

## **Children's homes inspection - Full**

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|--------------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | <b>02/12/2015</b>         |
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | <b>SC029504</b>           |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | <b>Full</b>               |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | <b>Children's home</b>    |
| <b>Registered manager</b>      | <b>Katherine Sydenham</b> |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | <b>Phillip Morris</b>     |

|                                                                                                 |                               |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>02/12/2015</b>             |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>Improved effectiveness</b> |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>                   |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                               |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>                   |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                               |
| <b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Good</b>                   |
| <b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Good</b>                   |

**SC029504**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people enjoy good relationships with staff, with mutual respect, understanding, and nurturing care being evident. This creates a good atmosphere of acceptance and warmth where young people can make progress.
- Staff work in partnership with health, education and specialist services. These professional relationships are effective and allow young people to access the services they need.
- Skilled, committed and experienced staff members support young people to make progress all areas of their lives.
- Young people live in a safe environment. They are kept safe by good staff practice that is in line with procedures and policy. Risk assessments are robust because managers regularly review and update them.
- Young people become less vulnerable to abuse and exploitation because staff help them to reduce risk taking behaviours, including being away from home for long periods.
- The environment is homely, clean and suitably furnished. The young people are encouraged to personalise their home.
- Encouragement is provided, helping young people to express their wishes and feelings regarding the care they receive.
- An area for development has been identified. The home is asked to provide young people with help, advice and guidance regarding the health implications of alcohol use.

## 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 with the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Due date   |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>10: The health and well-being standard</p> <p>In order to meet the health and well-being standard -</p> <p>(1)(b) children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being. this is with particular reference to providing young people with advice and guidance about alcohol use;</p> <p>(1)(c) children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.</p> | 08/01/2016 |

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This is a home that provides care and accommodation for young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is registered to accommodate up to four young people. It is owned and managed by a private company.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 12/03/2015      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness |
| 03/12/2014      | Full            | Good                   |
| 20/03/2014      | Interim         | Good Progress          |
| 20/11/2013      | Full            | Outstanding            |

## Inspection Judgements

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| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Young people receive personalised and well-planned care that reflects their complex and diverse needs. They are cared for by a supportive and nurturing staff team who understand them well. This ensures they make good progress in all aspects of their lives, taking into account some difficult starting points. A young person said, 'I enjoy living here, the staff are good, they communicate and talk to me and I get to go on activities'.</p> <p>Young people benefit from a staff team that provides consistent care with clear and structured boundaries. The senior staff team are stable and experienced, bringing to bear a wealth of skills and knowledge. They are adept at dealing effectively with difficult situations. This helps to develop strong and supportive relationships between the staff and young people. Staff enhance and enrich young people's day-to-day experiences, creating a family atmosphere where young people feel listened to, respected, and accepted.</p> <p>Young people's health needs are supported and met. Staff are in regular contact with primary health care professionals. They arrange appointments at opticians and dentists, as well as annual health reviews. Some young people smoke; staff have worked with them to discourage this, providing advice, guidance and support to reduce or stop. However, there has been an ineffective response from the registered manager and staff to incidents of alcohol misuse because individual work regarding the harmful effects of alcohol has not taken place in a timely manner. Young people's emotional needs are continually promoted. The registered manager and staff challenge partner agencies, such as mental health services, if required. Consequently, they advocate well for young people if they are not receiving the support they require.</p> <p>The registered manager and staff work with schools and education providers to achieve progress. They work hard to promote a positive view of education. This encourages young people to aim towards securing suitable long-term education placements. Barriers to education are understood and challenged. This ensures young people receive the practical and emotional support they need to help them with education. For those young people not in mainstream education, staff liaise with virtual head teachers and social workers, acting quickly to find alternative provision. This minimises disruption to young people's education.</p> <p>The needs of young people living a long way from their families are understood, planned for and met. The registered manager works in partnership with the placing</p> |                 |

authority to identify and secure the resources required. Good arrangements for regular contact with family, friends, and those important to the young person are in place. Feelings of isolation and loneliness are addressed through the development of close relationships with staff.

The registered manager and staff encourage young people to voice their opinions and views. They participate in individual sessions with staff, reviewing their care plans. As a result, young people feel that their wishes and feelings are valued. Young people's meetings take place regularly, fostering good communication. Young people know how to complain and have trusted adults they can turn to for advice and guidance. This means that the rights and entitlements of young people are respected and upheld.

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| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Young people feel safe and are kept safe by the staff who look after them. The staff team utilise, to good effect, established procedures to support their practice in keeping young people safe. Detailed risk assessments are in place, which identify areas of individual risk and vulnerability. Staff use this information well to inform their daily work with each young person. These practices are underpinned by child protection training for all staff and a robust, updated safeguarding policy. This means that staff know how to respond to safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>Some young people have gone missing from care, although this has greatly reduced in frequency. On the occasions this has happened, staff have acted quickly, and followed procedure and processes to secure the young person's safe return home. They have worked in partnership with other agencies to revise the risk assessments that inform their practice. When young people return home, they are greeted warmly; staff discuss the events with them to determine the reasons for the absence and develop strategies to prevent recurrence.</p> <p>Staff help young people to reduce risk-taking behaviours including drug use, anti-social behaviours and self-harm. Jointly agreed and innovative approaches to managing self-harm have been devised and agreed between agencies. Young people increase their emotional resilience as they learn better and less harmful coping strategies.</p> <p>The staff embrace their role in addressing young people's behavioural needs. Established relationships, coupled with good behaviour management plans, result in young people being diverted from a path of concerning behaviours. Praise, reward and the celebration of achievement replace the need for punitive behaviour</p> |                 |

management strategies. Young people are encouraged to behave well, they quickly come to understand how to behave in an acceptable manner. In instances of young people causing damage to the fabric of the building, staff act quickly to ensure repairs take place. They work with the young people to identify ways to express frustration or distress without recourse to aggression. The use of physical intervention is sometimes necessary. Staff use their training and skills to minimise the use of this method of control. Practice in this regard is proportionate, appropriately recorded, and rigorously reviewed by the registered manager.

Young people are safeguarded through the safe recruitment of new staff. Robust and rigorous processes are in place to minimise the possibility of young people being harmed by those caring for them. References are taken and checked, criminal records checks undertaken, and employment histories reviewed. These measures serve to deter and prevent individuals of concern working with young people.

Young people's home environment is both safe and comfortable. It is comfortable, clean and well maintained. Health and safety is of crucial importance and, as such, all required checks are undertaken in a timely manner on all fire equipment. Everyone knows what to do in an emergency.

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         | <b>good</b>     |
| <p>Young people benefit from living in a well organised and effectively managed home. The registered manager has considerable experience, and is committed to continued service improvement. The deputy manager, although new to this home, also has considerable experience. Staff and stakeholders are clear about the aims and objectives of the service. An informative statement of purpose underscores this, as does the young person's guide.</p> <p>The staff team are well informed about each young person so that they understand their roles and responsibilities in achieving care plan objectives. Staff know who they are accountable to and the duties delegated to them. Senior workers and managers on duty provide good quality support to staff. Comprehensive shift handovers are completed. This provides for a structured and professional approach to care.</p> <p>The staff report they are well supported by the registered manager and senior staff members. There are effective support systems in place. These include regular supervision, and good quality training. Training is monitored to ensure mandatory and refresher training is completed within agreed timescales. Staffing levels are</p> |                 |

appropriate. There are currently no vacancies and the manager does not have to rely upon agency staff. This results in young people being cared for by a stable and consistent staff group.

Mutually respectful relationships exist between staff members. Team meetings take place regularly at which staff are able to contribute their views and ideas. The collective strengths of the staff group are harnessed for the benefit of young people. Good internal communication helps staff to have a clarity of approach to care practice. This leads to an environment of acceptance, positivity and fun.

Internal monitoring systems are utilised to good effect by the registered manager. In addition, regular appraisal of the quality of care is undertaken by a challenging independent visitor who completes a monthly report. The registered manager also uses internal audit processes; monthly management data is compiled and reported on. This allows the registered manager to highlight strengths whilst taking swift action to meet shortfalls. The quality of care for young people, as a result, is subject to continued scrutiny and improvement.

The registered manager and staff work effectively with other professionals. As a result, allocated social workers, youth offending workers and education professionals ensure young people receive the services and support they need to move forward with their lives. Professionals praise the work of the home, citing clear evidence of young people making and sustaining progress. This good practice ensures young people receive integrated and comprehensive care that addresses their wide ranging needs.

## 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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