

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035687
Inspector	Debbie Foster
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Registered person	Hesley Services Limited
Registered person address	Hesley Hall Coachhouse Hesley Doncaster South Yorkshire DN11 9HH
Responsible individual	Phillip Champion
Registered manager	Judith Elizabeth McCartney
Date of last inspection	06/12/2013

Inspection date	18/06/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	None taken place.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people benefit greatly from the good care staff provide. This enables young people to make continuing progress in most aspects of their lives and improves outcomes in their health; positive behaviour; keeping safe; educational attendance and attainment; social and life skills. Other professionals recognise the good progress young people have made or are making.

Care is well planned and personalised to meet young people's individual needs. Staff are caring and committed and they provide structure, balanced with a nurturing environment. This enables young people to thrive, feel safe, build confidence, and develop social and life skills.

A parent said 'my son is safe which is fundamental. He is well looked after and cared for. There are some excellent staff, and some with less experience. I attend regular meetings and I get a weekly call on how and what my son has been doing; I'm told the good things as well as any issues. I'm always informed about any health appointments. I visit him and take him out and I'm always made welcome. I know a number of staff love my son and that he is well cared for.'

Young people are kept safe. Staff have a very good level of knowledge and understanding of all young people's specific and diverse needs. They take action to

ensure any safety concerns are addressed and managed to keep young people safe from unnecessary harm.

Professionals made positive comments, including: 'This home is much more than a children's home. (The young person) has a flat with other young people and there is more of a feeling of independence around that. I have seen warm relationships between (the young person) and the staff and I have seen the family welcomed into the home. The parents are extremely happy about the care given to their daughter and the opportunities she is now having,' and '(The young person) has flourished at the home and appears very happy. There are always members from Education and Care at the reviews and they appear to work well together for the good of the young person.'

A relatively new senior management team has identified strengths and weaknesses in the service and addressed a number of shortfalls. The manager leads by example providing clear expectations, good quality training and supervision, and building further on effective communication to ensure consistent care is delivered to all young people. The home demonstrates a strong commitment to continually reviewing the care provided for young people.

Areas for development relate to improving monitoring of the service and evaluating the quality of care fully; to ensure that at all times there is a balance of experience in the staff groups working within each house to meet the needs of young people; to rectify the deficiencies found in isolated staff recruitment files and to ensure safe recruitment is robust throughout; to implement the changes to registration arrangements in line with legal requirements. The development plan for the service should include more detail on how the children's home intends to improve further the quality of care.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This provision is a residential special school owned by a private organisation. The school offers accommodation for up to 40 children and young people between the ages of eight years and 19 years. Children and young people have severe learning difficulties and complex needs, including autism. The residential accommodation is registered and inspected as a children's home by Ofsted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2013	Interim	good progress
20/06/2013	Full	good
18/03/2013	Interim	good progress
11/05/2012	Full	good

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the registered person's system for recruiting staff and others includes an effective system for reaching decisions as to who is to be appointed and the circumstances in which an application should be refused in light of any criminal convictions or other concerns about suitability that are declared or discovered through the recruitment process (NMS 16.5)
- ensure that the overall number, competence and deployment of staff, both a staff group and on individual shifts, can fulfil the home's Statement of Purpose and meet the individual needs of all children resident in the home. In particular, ensure that there is a balance of experience in the staff groups working within each house at all times (NMS 17.1)
- ensure that there are effective procedures for monitoring and controlling the activities of the home. In particular, ensure the care practices and the quality

care is fully evaluated (NMS 21.1)

- ensure that the manager and staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. and that the level of delegation and responsibility of the manager and staff, and the lines of accountability, are clearly defined. In particular, ensure that the manager is aware of and follows the correct procedures relating to registration changes, and that agreements are reached regarding changes of registration prior to arranging the admission of young people to the affected premises (NMS 21.4)
- ensure that the development plan identifies the specific changes in the operation and resources of the service required to bring further improvement to the quality of care for young people within the children's home setting. (NMS 15.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress in most areas of their lives from their starting point on admission to the home. Staff develop strong nurturing relationships with young people. This enables young people to settle into the home, to develop a sense of self-confidence and build trusting relationships. This in turn, supports their progress.

Young people enjoy good health. Their physical and emotional health needs are identified at an early stage. Plans are put in place to make sure they are met, with young people being registered with primary health care services and supported at all health appointments. Young people have access to a multi-disciplinary support team which includes speech and language therapists and clinical psychologists. Young people's long-term health and well-being greatly benefit from this support. As a result young people's good health is maintained or improves over time.

The home has a clear medication policy and procedures. Staff who administer medication have received suitable training. Medication is administered, stored and recorded appropriately. This protects young people and ensures that they have medicines when they need them to meet their health needs.

Young people enjoy and benefit from attending school and are encouraged and supported by staff. Staff work very closely with teachers and other education professionals. All young people have very good attendance which has been built upon and sustained for some considerable time. In turn, young people's educational grades are improving. This ensures each young person's achievements are being maximised.

Staff encourage young people to identify activities they are interested in. This is a real strength of the service. Time and effort are devoted to getting young people's views on what they wish to participate in. Young people have good opportunities to take part in a wide range of activities. These include Zumba, rebound therapy, horse riding, Scouts, cooking, keep fit, walks, carnivals and outdoor pursuit breaks. This enables young people to develop interests and, in turn, their confidence and social skills.

Young people acquire good independence and life skills appropriate to their age and understanding. This is achieved by them being actively involved in daily living tasks such as shopping, undertaking general house chores and getting out in the community, and using public transport for some. Young people report that staff are helping them to become more independent. Staff are working alongside each young person to help them to reach their potential and to ensure they have all the necessary skills to look after themselves if they are able; or to gain new skills to do as much as they can independently. As a result, young people are being well prepared for

adulthood.

Young people benefit greatly from seeing their family and other people who are important to them. Young people visit family members who live in other cities across the country. Staff make sure that young people have the right support during each visit to ensure that this is a positive experience. Maintaining these relationships brings immense benefit to young people emotionally, supporting their sense of identity and belonging.

Quality of care

good

Staff strongly advocate for young people to ensure they are supported in all aspects of their lives to enable them to succeed and achieve their best. The well-being and safety of individual young people is a focus of care provided. Staff have created a culture of care which provides young people with a nurturing and secure environment. As a result, young people make good progress. A young person stated 'I like it here; I get on with all the staff.' Independent reviewing officers said 'Staff always speak of (the young person) fondly and have his best interests at heart,' and 'the carers are very loving and caring towards my young person, the home is very friendly and children are encouraged to undertake various activities that they wouldn't normally do at home.' Young people have positive relationships with staff which help them to trust the people caring for them. This in turn assists them to positively move forward in their lives.

Staff provide care in a way that effectively promotes young people's welfare regardless of the challenges they present. Diverse needs arising from factors such as vulnerability, behaviour, health and personal safety are well met. Young people are involved in decision making about their lives. For example, some are consulted on menu options, activities and trips. This contributes to young people making choices that affect their daily lives.

Good standards of care are achieved by implementing detailed in-house care and support plans, including risk assessments. These are very specific about a young person's individual needs and the support required. Staff consistently follow these plans and demonstrate a very good knowledge of each young person's individual care. Staff also support young people to develop self-confidence and learn coping skills to manage their behaviour. As a consequence young people make progress in undertaking personal care tasks such as dressing themselves, and everyday tasks including attending school and activities. Staff are able to demonstrate the progress young people are making from the starting point of their placement. As a result, young people achieve positive outcomes.

There is a very strong ethos in the home to promote young people's learning. Staff are proactive in supporting young people to attend education, improve attendance and attainment over time. There are established, strong partnerships with other

agencies including education professionals, social workers and clinical support teams. The service's school and the care staff team work holistically to ensure young people's life learning is enhanced. This brings a wealth of benefits to young people to enable their progress in most aspects of their welfare and development.

Young people enjoy and greatly benefit from a positive environment and live in a home that is maintained to a good standard. Overall the houses are well decorated, comfortably furnished, clean and tidy. Young people personalise their bedrooms. Each house is kept safe through detailed health and safety checks and risk assessments. It is suitably located for local amenities. This ensures that young people experience and live in a positive, safe and comfortable environment.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are kept safe; some say they feel safe. One parents said 'the most important thing to me is that my child is safe and the staff make sure he is. This gives me peace of mind.' Another said 'my son is safe living here. I could not leave him here if he were not.' The safety of young people is given high importance and is integral to daily practice. The majority of staff demonstrate a good level of knowledge and understanding of each young person's vulnerabilities and where they require support to ensure they are kept safe. Young people receive a high level of support from the staff. Most young people have made good progress in reducing risk taking behaviour. Work is on-going to further reduce some risk taking behaviour for others. Individualised and very specific risk assessments are used and followed explicitly by the staff. As a result, this is keeping young people safer.

Strong relationships with the local safeguarding children board are established. Allegations have been reported and investigated. Robust action has been taken to address safeguarding concerns. Staff receive suitable training in safeguarding and demonstrate an awareness of the procedures they must implement. Consequently, this assists in keeping young people safe from harm.

Staff receive suitable training to equip them with the skills to respond positively to young people with challenging behaviour. Staff have built effective relationships with young people to help them to manage their presenting behaviour and anxieties. Specific behaviour strategies are devised for each young person to support their needs. Staff are aware of the triggers to particular behaviour and circumstances which will heighten anxieties. The strategies put in place assist young people to learn coping mechanisms to manage their behaviour and feelings.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort. When young people put themselves and others at risk of harm physical interventions are used. Staff receive training with regular refresher updates. The management team review the physical interventions undertaken. This, combined with debriefs after incidents and regular reviewing of behaviour support strategies, assists in reducing over time the number of such

incidents for individual young people. Young people respond well to the structure, boundaries and the strategies that the staff implement. As a result, this assists in young people achieving care plan objectives as quickly as they can to bring better outcomes.

Young people are protected from bullying. Staff have a good awareness of the anti-bullying policy. The high staffing levels in the home allow close monitoring of young people, enabling staff to intervene and respond to any inappropriate behaviour. As a result this assists in preventing any bullying type behaviour.

Overall, safe recruitment practices and procedures are implemented. All staff have undertaken a Disclosure and Barring Service check and have provided employment history and identification checks. However, omissions have been found in isolated files. These relate to some gaps in employment history, and decision making on some references and recruitment tests. As a result, this could impact on ensuring that all staff are suitable to work with young people with learning disabilities.

Staff regularly carry out routine health and safety checks around the home. Routine evacuation procedures and practices ensure that the staff know what to do in the event of an emergency and know how to protect young people. All utilities are checked and regularly serviced. Staff also take appropriate steps to verify the identity of visitors to ensure young people are protected.

Leadership and management

adequate

The registered manager is suitably qualified and holds qualifications including an advanced diploma in management studies. She is a registered general nurse. She has over 30 years' experience of working in children's services including the NHS at a senior level; and has been in a registered manager in other services for six years, taking up her current post 12 months ago. The home has a large, stable core staff team with an array of experience in working with young people with learning disabilities and autism.

Staff demonstrate commitment and a caring approach to the young people they care for. High importance is given to training the staff team. The majority of the staff support team are qualified with National Vocational Qualification at level 3 in Caring for Children and Young People. Staff have received frequent refresher training in mandatory areas. For example, in child protection, behaviour management and first aid. In addition they access some more specialist training which includes autism, epilepsy trauma, attachment and resilience. This enables staff to understand young people's needs, have the necessary skill base and provide good quality of care to young people.

Young people benefit from good levels of support and care through a high ratio of staff to young people. The service does have a number of vacancies. Part time staff

are covering the majority of these shifts, with others covered by regular agency staff. The service is currently recruiting new staff. Some houses did have a balance of experienced staff working with newly appointed staff. However, in one house a number of new staff with limited experience were found to be working during the inspection. This did not ensure that there was a balance of experienced staff working with young people in each house. As a result, this could impact on the quality of care provided to some young people.

Staff say 'We work well together,' and 'Communication is good between us, school, and other professionals.' The majority of professionals say that staff communicate well with them. Parents confirm that staff communicate well with them about how their child is, by phone and on visits. Routine communication systems exist to support staff in carrying out their duties. These include daily handovers, debriefs, regular formal supervision, child centred reviews and team meetings. These provide staff with access to on-going support, advice and guidance on how to care of young people.

Arrangements exist for the manager and the provider to monitor the quality of care. All previous requirements and recommendations had been completed at the last interim inspection. Monitoring systems overall are suitable. Where shortfalls have been identified, swift action has been taken to address these by the manager and management team. However, shortfalls have been identified during this inspection which had not been detected by the internal monitoring of the service. Deficiencies have been found in aspects of recruitment; the development plan mainly has an education focus; and experienced staff not being on duty in each house on all shifts. This indicates that the monitoring systems are not as robust as they could be to detect all deficiencies to further improve the service provided.

Registration processes have not met requirements. The breach of regulations has been avoided by detection of the deficiencies during the inspection. The registered manager did not have a full knowledge of the guidance and legal requirements in this area. The registered provider had delegated this task to other personnel to oversee within the organisation. These shortfalls and deficiencies have not yet had a significant detrimental effect upon the quality of care or outcomes for all young people. However, they do impact on the home's ability to improve the quality of care provided and meet all the requirements of registration.

Young people's individual case files, the home's records and other written documentation are of a good standard overall. This facilitates good communication with parents, with young people where able, and with other professionals. It ensures that a permanent and secure record of young people's, development and progress is maintained. Case files are stored securely which promotes the privacy and confidentiality of young people.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.