

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	08/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC034301
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Bristol City Council
Registered person address	Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services, City Hall, College Green, BRISTOL, BS1 5TR

Responsible individual	Karen Gazzard
Registered manager	Emma Hood
Inspector	Clare Davies

Inspection date	08/09/2015
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

SC034301

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are making progress in relation to their education, behaviour and emotional development. They are supported through the structure and boundaries provided by the manager and staff team.
- Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and work effectively with other agencies. Young people are reducing the number of times that they go missing as they respond to the collaborative approach to keep themselves safe.
- Young people receive good health care and support with their emotional well-being. Staff assist young people to develop in confidence and improve their self-esteem leading to positive decision making.
- There is an experienced and committed staff team, they know young people well and their individual needs. This stability enables young people to develop warm and trusting relationships with staff and significant others. Staff demonstrate that they care and young people recognise this with a sense of belonging to this home.
- The manager provides sound leadership enabling staff to deliver good quality care. Staff are enthusiastic about their work supported through the training programme and supervision.
- Improvements are required in relation to monthly monitoring by an independent person and the content of risk assessments. Memory boxes and photographs are collected for young people during this placement and achievements are celebrated however, they are not always recorded sufficiently.

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
44: Independent person: visits and reports The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. (Regulation 44(1))	30/09/2015

Recommendations

- Ensure that written risk assessments include visiting pets and the full impact of children living together as a residential group. Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 42 paragraph 9.5)
- Ensure that notable achievements are clearly recorded in monthly summary reports. The home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62 paragraph 14.5)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people of either sex, with emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is operated by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2015	Interim	Improved Effectiveness
24/10/2014	Full	Adequate
05/02/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress
25/07/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people develop warm and trusting relationships with the staff. The strength of these relationships enable young people to grow in confidence and progress in their personal development. Staff know the young people well and respond effectively to their needs. They provide support for young people to make sense of their past experiences and devise coping strategies to manage their feelings. Young people are actively involved in decision making about their personal plans and the daily running of the home. Discussion over mealtimes is an effective way to gather young people's views in addition to one to one sessions and formal surveys. Staff are resourceful to ensure that young people with limited communication skills are included with use of visual prompts, language guides and use of interpreters when English is an additional language. Young people understand how to make a complaint however, there are none recorded since the last inspection. This is indicative of the strength of relationships with the manager and staff where young people can readily talk about any concern or complaint to be dealt with informally. Good communication between the staff and education providers support young people with their learning. Young people who experienced disruption in their previous school placements are now fully engaged and attending. School leavers are supported with sixth form education or access to learning and employment. The commitment and perseverance from the manager and staff teaches young people that if one pathway to learning doesn't work out, an alternative can be sought. Young people receive support to boost their self-esteem when confronting anxious events such as interviews and examinations. This may be the purchase of new clothes, equipment, going to the hairdressers or transport provided. Young people are encouraged to eat healthily and to understand the importance of maintaining good health. Information and advice is available for a range of matters such as sexual health, smoking and the consequences of substance misuse. Staff promote the use of community health services and specialist healthcare professionals. This ensures that young people have their emerging health needs met and they are able to make informed decisions to promote their health and wellbeing. As young people reach the age of 18 years they are supported to access adult services, a connection they will need when they move on to independent living in the community. Young people enjoy activities in the home and the local area. The current group	

prefer to go out individually with staff, or with their friends. Cooking and craft activities occur in the home and occasionally young people go out together swimming or to a theme park. Cars are available at the home to facilitate transport in addition to young people learning how to use public transport to increase their independence. Young people can travel by bus to school and after a successful road safety course some choose to cycle.

Independence is promoted well. Young people know how to budget, shop and cook for themselves. They do their laundry and some household chores to maintain their personal space. As a result they have greater confidence in their ability and are prepared for their transition into adulthood. A social worker reports, 'staff try to balance the independence work allowing (young people) to get things wrong with being supportive and kind'.

Young people are able to follow and express their cultural identity. Arrangements are made to meet people of the same faith at places of worship and community venues. Staff promote tolerance amongst the residential group to respect each other and challenge any discriminatory language. Young people new in placement are welcomed and provided with information and reassurance at an anxious time.

Structured transition plans enable young people to leave this home and move on to alternative placements. Many young people keep in contact with the manager and staff for social contact and support when struggling to manage their independence.

Placement plans are child-focused providing a good overview of their needs and promoting young people's individuality. Young people contribute to these documents developing some ownership of what is written about them. They have their own folders for records and correspondence. This simple idea promotes inclusion and values important personal documents that are accessible to them.

The manager and staff recognise the importance for young people to maintain relationships with their family members and friends. Time spent with family members is well planned and appropriately supervised in line with care plans. This ensures young people enjoy purposeful and safe contact that is a positive experience for them and their families.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people receive a strong proactive response from the manager and staff to support and protect them. When young people go missing from the home, staff	

actively search for them. They use their knowledge of friends, family members and known places to track their whereabouts. Incidents of young people missing are reducing as a result of effective partnership working with agencies such as the police and a children's charity. Police officers report that the staff, 'collaborate well with me and other agencies in relation to safeguarding plans for young people in their care'. Key people in the local authority meet with young people upon their return to establish that they are safe and well.

Social workers and their managers are impressed with the risk management of safeguarding concerns involving young people. A social worker reports, 'they provide her with a safe base'. Staff are trained and experienced in recognising high risk behaviours such as drug use, self-harm, criminal activity and sexual exploitation. Effective key work and collaboration with community resources help young people to make informed safe decisions.

Young people develop trusting relationships with staff members where they are able to confide in them their worries and fears. Staff provide boundaries and promote socially acceptable behaviour. Their actions of good parenting give clear messages, reinforced with comments such as, 'we are worried about you' and 'I am concerned for you'. As a result young people recognise that staff do care for them even though they may not agree with the boundaries imposed at the time.

Risk assessments reflect individual concerns and how such behaviours can be reduced. A regular review of these documents ensures that current risks are being managed by the staff. Discussions with young people help them to make decisions on keeping safe when they are out in the community, forming relationships, using social media and mobile phones. Risk assessments for the environment cover situations such as, use of electrical equipment and lone working. Such documents provide sound advice for the safety of staff, young people and visitors however the risks posed by visiting pets are not included. A minor shortfall was noted in the impact risk assessment for the residential group where a known risk has been omitted.

Incidents of challenging behaviour are responded to with de-escalation and discussion. Physical intervention is rare, the last incident occurred in January 2015. The staff are skilled in supporting young people to manage their behaviour and develop strategies for when they feel angry and upset. Conflict between young people is effectively resolved through discussion. A good working relationship with a police community support officer enables young people to talk with him when there are difficulties, avoiding formal reports to the police.

Young people have details of internet safety and staff encourage them to discuss their use of websites and applications. Staff access training materials and recognise the need to keep up to date with e-safety to promote the protection of young people and their welfare.

Routine checks ensure that this is a safe home. Staff training on fire safety is cascaded to young people, alerting them to the dangers of overloading electrical extension leads. This involves an assessment of their electrical appliances and the arrangement of trailing leads. Young people understand these dangers and are supported to re-arrange their bedrooms creating a safer environment. This effective training provides young people with the knowledge and skills to keep safe in their bedrooms, and when they move on to independent living.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager of this home has been in post for 12 years. She is very experienced in residential care and maintains her professional development through the local authority's learning and development programme. The manager is currently working towards a level 5 management qualification. Staff are enthusiastic about their work. The stable team makes good use of individual's strengths, utilising their different skills and approaches to achieve best outcomes for young people. 'We have a brilliant team here, we work well together', reports a member of staff, a comment echoed by others. Staff benefit from a comprehensive training programme, clinical supervision with a psychologist and supervision from managers. This level of support promotes the development of the team that delivers good levels of competence and skills. Their knowledge, experience and commitment supports young people in making progress. Working with other agencies is a strength of this home. The manager and staff are resourceful in finding suitable support to meet young people's needs. Staff are persistent when confronted with a lack of engagement, they keep searching for alternative ways to stimulate young people's interest and not give up on them. For example, difficulties in maintaining training and employment are reviewed regularly to seek alternative options to meet young people's needs. The manager uses effective monitoring systems to review care practices and the progress of young people. This informs the manager of the strengths and weaknesses of the home for the development plan and to identify where action is needed. Recommendations from previous inspections have been addressed. The manager demonstrates that she learns from inspections and quality assurance systems to implement positive change. A shortfall from the local authority is the lack of monitoring by an independent person each month. The Responsible Individual reports that it has been difficult to recruit to this role but an independent person is now in post to complete monthly	

visits. The absence of this monthly monitoring has had a minimal impact on young people due to the level of checks undertaken by the manager and her line manager.

Record keeping is good and includes young people. Care plans are current and case records report on significant events and progress in relation to health, education and behaviour. However, there is one area for improvement. In practice, young people's achievements are celebrated and praised yet case records fail to sufficiently highlight these successful events. Case records need to be scrutinised to identify these moments, they do not always stand out to be counted.

Leaders and managers ensure that young people live in a pleasant environment. Redecoration and new furnishings chosen by young people create a comfortable television lounge. The development plan includes forward planning on property redecoration and maintenance.

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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