

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	17/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC038780
Type of inspection	Full
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	17/08/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in 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

SC038780

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The registered manager provides good support to staff and young people, and leads the home very effectively.
- Young people have good relationships with staff, and there are regular one-to-one discussions which support young people well with their difficulties and worries.
- Young people all begin to access education and, for some who have previously been out of education, this is very positive.
- Interests and talents are nurtured, and young people find out what they are good at.
- The wide range of activities suits the energetic group of young people, and staff work hard to provide a wide range of different experiences to suit individual needs.
- Staff know the young people extremely well and are creative in their approach, particularly in protecting individuals when they go missing.

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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Evaluation of missing incidents should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what has worked well. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.31)
- Each home must have clear arrangements in place to maintain effective management when the manager is absent, off duty or on leave. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food and hygiene). This is in relation to a bathroom at the home which was dirty and unhygienic. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Full report

Information about this children's home

Rowan House is privately owned. It provides care and accommodation to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2016	Interim	Declined effectiveness
19/05/2015	Full	Good
21/01/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/06/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people's admissions to the home are managed well. Good planning ensures that staff know young people's needs from the onset, and they settle in quickly. One social worker praised the staff for their approach, and said, 'I was so impressed on the first day.' Young people say that they are given a warm welcome. Effective and individualised care planning ensures that their needs are well set out and that staff know what they should do to meet them. As a result, the care is individual to the young person. Staff know that young people are often in crisis on their arrival and are aware that it takes time before they start to make progress. They are creative in their care delivery and find effective methods to improve behaviours quickly. For example, the effective use of incentives has recently made a difference to some young people's unsafe behaviour. This has enabled them to settle down and make progress quickly. There are very positive relationships between staff and young people, and the diverse staff group uses its skills and talents to engage young people in education and activities. Young people have high energy levels and staff continue to be energetic themselves in providing and joining in activities, so that young people become engaged and do not get bored. Leisure provision is a strength and young people access a very wide range of activities for their enjoyment, such as community-based boxing, swimming and 'free jumping'. These activities mean a great deal to young people and they know that they have to maintain good levels of behaviour to access them, which works well to improve progress in behaviour. One young person has worked hard to save their incentive money and is very pleased to have purchased a pet, showing that individual interests are fully taken into account. Each young person has their own education package, with a view to ensuring that their educational needs are well met. There is a range of differing education facilities. Some young people receive personal tutoring, one is completing a course using his musical talents and one attends the company's own school, demonstrating the variety of education accessed according to young people's needs. Young people develop their interests and learn about the options that they wish to pursue, now and in the future. Young people's interests and talents are fully recognised by staff, who actively encourage them in all that they do. Staff praise young people for their achievements, which builds their confidence and self-esteem. There are several examples of young people accessing education	

successfully, while at the home, after periods of being out of education altogether.

Young people are only discharged if they are genuinely ready to go back home or to move on to semi-independent living. There are occasions when young people have had to leave because they are unable to continue to make progress, but these decisions are made in the young person's best interests and to secure their progress. Young people take memory boxes with them, but when they have to leave more quickly there are not always arrangements to ensure that they can say goodbye properly. For example, one young person had to leave the home and could not be told until the day that they left. This was in line with social worker's plans and to protect their welfare and safety. This young person had had some good times at the home, which he will be able to reflect on, but when he looks back at his records it is not entirely evident that staff had tried to say a proper goodbye.

Young people living away from home are well supported, and one professional said, 'they are very good with contacts'. It is very evident that young people are well supported to make contact with their families and friends in their own local area. At the same time, there are many opportunities for young people to make new friends through the varying clubs and activities in the local community.

Young people's health is well protected, and there is an emphasis on healthy eating and exercise. In addition, young people are encouraged to stop smoking and taking drugs, with the use of outside agencies to help young people to make improvements with this.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people feel safe and are safe at this home. When there is a high level of significant events due to young people's complex behaviour, the good policies and procedures are well used to ensure that appropriate professionals are informed. When young people go missing, the police and other relevant authorities are informed and there are effective working partnerships with the missing from care coordinators in the area. The registered manager regularly attends meetings with the police, and the joint working ensures that intelligence is shared between professionals to protect young people further. Staff worry about young people when they are missing and are creative in their approach to protecting them and finding them. All staff are fully trained in child sexual exploitation and are familiar with the risks in the area. As a consequence, they know how to protect young people from being sexually exploited. After periods of being missing, young people very often do not want to engage	

with staff to say where they have been. More could be done to coordinate a more proactive approach to this, to ensure that young people's safety continues to increase. For example, there is little information to show the follow up of some important information that recently came to light, despite staff being aware of the risks.

Staff are very keen to protect young people, and this is a common ethos within the staff team. Staff know what to do if there is a safety concern about an individual and are also familiar with the procedure if there is a concern about a staff member. Staff take quick and decisive action to ensure that young people are protected.

Staff only use physical intervention when it is absolutely necessary, and the low level of such incidents demonstrates a more positive approach. Incentives and sanctions are used to affect young people's behaviour positively.

Staff recruitment is well managed, with senior staff regularly checking recruitment records to add further scrutiny. This reduces the risk of unsuitable adults being able to work with young people.

The building is a safe place to live in and work in. Regular checks take place to make sure that it stays that way, for example tests on gas and electricity, and regular fire drills. One young person's bathroom was found to be dirty, harbouring bacteria that could pose a risk to their health if this is not put right.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has worked in children's homes for a number of years and had experience prior to her registration in April 2016. She is currently undertaking her diploma in management to ensure that she meets regulatory requirements. She has made sure that the leadership and management of the home have been good. She regularly reviews records, speaks to young people and staff, and ensures that good monitoring consistently ensures the good quality of care provided. Staff and young people speak highly of her. One young person said, 'She is sound', and reported that they know that they can always go to her if there is a problem. She is fully involved in the young people's lives and regularly holds sessions with them individually, particularly when they are having difficulties with their safety. This ensures that young people's sense of safety improves. There has been one occasion when she has been on holiday and the arrangements to manage the home have not ensured such a positive and consistent approach. Opportunities to safeguard children further could be missed in the future if this is not put right.	

There are regular independent visits to the home that the provider arranges. These visits continue to be robust, and highlight good practice and areas for development. The reports are sent to Ofsted, but not always in a timely way. Ofsted have not received some visit reports for some weeks after the visit. This does not allow the regulator to review reports in a timely manner to regulate effectively the matters arising in the home.

The registered manager has developed very effective working relationships with other professionals, who say 'contact with the manager is always good' and 'I get regular reports'. These good working relationships help to protect young people and maximise their progress. This is because the full range of professionals are completely aware of the most up-to-date information and can better plan the next steps to ensure the momentum of progress.

The training programme ensures that staff are well trained. Staff know how to meet the needs of complex young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties, and enjoy their work. One staff spoke of leaving the home then coming back as relief staff, because they enjoy being with the young people and seeing their progress. Staff speak very highly of young people. Their nurturing approach suits young people, many of whom are in crisis on their arrival and need a great deal of emotional support.

Staff are well supported in their role and know that they can go to a manager at any time to gain support, encouragement and direction. There is good personnel management and, when issues are identified or complaints are made about staff's practice, there is always follow up. This ensures that a good quality of care continues and that all staff are well managed and safe to work with young people.

The care provided consistently meets with the home's statement of purpose. Professionals, young people, and their parents and carers know what they should expect, because it is clearly set out in the document.

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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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