

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC025664
Inspector	Seka Graovac
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Ownlife Limited
Registered person address	Triumph House, Station Approach Sanderstead Road South Croydon Surrey CR2 0PL
Responsible individual	David Francis Hastings
Registered manager	Susan Elisabeth Cooke
Date of last inspection	25/07/2014

Inspection date	05/01/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

No breaches of The Children's Homes Regulations 2011 were identified at the inspection that was carried out in July 2014. At this interim inspection, four breaches of these regulations were identified.

The poor standard of the record-keeping regarding medication is of a particular concern. When medicines are brought into the home, their names and the amount received are not always recorded. There have also been occasions when the amount was recorded but it was incorrect. Not having a correct baseline at the start means that it is not possible to confidently track what happens with all the medicines in the home or carry out meaningful audits. In addition, the home is unable to demonstrate that staff always make a record when they give medicine to a young person: the actual count of the medicines and the administration records do not match.

Not following robust procedures for dealing with medication potentially has a strong impact on the young people and their health and welfare. The Registered Manager is unable to show that this important aspect of the service is monitored. No issues in respect of medication have been identified by the home's leaders, managers or staff members. The inspector has not observed any negative impact of the weaknesses in the medication procedure on the young people. However, the risk remains high and real until a more robust procedure is consistently implemented.

Two breaches of the regulations relate to the staff matters.

One of them is regarding the home's ability to demonstrate having all required staff recruitment records. The company's procedure is to keep the actual information on the staff files in the head-office. A check-list that covers this information is kept in the home. At the last inspection, the inspector compared the information available

on the staff files and in the home's check-list. The two did not always match. This was discussed with the management, who promised to address the minor discrepancies discovered. The improvement has not been achieved and the records have got worse: at this visit, the home was unable to evidence any recruitment information regarding some staff members who currently work in it.

The other breach that relates to the staff matters is about staff supervision. The low frequency of formal supervision meetings was identified as a weakness at the full inspection. It was formally raised in the inspection report as a recommendation. No improvement has been achieved. The opposite has happened: the frequency of staff supervision meetings has decreased. The person who was responsible for providing supervision to the Registered Manager and the deputy manager was absent for a while and subsequently left the service. There are currently no arrangements in place for the supervision of the managers. Other staff members have met with their supervisors for a formal one-to-one meeting only infrequently: each of the two files that the inspector looked at contained a record of only one supervision meeting in the last six months. The home is unable to demonstrate that young people receive care from the management and staff who themselves are appropriately supported and supervised. This is likely to have a negative impact on the quality of the care provided.

Another breach identified at this visit relates to the lack of an annual review of the suitability of the location of the home. The Registered Manager has written to a number of local services seeking information and contribution to the risk assessment relating to the home's locality. However, the full review has not been completed, although it was due by the end of 2014.

The home has continued to provide a positive environment for young people. Based on comprehensive individual risk assessments, the risk management strategies are effective at securing their welfare and safety. These strategies include high levels of supervision including stringent controls of access they have to any on-line facilities. The key-working sessions and day-to-day interactions between staff members and young people firmly focus on educating young people about the risks and encouraging safer behaviours. The standard of young people's behaviour in the home has improved. However, issues still arise, when they are out in the community and not supported by the home's staff. The young people report that they have developed positive relationships with some staff members. They do not go missing from the home's safe environment. The home is effective at safely containing young people, in line with their individual placement plans and the risk management strategies.

The home is not content with this. The management and staff have high aspirations for young people. When any 'drift and non-engagement' of young people and a lack of progress are identified, the management takes swift actions to ensure that any barriers to achieving better outcomes are comprehensively addressed. This includes any barriers that stem out of the limitations of the local services that the young

person receives. The Registered Manager has an excellent understanding of collaborative multi-agency working. When it is in the best interest of the child, she is willing to challenge and motivate other services to do better. She advocates well for the young people in their care and drives positive outcomes for them. She has initiated referrals to various specialist assessments to ensure that the young people receive the care and support that address the full range of their needs. She makes strong contributions to the local children's services' care planning and review processes. Working in close collaboration with the local partner-services, such as the children's social, education, health and youth support services and the police are the main strength of this home.

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home. The company has one other children's home registered with Ofsted and some other services that focus on promoting young people's independence. This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/07/2014	Full	good
16/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
18/07/2013	Full	good
08/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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
21 (2001)	make suitable arrangements for the recording, handling, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of any medicines received into the children's home (Regulation 21 (1))	31/01/2015
26 (2001)	ensure that the home is able to evidence that the full information in respect of each of the matters listed in Schedule 2 in respect of each staff member has been obtained (Regulation 26 (6))	28/02/2015
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed to work in the children's home, including managers, receive appropriate supervision	28/02/2015
31 (2001)	review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the children's homes' premises at least once each calendar year. (Regulation 1A)	28/02/2015

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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.