

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	13/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC038780
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Blue Mountain Homes Ltd
Registered provider address	Flat 17, Leeland Mansions, Leeland Road, London, W13 9HE

Responsible individual	Pradeep Manaktala
Registered manager	Lisa Owens
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford

Inspection date	13/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. The home's response to a safeguarding issue was not sufficiently robust. Important safeguarding information came to light when a young person went missing. This information was not shared with the placing authority for their consideration even though it might have indicated that the young person was at risk or had been harmed. Because they did not know about it, social workers were not able to make important decisions about the young person's safety and welfare. Also, the matter was not fully investigated by staff. There was a lack of professional curiosity in the staff's response to the issue. In another incident, young people spent the night together in a young person's bedroom and this went unnoticed by staff. Whilst there has been a good response to this incident, which should help to protect young people in the future, the fact that it initially went unnoticed, shows poor supervision of young people on this occasion. Staff recently took a young person with them to collect another young person from a visit at their family home. This has compromised a young person's privacy and confidentiality because the other young person found out their home address. Staff had discussed this with their 'on call' manager, who had approved the decision. There was little planning or forethought about possible consequences. One young person has had a serious accident while running around the house with another young person. They injured their head and the paramedics had to be called. The staff acted quickly and vigilantly, but follow-up work on the cause of the accident is poor. It is not clear that the young person had learned lessons about the dangers of running in the house. Therefore, there is the potential for this to happen again. Although some shortfalls are identified as a result of this inspection, young people have had some very positive experiences. They are listened to and staff are good at promoting contact with family, based on their wishes and feelings. One social worker noted that staff had supported a young person with their contact visits and said: 'they do well with contacts'. Staff have also helped another young person by	

working proactively with their social worker to increase family contact. As a result, the young person is developing stronger relationships that will support them in the future.

Some young people are admitted to the home having previously served custodial sentences. Staff are instrumental in enabling young people to reduce criminal activity. Records of one-to-one sessions demonstrate very positive relationships between young people and staff. Young people engage in these sessions and start to understand the impact that their behaviour may have on their future if they continue to get into trouble with the police. In addition to reducing offending behaviours, individual work is effective in helping young people to learn about risks associated with alcohol and drug use. Staff do not shy away from giving young people important messages about where they have gone wrong in the past and how they can move forward in the future.

When young people go missing, staff are very proactive in their response. They actively search for missing young people and are fully aware of their vulnerability in the community. They respond appropriately and according to risk. They work well with the police and other professionals to ensure that young people are as safe as they can be. There are always discussions with young people about where they have been and who they have been with. This helps to improve their safety over time.

Risk assessment is generally strong. The manager always ensures that risk assessments are updated so that they capture complex and changing risks. This means that staff understand what they must do to protect young people's safety and welfare. There is a high level of negotiation with young people so that they 'sign up' to their risk assessment. Incentives are used well to develop trust between staff and young people. Young people develop a sense of safety and start to build up some free time in the community.

There has been an unsettled period in the home since the last inspection. Staff always have the safety of young people as a priority and generally respond to complex behaviours and incidents promptly. Young people's behaviours are now settling down because of this approach.

Young people who have struggled to attend school in the past, are now engaging in their own bespoke education programmes. Staff's encouraging and persistent approach ensures that young people's attendance and participation improves. One education provider's comments include: 'Staff are good at motivating, they do an awful lot'. They say that one young person, 'has absolutely flown'.

New young people settle in their home quickly. While this can be a difficult time for them, staff put them at their ease quickly because of their nurturing and warm approach. One newer young person said: 'They were kind and welcomed me'. Young people feel well prepared for their admission. They say that staff know all about them when they come, indicating good assessment and planning for their

care.

One young person has been preparing particularly well for his move into semi-independence in the near future. He has managed his entire budget so that he can practice this and now knows what to expect when he leaves. This approach builds up young people's confidence in readiness for adulthood.

The three recommendations set at the last inspection have been met. There have been improvements to the cleanliness of bathrooms and there is now a new cleaning routine. Recently, senior managers have focussed on this issue to secure continued improvement. When young people go missing, there are always follow up discussions with them about their safety and wellbeing. Also, a new deputy manager has been employed to support the registered manager in her work.

The registered manager acknowledges the shortfalls in this report and remains highly committed to the young people. She is suitably qualified and experienced to run this children's home. The newly established management team further strengthen the leadership and management of the home.

Information about this children's home

- The home is privately owned and provides care to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD)

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/8/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Declined effectiveness
19/05/2015	Full	Good
21/01/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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
12 The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure- 2(a) that staff- (iii) have the skills to identify if a child is at risk of harm. (iv) manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other. (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. (vi) take effective action where there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (vi) are familiar with and act in accordance with the homes child protection policies.	01/01/2016
The registered person must ensure that the privacy of children is appropriately protected. (Regulation 21(a))	01/01/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff support children to be aware of and manage their safety, both inside and outside the home to the extent that any parent would. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9).

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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