

SC038780

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 April 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 4 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/05/2017	Full	Good
13/12/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ("the Level 3 Diploma"); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. (Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b))	31/05/2018
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	31/05/2018

Recommendations

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

There are good relationships between the staff and young people. These relationships are supportive and nurturing. Staff know the young people's needs well; there is warmth, encouragement and a positive sense of humour in the home. This helps young people to feel valued. Two young people told the inspector that 'living here is like being in a family'.

Staff regularly meet with young people for individual key-working sessions. They discuss a wide range of matters affecting the young people. This can range from behavioural

issues to family contact, to relationships in the home. Young people value these sessions.

Staff ensure that young people who identify as transgender receive the help and support that they need. These young people are treated with respect and sensitivity. They are given practical and emotional support in gender transitioning. Staff have put considerable time into learning and understanding the needs of young people making gender transitions. They have adapted their care practice to make certain that they provide the best possible care.

Young people and staff meet together on a weekly basis. They discuss a wide range of issues relating to the running of the home. The views and ideas of young people are important and are taken seriously by the manager and staff. The manager responds to suggestions and requests even if she is unable to attend the house meeting.

If young people feel aggrieved or upset, they know how to make a complaint. Two complaints have been made by young people since the last inspection. The manager and leaders of the service have responded to these complaints and resolved them.

Some young people have been committed to their education. They have overcome obstacles and are now on track to complete their GCSEs. Other young people have had variable experiences. At times, they have struggled to maintain their education or training place. Staff have persevered with young people to help them do their best in education or training.

Some young people smoke tobacco and have tried cannabis. Staff provide young people with advice and guidance to discourage this behaviour. Young people receive help and support from other agencies regarding smoking cessation or cannabis use. Staff provide young people with appropriate advice regarding sexual health and help young people to keep themselves safe.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The manager has carried out a comprehensive location risk assessment. The manager canvassed the views of other agencies, including the police, in the assessment. The manager identifies local areas of concern and staff discourage young people from visiting these areas. This helps to keep young people safe while in the community.

Good-quality risk assessments help to keep young people safe. These assessments enable staff to understand young people's individual vulnerabilities and the actions they should take to keep young people safe. Any changes in young people's circumstances, which could impact on their risk and vulnerability, result in the risk assessment being updated. Staff contribute to these assessments and understand them well.

Young people's behaviour has improved over time. Staff do not have to use sanctions in response to poor behaviour. Staff use key-work sessions to raise any concerns about behaviour, and this is effective. Young people can discuss any underlying emotions that

may give rise to negative behaviour. Staff will help young people to identify alternative approaches, redirecting them away from negative behaviour.

The manager has taken appropriate action when young people have raised concerns about staff. The manager ensures that staff behaviour does not compromise the safety and welfare of young people.

Staff follow appropriate procedures when young people go missing from the home or if they are away from the home without permission. The manager has not consistently ensured that local authorities conduct return home interviews. This means that the manager or staff are not able to learn from the information derived from these interviews.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

A committed registered manager leads the home. She has a relevant qualification in leadership and management and is studying towards the level 5 diploma in management. She is passionate in her role and champions the rights and entitlements of the young people in her care.

Leadership and management require improvement to be good as some staff have not received regular professional supervision for several months. Infrequent supervision was identified at the last inspection and a recommendation was made in response to this. The frequency of staff supervision remains a problem.

Some staff have not yet attained the relevant qualification for staff working in children's residential care. The manager has not taken effective action to ensure compliance with this.

The manager has an in-depth knowledge of each young person. She ensures that care and placement plans accurately identify young people's needs. The manager makes certain that the right services are in place to meet these needs.

The manager monitors the quality of the service provision in a number of ways. This includes:

- using the detailed reports provided by the independent visitor to identify the home's strengths and weaknesses
- completing her own quality assurance report and devising an accompanying action plan
- using the feedback from young people and from professionals working with the service to make improvements.

These measures help the manager to develop the service and support her drive for continuous improvement.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC038780

Provision sub-type: 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

Phillip Morris, social care inspector

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