

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	23/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC036262
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Derbyshire County Council
Registered person address	County Hall, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 3AG

Responsible individual	Mary Wilton
Registered manager	Malcolm Brocklehurst
Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic

Inspection date	23/09/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	Two compliance notices were issued on 21 August 2015. These have been met.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires Improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires Improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires Improvement

SC036262

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- There has been unstable and ineffective management during the last year. This has had an impact on the ability of the home to provide a good standard of care and for managers to make the much needed improvements. The registered provider has recently put in an experienced manager to support the existing management team to address the identified shortfalls and improve the quality of care provided to young people.
- Some young people's care plans and risk assessments (known as safe care plans) are insufficiently detailed in relation to the promotion of education, training and employment. Some of these key documents lack timescales and are not dated or signed by the author.
- Recording in some documents, including young people's daily logs, is often unclear and does not give the reader clear details of what actually happened. Additionally, there is poor organisation and filing of records, which does not provide a clear and easily accessible audit trail of events. This makes it more difficult to monitor if young people's needs are being met.
- The promotion of education, training and employment has not been a priority. This has affected young people's opportunities to pursue their chosen careers and achieve their full potential.
- Young people are not adequately supported in preparing for independent living and leaving care. There are no clear plans or strategies to support them with their emotional and practical needs for these key changes in their lives.
- Shortfalls identified during this inspection call into question the competency of some staff, despite them having many years' experience of working at the home and receiving a range of relevant training.

The children's home strengths

- Young people continue to experience positive relationships with staff. They are happy at the home and those due to leave the home told the inspector they did not want to leave but accepted the reasons why they are leaving.
- Young people are listened to and actively involved in the day-to-day running of the home and in planning for their futures.

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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard the registered person must ensure: (1) that children receive care from staff who – (a) understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; (b) use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to – (b) ensure that staff – (ii) protect and promote each child's welfare; (vi) help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement, or to live independently as an adult.	30 November 2015
13: The leadership and management standard (1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that – (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare	30 November 2015

(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to – (f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.	
The registered person must maintain records (“case records”) for each child which – (a) include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; (b) are kept up to date; and (c) are signed and dated by the author of each entry. This is with specific reference to young people’s care plans and risk assessments. (Regulation 36 (1) (a) (b) (c))	31 October 2015
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes a description of the measure and its duration; the name of the person who used the measure; and of any other person present when the measure was used. (Regulation 35 (3) (a) (iv) (vi))	31 October 2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home which provides care and accommodation for up to four children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home's statement of purpose indicates that the age range will be between 11 and 18 years of age.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/08/2015	Full	Inadequate
14/01/2015	Full	Adequate
19/11/2014	Full	Inadequate
27/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires Improvement
Young people mostly receive care based on their individualised needs. Staff have made some improvements to some of the care plans and risk assessments (known as safe care plans). However, the care plans do not give details of how their educational needs or access to training and employment are met. Some care plans and risk assessments do not give timescales and some are not signed and dated by the author. This makes it difficult to assess if needs identified are current and when plans have been reviewed None of the young people are in full-time education, training or employment. Some young people are applying for apprenticeships and/or are on part-time work experience. However, there is very little evidence to indicate how staff are working with young people to enable them to reach their full potential. Young people's care records do not detail strategies to encourage them to apply for education, training or employment. Young people's days are not structured to support them to engage and recognise the importance of pursuing their education or obtaining employment. This lack of structure results in drift, which has the potential to make it more difficult to achieve their hopes and aspirations. Staff are not providing adequate support to young people to prepare them for independent living. They have not focused, in some instances, on helping young people to build up their emotional resilience and confidence in preparation for leaving care. Young people's care plans/pathway plans do not outline how staff are supporting them with their emotional needs and anxieties about leaving the home. Although young people have gained some practical independence skills during their time at the home, there are no structured independence programmes for them to engage in. This makes it difficult to assess their readiness for moving on. Young people are happy and settled at the home. They told the inspector that this is their home. They enjoy good relationships with staff. Young people are at the centre of decision making regarding the day-to-day running of the home and planning for their futures. They feel listened to, which helps them feel valued. In recent months, they have chosen holiday destinations, the décor for their bedrooms and some young people have been part of a meeting with the local authority's maintenance department regarding improvements to the home. They continue to access a range of leisure activities which they enjoy. Young people's individual health needs are met as they have access to a range of routine and specialist health services such as the child and adolescent mental	

health service (CAMHS). Some young people's health has improved significantly since the last inspection as they are no longer going missing, and they recognise the importance of having regular health checks.

There have been significant improvements in the handling of medication since the last inspection. Staff have received further training, and robust management monitoring systems are now in place to check that staff follow procedures. The management team has introduced new recording systems for the administration of medication, and the receipt and disposal of medication. A review of young people's medication administration records identified that young people are now receiving their medication as prescribed. Consequently, their health needs are being met and the compliance notice issued at the last inspection has been met.

Young people continue to be given practical and emotional support with maintaining contact with their families and friends where appropriate.

Young people's bedrooms have been completely refurbished since the last inspection. Each young person has chosen furniture and décor which reflect their individuality and they are very happy with their bedrooms. Further decoration of the communal areas has also taken place. As a result, young people now live in a comfortable and pleasant home and the previous requirement has been addressed.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires Improvement
There have been few incidents of risk-taking behaviour, including criminal activity or going missing, since the last inspection. Social workers have commented that staff have worked hard to manage young people's behaviours. However, care records still call into question the competency of some staff. For example, a young person had been staying at the flat of an older male who was considered to present significant risks to the young person. Staff followed all relevant protocols in terms of working with the police and keeping in contact with the young person. The management team was proactive in taking appropriate actions to resolve the situation. However, when the young person returned he soon left the home again to go back to the older male's flat, thereby placing himself at significant risk. There is no documentary evidence to suggest that staff on duty at the time tried any strategies to persuade the young person not to go to the older person's flat again. This lack of action did not help to protect the young person. Issues identified during the last inspection regarding the safety of a young person have been addressed. The young person's safety has improved significantly, and care and support provided are in line with the placement objectives. Therefore, the	

compliance notice issued at the last inspection has been met.

Staff continue to work with social workers and relevant partner agencies, including CAMHS and the police, regarding the management of young people's behaviour. Some staff have recently received refresher training in behaviour management. Although there have been no recent incidents of physical intervention recorded in the central log, recording in young people's daily logs is unclear in some instances and implies physical intervention has been used. Poor and unclear recording does not assist with monitoring that the management of behaviour is appropriate and safe. Therefore the requirement made at the last inspection has not been adequately addressed, despite staff briefings.

Young people are able to raise any concerns they may have with staff, due to their positive and trusting relationships. They know that staff will take their concerns and complaints seriously and that staff will deal with them appropriately. This helps young people to feel safe and secure and protects them from the risk of harm. No complaints have been made since the last inspection.

The management of health and safety is good and helps to protect young people and staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires Improvement
The registered provider ensures staff receive all the required training and has provided further training since the last inspection. The majority of staff have many years' service working in children's homes and are suitably qualified. The registered provider is taking a number of actions to address issues regarding some staff's competency levels. However, during this inspection the inspector identified further shortfalls relating to staff practice, the quality of some records and some staff's prioritisation and organisational skills. For example, during one shift, one of the newer members of staff went out with three young people on an activity where there were a number of potential risks to individuals due to health conditions and behaviours. Two of the more experienced staff remained at the home with no young people. This is poor practice and planning, and potentially placed the young people at risk. No explanation was provided as to how or why this decision had been made. There have been some improvements to the management of the home since the last inspection. The registered manager remains absent, and temporary management arrangements are in place. An experienced registered manager from another local authority children's home has recently started working at the home.	

He has already identified a number of shortfalls and is working with the two deputy managers to produce an action plan. Throughout this inspection, the management team demonstrated a real commitment to improving the services provided to young people and increasing their life opportunities. A number of senior managers are supporting the management team to make the much needed improvements.

Since the last inspection, the registered provider has reviewed arrangements for the monthly monitoring visits by the independent visitors, and as a temporary measure appointed another experienced registered manager to carry out quality assurance visits. Two visits have taken place so far, and reports reflect in-depth reviews of practices, including records. These two reports are assisting the temporary manager and management team in producing a robust development plan. The requirement made at the last inspection has been addressed.

The home's statement of purpose has recently been updated to reflect the temporary management arrangements. It contains all the required information and informs young people, parents/carers and social workers of services provided. The management team is working hard to ensure practice is in line with the statement of purpose.

The staff team continues to work effectively with partner agencies to ensure young people's needs are met and they can live safely. The temporary manager has already challenged decisions made by other professionals and has put pressure on different agencies to respond to safeguarding issues promptly. This demonstrates a commitment to safeguarding young people and challenging barriers. Feedback from social workers confirms that staff work closely with them and are proactive in requesting meetings where there are concerns about a young person.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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