

SC025420

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns the home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2019.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 January 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 2 December 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/12/2019	Full	Inadequate
26/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/05/2018	Full	Good
08/08/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be 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 staff— understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies; 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 12 (1)(2)(a)(v)(vii)(b))	28/02/2020
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; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(2)(a)(h))	28/02/2020
The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that young people, staff and professionals are consulted, as part of the performance review.	28/02/2020
The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—	28/02/2020

take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives. (Regulation 7 (1)(c))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees—receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	28/02/2020

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

At the previous inspection in November 2019, the home was judged as inadequate. No young people have been admitted to the home or discharged from the home since this time.

The manager and staff have taken good action in supporting the young people, who are starting to make progress. However, these actions have yet to be securely embedded in care practice to ensure that the young people's improved outcomes are sustained.

In general, young people said that they have good relationships with the staff. This enables young people to develop their confidence in sharing their concerns and anxieties and to find solutions to what is worrying them. Young people spoke positively about staff and how the staff have supported them. However, one young person was unhappy that two members of staff, whom he had a good relationship with, have been moved to another home. This was part of a restructuring by the company to balance experienced staff across their homes, and the home also employed a sports coach. Young people were not consulted about this. This does not ensure that their views, wishes and feelings are considered.

Staff value education for young people and they support and encourage the young people to attend school and college. Positive relationships with education staff and the virtual headteacher mean that any barriers to learning are quickly identified and addressed. The young people have been supported to follow their ambitions. One young person wants to be a chef, and another wants to be a musician. They both attend education provisions that give them the opportunity to explore these career pathways.

Young people receive practical support from staff so that they can visit their families. Staff understand the strong links that young people have with their families and provide support when and if required. For example, one young person was only seeing his family for a few hours. Over time, this has built up, and he had an overnight stay with his mother at Christmas. This went well. The manager is working with his social worker and his parent to build on this further.

All medication is now stored and recorded appropriately. Consent for medical treatment and first aid is in place for each young person. There are now clear procedures for the disposal of medication and for any changes in the young people's prescriptions. Staff have received more training in the administration of medication. The registered manager has devised a robust auditing system to be put in place for overseeing the safe administration of medication. This further protects young people.

Regardless of the young people's age, they are encouraged to help around the home and take responsibility for their bedrooms, and they are supported to plan, prepare and cook for themselves and others. This helps prepare them for adult life.

The young people live in a large property that occupies four floors. The basement has been changed to offer young people fitness opportunities and it has a quiet room for reflection. The top floor has been converted into a school area. This means that any new admissions to the home who are out of education can be tutored away from the main living area of the home. The home has been redecorated and it is suitably furnished throughout.

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

Since the last inspection, the provider's safeguarding policies and procedures have been updated. Staff's understanding of and responses to safeguarding concerns have been enhanced by further training. The provider has arranged several workshops that cover a range of safeguarding topics, the staff's roles and responsibilities with regards to safeguarding practices and general topics. These will be revisited in the team meetings. For example, after the first workshop, staff discussed the whistleblowing policy. There are three further workshops planned. The manager said that she will test staff's knowledge of safeguarding in their individual supervision sessions. Therefore, this is not yet embedded in practice. As a result, the requirement given at the last inspection has been only partially met and has been repeated.

The young people said that they feel safe in this home. They said that staff discuss issues of safety with them on a regular basis. In the young people's meeting, the young people have recently discussed drug misuse. Some young people, for whom going missing from home was previously a feature of their lives, experience a significant drop in the frequency of these episodes. When young people do go missing, staff follow a robust protocol that includes searching for young people.

Good risk assessments contribute towards protecting the young people. Staff promote positive behaviour using positive rewards and direct work with young people. Young people understand reward systems and feel that they work effectively. As a result, the home is settled, and there are very few behavioural incidents. Any negative consequences are proportionate to the behaviour and are thoroughly evaluated by the manager.

Environmental risk assessments accurately reflect identified risks and potential hazards. New safeguards have been implemented in relation to the fire doors and alarms. Young people and staff understand fire safety systems and know how to respond if emergencies occur. A new risk assessment has been introduced for the new assault course in the garden. Some adaptations have been made to ensure that it is safe for young people to use. The manager has introduced a daily walk-around check-list as part of the staff's handover. This ensures that all areas are monitored frequently.

The company follows the safer recruitment guidance. All checks are completed and verified to ensure that members of staff are suitable to work with young people. When staff have transferred from another home to this home, the manager has completed a transfer document. This involves discussing the member of staff with their previous manager and having sight of their recruitment file. This ensures that the manager can confidently confirm their suitability and that she understands the support that they may require.

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

The registered manager is suitably qualified and has the experience to undertake her role. She is supported in her role by a deputy and a senior member of staff. She has introduced several check-lists, which will enable her to routinely monitor, evaluate and analyse the work undertaken by the staff. Daily, weekly and monthly monitoring has started to take place. The manager said that this will help her to identify weaknesses and to take remedial action. Therefore, this is not yet embedded in practice. As a result, the requirement given at the last inspection has been partially met and has been repeated.

The company has changed the ethos of the home and a variation was granted by Ofsted in January 2020 to reduce the number of categories of need that the home is registered for. The home's ethos means there will be a considerable focus on the emotional well-being and the physical and mental health of children and young people who live here. They aim to provide improvement in physical health through a structured games programme called 'Superstar mover'. One young person has already seen the benefits of this by losing some weight. The young people said that they are really enjoying the opportunities given to them, especially the yoga sessions.

The registered manager has not ensured that the home operates in line with the workforce plan. This relates to the frequency of staff supervision, which is not provided to staff as stated: 'four to six weeks'. Reduced levels of supervision mean that staff do not have regular opportunities to reflect on their practice. Appraisals have been completed for the staff for whom they were overdue. However, the information in them is brief. There are sections empty, notably the sections covering consultation with young people, other staff and professionals. This does not give an all-round view of the staff's practice.

Staff are motivated and driven and display a desire for improvement. One member of staff stated that their aim is to provide the best care they can for the young people.

Since the last inspection, the staff have completed several positive training sessions. The staff spoken with said that training and learning opportunities have been helpful. They said that they have learned to consider different approaches when responding to the young people's presenting behaviours and needs.

Effective action has been taken to address most of the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. Some have been repeated to ensure that the improvements are embedded in practice, such as safeguarding arrangements, appraisals and monitoring of the home. However, health records are now clear and include the arrangements for disposing of medication and changes in the young people's prescriptions.

The manager has consulted with the local authority's fire safety service, and a robust risk assessment and daily checks on fire doors help to protect young people and visitors to the home. A return to work interview is carried out when staff have been off sick. This ensures that staff are physically fit to carry out their roles and responsibilities. The manager understands her role in informing Ofsted of any serious incident and she has updated her practice following the recent guidance from Ofsted.

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 differences 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: SC025420

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Ltd

Registered provider address: Hill House, Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB

Responsible individual: Anthony Nolan

Registered manager: Mellissa Gittens

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care regulatory inspector

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