support services. Young people's self-confidence improves as staff sensitively help young people with their personal care. Young people's health and emotional development benefit because of this specialised support.

The home is well presented and offers a welcoming environment that enables young people to feel safe and protected. Each part of the home is very well presented and suitably furnished, providing more than enough space for young people to relax. A young person has recently been supported to convert part of the large garden into an allotment, and takes pride in tending the vegetables that he is growing.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people say that they feel safe. Risks are identified as part of the care planning process. Managers make sure that they are regularly reviewed to ensure that the appropriate strategies are in place to minimise harm. There is clear identification of the risks, potential triggers for risk-taking behaviours and strategies to minimise or manage risks. Young people arrive with complex needs and challenging behaviours, such as gang affiliation and criminal activity. Staff use their skills and knowledge of behaviour management to understand young people's needs. This helps young people to manage their emotions safely and to begin to understand the triggers that can place them at risk. Young people benefit from coordinated and reviewed care plans, which are regularly considered in light of progress made and new needs emerging. This ensures that the care offered is responsive and individualised. Professionals involved with young people reflect that communication from the home is timely and focused on young people. A social worker commented, 'The written reports and verbal feedback that I get from the home show that they are on top of my young person's needs.' However, a young person who was placed on an emergency basis did not have the appropriate and relevant local authority care planning documents in place. This means that the home does not have sufficient information to implement an effective placement plan to meet this young person's individual needs. Young people's risk-taking behaviours have decreased since admission. For example, young people who previously struggled to control their feelings of anger and the associated aggressive behaviour are now able to manage this much more productively. Similarly, incidents of young people going missing from the home have decreased significantly. Staff were observed during the inspection to be sensitively and effectively managing to de-escalate a young person who was in a heightened mood, to a point where he was supported to manage his emotions. Staff are alert to the potential risks of radicalisation and to any indications that young people could be preoccupied with ideas of aggression and violence towards others who are seen as against their religion. For example, staff liaise closely with key faith and community groups at places of worship that young people attend. The home uses a system of financial rewards and incentives to promote positive behaviour. Consequently, the use of physical intervention is rare. Sanctions are also rare, and the focus is on positive behaviour. Young people described the sanctions as 'honest and fair'. It was pleasing to see that young people have an opportunity to revoke the sanction by displaying positive behaviour. This further helps to	

support the young people with their behaviour management skills. Staff are highly motivated to keep young people safe and to help them grow. They work hard with young people to help them to address their risk-taking behaviours. Key-worker sessions evidence frequent discussions on areas of risk and the identification of proactive ways of supporting young people to manage their own behaviours and reduce their risks. Staff also use innovative methods of engaging with the young people to keep them safe. An excellent example is showing the group of young people a documentary on gang affiliation. A staff member said, 'I speak to them as grown ups, and I try to help them through the transition from boys to men. I want to give them a good platform in life.' This level of passion and compassion ensures that the young people living at the home feel valued and receive the appropriate guidance

Managers ensure that safe recruitment practices are utilised to ensure that young people are protected, and that all staff at the home are suitable and safe to work with young people. Young people live in a physically safe environment in which the manager ensures that all routine checks, risk assessments, and safety policies and procedures are rigorously adhered to.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been in post since 2009. He is suitably qualified to undertake his responsibilities, with an NVQ 3 in caring for children and young people, and a level 4 qualification in management. The manager and deputy are passionate about providing the best care and experiences for the young people. They ensure that the needs of young people are clearly prioritised at the home. The staff team shows high levels of commitment to ensuring that young people progress and achieve. Staffing arrangements in the home meet the needs of the young people. The clear strength of the cohesive and long-term staff team is that it is effective in maintaining stability for young people. Staff are qualified to work with children in a residential setting. They also receive specific training according to the needs of the young people, such as training about drugs and substance misuse, as well as about refugees and displaced young people. However, the provider has a centralised training matrix document for the home. This document was not up to date, thus the manager was unable to have a clear overview of the staff's training needs. Regular staff meetings and handover discussions embed consistent practice across the staff team, thus promoting the home's statement of purpose. There are mutually supportive and respectful relationships across the staff group. These	

demonstrate positive role models and consistency for the young people. Staff have developed positive working relationships with a number of key stakeholders, including the youth offending service, education professionals and social workers. All are positive about the level and quality of communication received from the home, and this promotes effective partnership working. Staff use partnership relationships to advocate and challenge on behalf of young people to ensure that they receive appropriate support to meet their needs. For some young people, this has been very effective, for example in securing appropriate training and education settings.

Staff talk positively about the support that they receive, especially in relation to the registered manager. However, staff supervisions do not routinely take place. Furthermore, the supervision sessions that do take place are not consistently recorded as required by company policy. This limits the opportunity for managerial oversight and staff development. The registered manager is aware of this shortfall.

Monitoring is effective. Information arising from the manager's and external person's monitoring, and through inspection, mean that the manager has a good understanding about the strengths and areas for development. He is quick to address the issues arising. The home has appropriate systems in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant bodies of significant events that occur within the home or with young people. This ensures that those with an interest in young people's welfare are kept appropriately informed.

The manager uses the testimony from young people, and information from professionals working with the home and from complaints, to learn lessons with a view to improvement. However, this information is not transferred into the home's development plan. This is a missed opportunity to ensure that the voices of young people influence the plans for the home.

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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