

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	27 October 2016
Unique reference number	SC036584
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Jason Grainger
Inspector	Michelle Spruce

Inspection date	27 October 2016
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

SC036584

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people enjoy living at the home and experience a range of activities that meet their individual needs.
- Young people feel safe living at the home. Good staffing arrangements keep them safe.
- Children at risk of child sexual exploitation are protected.
- Partnership working with health professionals is good and supports the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of children and young people.
- Staff are proactive and work well with the police to reduce the risk of missing from home.
- Staff are supported well and receive good supervision, training and appraisals.
- Staff are innovative in finding ways to promote and recognise the achievements of everyone.
- The induction book for young people is personalised and helps the admission process.
- The home is maintained to a high standard. Young people respect their environment.
- Additional management support provides effective leadership and management of the service.
- There is one identified shortfall in relation to record-keeping in line with the homes policies and procedures.

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:

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies and procedures on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned and operated by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/09/2015	Full	Good
16/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
29/08/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Staff are committed and dedicated. They deliver care on an individual needs-led basis. Young people benefit from sustained and settled placements. A parent of a young person commented about the care his child receives and said, 'Very happy with the care. Over the moon with him. Significant improvement.' Young people enjoy living at the home. A young person said, 'I get to have free time. I have a television in my bedroom. I see my friends, have holidays, go out on trips and have nice food.' Young people build good healthy relationships with each other and staff. Staff take their time to get to know young people. This builds trust between them and gives young people the chance to feel safe and protected. Young people have a trusted adult to share their feelings or concerns with. A young person said, 'I get along with the staff. I get along with everyone. I respect them. I am very sociable. I like to do their hair and spend time with them.' Staff encourage young people to talk about difficult relationships when conflict occurs. This encourages group living and helps to improve friendships. Young people have their say in residents' meetings and key work sessions and during their review. Young people feel valued because staff listen to and act on their thoughts and suggestions. This helps them to shape the care they receive and the environment they live in. Some young people have independent advocates that represent them when they feel unable to speak up. A young person said, 'I always attend my reviews. If people don't listen to me the staff sort out an independent advocate for me. He comes to see me at school. I can tell him anything.' This gives young people the confidence that their voices are heard. When young people are new to the home, staff are sensitive to their feelings. They provide a child-centred guide about the home to help them understand what to expect. The young people's handbooks are unique. Each one is written individually, making it personal to the young person. This helps them to feel welcome. A parent commented about his child's experience since moving in and said, 'He is more settled here. It is closer for us to see him. There is lots to do here for him. It feels more like a family home.' Young people have access to health services that are relevant to them. Their emotional, physical and psychological health is supported well. All routine health appointments are attended. Any additional services required are accessed appropriately. A staff member said, 'Children are really thriving from where they were before. They are healthy and fit.' Staff promote a healthy diet and encourage	

physical activities to keep young people fit. A young person said, 'I take medication to help with my sleep and skin. I attend all health appointments. They have sorted my meds out for me.'

All young people attend education and have aspirations for their future. A young person said, 'It is much better now I have hair and beauty on my timetable. I want to be a beautician and do hair.' Young people who experience difficulties at school are helped to remain in education. Staff work alongside the education staff to maintain attendance and encourage progress. This helps young people to learn at a pace that is achievable for them without too much disruption.

Young people access a range of activities that promote their physical well-being. The diverse range of activities that staff provide make sure young people have good social experiences. A young person said, 'I enjoy it here and have fun. I went to Wales. I go to youth club and have loads of friends there. Some of my friends came here for my birthday. I have friends in the street I go and call for them.' Another young person commented about his experience and said, 'I enjoy lots of activities. I go horse riding. I have moved up at pony club. I can groom horses, ride, walk them on a lead, direct them, tell what their senses are, trot and half canter.' This helps to develop young people's interpersonal and social skills and improves their confidence.

Young people remain in contact with family and friends who are important to them. This strengthens and develops important bonds. Visitors to the home are welcomed by staff. This provides a relaxed environment for families and young people during contact. Staff work exceptionally well with families. Staff build up a good rapport with parents. This is helpful in showing the young people how good relationship-building with their parents is developed and maintained. A staff member said, 'You can see how proud the child is to share their experiences of how they are improving and growing up with their parents.'

Independence skills are incorporated into daily tasks to improve life skills. Staff recognise the individual abilities of each young person and tailor the development of life skills accordingly. This helps young people to prepare for independence and leaving care.

Young people make decisions about the home they live in and contribute to their care plan. Young people are helped to move on from care when they reach adulthood. A young person said, 'I feel more independent now. I can manage my money better. I can do more things on my own now. I can use the kitchen on my own. I do my own personal care and look after my hamster and fish. I can shop for my own clothes. I have my own pocket money.' One young person has moved to an appropriate provision in line with his care plan since reaching adulthood. He still keeps in touch with staff and often visits. This demonstrates the value he places on the home and staff.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people feel safe because staff provide a safe place for young people to live. Risk is identified and managed well. There are suitable fire and health and safety arrangements in place that keep the home free from risk. Fire drills and tests are routinely undertaken, maintenance issues are addressed and the home is maintained to a high standard. This keeps all who live, work and visit the home safe. Staff are clear about the support young people need to keep them safe. Behaviour management plans are evaluated for each individual and the plans reflect the support needed to manage any identified risk. A parent said, 'Staff are very good with him. They listen to him and try to get him to understand the consequences to his actions. He is learning how to manage his behaviour.' Staff only use physical intervention as a last resort. The episodes of young people missing from the home has reduced since the last full inspection. Staff help young people to manage their emotions that may trigger feelings of wanting to leave the home. This reduces the risk of them going missing and keeps them safe. Young people do not engage in anti-social behaviour that warrants police involvement. They take responsibility for their actions and understand that there are consequences to behaviour that is inappropriate. Sanctions are fair and proportionate. Staff use praise and rewards to help young people feel valued. A staff member said, 'We have a starry sky. This is a way of giving appreciation and acknowledgement to everyone for their good doings. You receive a star sticker to add to the sky on the wall. This helps each other to be kind and respectful.' Staff do not always follow the home's policy and procedure when opening medication for the first time. This means that they cannot determine whether it has passed its shelf life. There is potential for medication to be used outside of the guidelines. Young people have access to independent advocates. This makes sure that their voices are heard. There have been no allegations against staff in the home or complaints since the last full inspection. Young people understand their rights and know how to complain. A young person said, 'I ask the staff if I am struggling. The staff phone the advocate and he listens to me. I would tell them if I was unhappy.'	

The manager notifies Ofsted in a timely manner of any significant events. This makes sure any action needed to keep children and young people safe is done so accordingly.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been in place for three years. Prior to this role, he was acting manager of the home. He has over 15 years' experience with children and young people in residential care. The management team is enhanced by two qualified care managers. This provides the service with strong leadership qualities. As a result, staff tend to remain consistent and loyal to the home. This provides young people with exceptional continuity of care. The manager said, 'Staff are committed. They put themselves out.' Staff feel that they are supported well by the management team and speak highly of them. There is a positive culture throughout the team that stems from the values and ethos of the statement of purpose. It is embedded into the practice and daily routines that staff promote. This gives young people positive role models that they aspire to. The young person's guide to the home is exceptionally personalised. Each person is given a guide during the admission process. The guide is uniquely presented with personal touches that help young people to feel a sense of belonging when they come to live at the home. This helps them to settle in because they can already see how much staff already know about them. The training, supervision and appraisal that staff receive broaden their development, enhance their skill and provide them with the feedback they require to continue to give the young people good care. This improves the quality of care. The manager monitors the home in line with regulation. This helps him to plan the future of the home by identifying strengths and weaknesses. Further monthly monitoring by an independent visitor also gives the manager a view of how well the service is performing. This makes sure that the service continues to grow and opportunities for young people improve. The manager said, 'The monitoring tells us about statistics and progress of children. It tells us if we are meeting our objectives.' The staff have excellent relationships with parents, carers and external professionals. They go the extra mile in helping to maintain positive relationships between young people and their parents. For example, staff recognised that one	

relationship was becoming strained. The staff organised an activity for the parent and young person to spend more time together. This intervention by staff and clear understanding of the situation helped to strengthen the relationship.

The manager challenges the practice of other staff to make sure that young people receive care that is in line with their plans. The manager actively challenged the educational arrangements for a young person. This resulted in a more appropriate provision to be found. This is significant because the young person is now able to complete his exams.

The home is excellently maintained, furnished and decorated throughout. It reflects the individual personalities of young people. Young people respect their home and this is reflected in the care that goes into maintaining it to a high standard.

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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