

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	04/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC028599
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Children and Family Services Limited
Registered person address	Prospero House, 46-48 Rothesay Road, LUTON, LU1 1QZ

Responsible individual	Ruth Kirchner
Registered manager	Ruth Kirchner
Inspector	Jane Partridge

Inspection date	04/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Improved effectiveness. The home continues to offer a nurturing and welcoming environment for young people to live. Whilst in good decorative order and well presented, plans are in place for upgrades to bathrooms and the kitchen in one of the properties. This will maintain standards and ensure that young people with specific disabilities have appropriate and accessible bathroom facilities. Young people continue to thrive whilst placed at this home. A stable and committed staff team deliver predictable, dependable care which enables young people to feel safe and protected. Of a young person with limited speech, the social worker commented: 'He signs this as being home, he knows he is safe here.' Since the last inspection one young person has left the home and one is very nearly due to become a resident. For the young person coming in to the service a competent transition plan has enabled a smooth adjustment from home. Staff have worked collaboratively with partner agencies, family members and the young person themselves. This planned introduction to the home has given time to establish a relationship and to draw information from all parties which contributes to a personal care plan which will meet the young person's needs. The young person who left the service did so in a less planned way and staff worked with partner agencies to minimise his disruption. Sadly, the placement could no longer meet the young person's needs whilst also meeting the needs of all the young people in placement. To improve the quality and standards of care, four statutory requirements and one recommendation were set at the previous inspection. Whilst a relatively short period of time has passed since then the manager has met or begun to meet the requirements and recommendations set. The home operates over two adjacent houses and whilst young people reside in one home they have access to both. To ensure that they are safe at all times updated risk assessments now consider the risk and vulnerability for each young person over each of the settings. Appropriate safeguards are in place to minimise risk. New internal procedures evidence that all staff are aware of risk factors and strategies to diminish them. The managers	

monitoring of the service has improved. Monthly file audits ensure that staff work from well recorded up to date information. The manager has implemented new staff supervision files. This new process also offer her a monitoring activity ensuring that staff receive timely supervision and all eligible staff have had their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised. This ensures that staff have regular opportunity to consider how they are meeting the individual needs of young people in placement and consider their on-going professional development. The annual appraisals considers how individual staff contribute to the overall service delivery as set out in the statement of purpose. To ensure staff have the specific understanding and skills to meet the individual needs of each young person in placement the manager has started to identify and secure particular child care training. Whilst some training is already booked the manager is also in the process of commissioning others from reputable organisations. In respect of the recommendation made at the last inspection, the manager has updated the missing from care policy. This now includes information about an independent return interview should a child go missing. Whilst is it good note that no young people have gone missing since the last inspection the updated policy offers staff clear guidance.

The manager recognises the strengths of her service. Young people enjoy quality care and attain good outcomes. Social workers commented: 'Young people make huge progress whilst they are there. There is such a marked improvement and he no longer lives in fear.' The manager has excellent working relationships with the wider professional team and staff work very well with family members. Young people benefit from supervised contact both in and outside the home. Family contact is valued and staff facilitate and support young people in maintaining family relationships.

All young people have excellent school attendance, engage with a range of activities and have their health needs met. Individual targets are set for young people to achieve. These focus mainly on self-care and independence skills to expand young people's abilities. However, a shortfall identified that staff do not celebrate these achievements once completed. Therefore, for these activities, young people do not experience the feeling of success and self-worth.

Whilst the manager has a good understanding of the individual needs of the young people, the service does not record formal impact risk assessments considering the placement of a new resident. This does not provide clear rationale and evidence of how managers assess risk of harm, disruption and vulnerabilities for young people coming into the service in the context of those young people already resident and vice versa.

Whilst two shortfalls are noted, the manager has met all the previous requirements and the recommendation set to improve the quality of care delivered. Young people experience a safe and caring home, they progress and attain good outcomes with the support and care of a committed staff team. The home has improved effectiveness.

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children home, which operates across two adjacent houses. It provides care and accommodation for up to seven young people with learning difficulties and who may also have a physical disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/12/2015	Full	Requires improvement
19/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/02/2015	Full	Good
24/02/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress

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

Recommendations

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

Ensure that the homes staff recognise and celebrate the achievements of their children once an individual action is met within the individual action plan. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 31 paragraph 6.8)

Ensure the home only accepts placements for children where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 56 paragraph 11.4)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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