

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	19/05/2015
Unique reference number	SC038780
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Blue Mountain Homes Ltd
Registered person address	17 Leeland Mansions, Leeland Road, London, W13 9HB

Responsible individual	Mr Pradeep Manaktala
Registered manager	Mr Shaun Hicks
Inspector	Miss Amanda Ellis

Inspection date	19/05/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained 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:

- Managers and staff are resilient and tenacious. They do not 'give up' on young people.
- Positive relationships with the staff team help young people settle and form attachments.
- Care planning is comprehensive, regularly reviewed, inclusive of young people's views and personalised.
- The individual identity needs of young people are fully met through all planning and delivery of care.
- Young people benefit from consistent boundaries and clear consequences to enable them to manage challenging and risky behaviours.
- Young people benefit from a strong, cohesive staff and management team, who have the appropriate knowledge and skills to ensure that young people receive sound and safe care
- Effective partnership work with multi-disciplinary teams means that young people benefit from high levels of support and are effectively safeguarded.
- Leadership and management arrangements demonstrate an agenda for continual improvement.

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
In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard the registered person must: ensure that staff 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 (Regulation 6 (2)(b)(vi))	15/06/2015
In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must: ensure staff have the skills to meet the needs of each child; this is with particular regard to managers ensuring they have up-to-date allegation training (Regulation 13 (2)(c))	15/06/2015
review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1)(2))	15/06/2015

Recommendations

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

ensure that 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. (The Guide page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home which provides care and accommodation for up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/06/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
08/05/2014	CH - Full	Inadequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people enjoy positive relationships with the staff team and with each other. Staff place young people's needs at the centre of their care practice. One independent reviewing officer (IRO) commented: 'It is very evident that they work hard to understand him and make a positive relationship with him. This leads to the young person being able to respond positively.' Staff are motivated to engage with young people. Consequently, young people feel valued and settle in the home. One young person said: 'I am relaxed here; this is the best place I have lived in.' Young people benefit from individualised educational programmes. The home's Statement of Purpose sets out that, 'we will endeavour to access appropriate educational services to meet individual needs following individual assessment.' These programmes suit young people's abilities, needs and preferences. Educational plans include attending the provider's Department for Education registered school, attending local colleges or working with alternative education providers. Routine and consistency within the home enable young people to improve attendance. Staff are proactive in supporting individual educational needs. Consequently, young people are able to achieve their potential in subjects that interest them. An effective staff team promotes improved health outcomes for young people. Young people are in good physical health. However, for some young people, their health is compromised due to alcohol and substance misuse. Staff are proactive in working with the looked after children (LAC) nurse, the child and adolescent mental health service and substance misuse workers to promote improved health outcomes. The LAC nurse said: 'We have good partnership work with the home and levels of communication. They meet the health needs of young people very well.' Additionally, advice, guidance and support by staff and alternative external agencies mean young people gain an understanding of key health risks. Young people benefit from appropriate contact with family, friends and other people who are important to them. The staff team works with young people to promote positive contacts, while sensitively enabling young people to understand why some contact arrangements are less beneficial. Contact arrangements are in accordance with local authority care plans, risk assessed and where necessary, supervised by the staff team. This ensures that young people have safe contact, retain relationships and maintain their unique family identity.	

Young people are encouraged to develop their independence and readiness for adulthood. Support and guidance from staff assist young people to learn essential skills such as cleaning and basic cookery. This is appropriate practice for young people who are new to the home. However, insufficient structured independence work fails to support medium to long-term placements. An absence of formal assessment, planning and review of young people's independence skills means that the home is not wholly effective in demonstrating how it prepares and assesses young people to live independently. This has no direct impact on young people currently in placement.

Young people know how to make a complaint and are confident about being able to do so. The young person's guide is comprehensive and contains information on how to make a complaint. The home provides a telephone for young people, in addition to their mobile phones. This means contacting children's rights, advocacy services and social work support is easily accessible. Young people are clear about the objectives and services of the home and state they have no complaints.

The home environment has been recently improved with redecoration, new furniture and personalisation of all areas of the home. This is consistent with the Statement of Purpose, which outlines that, 'it is a children's home and we make the home as "homely" as possible.' The Registered Manager said that young people are valuing the home and that property damage has ceased to be an issue. The interior of the home has a modern design, which reflects the tastes of the young people. The home is large and offers opportunity for both privacy and social engagement. Young people can personalise their own bedrooms and have a choice in their decoration preferences. This is consistent with family living, which means that young people feel relaxed and value their surroundings.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people significantly improve and reduce their risk-taking and challenging behaviours. This leads to them becoming increasingly safe. Discussions with several IROs and social workers confirm that this home provides safety and protection for young people who have previously put themselves at high risk of harm. The Registered Manager has built effective and cooperative links with the local police service. In addition, the home has well-established links with the local safeguarding teams and the local authority designated officer who work together for the protection of vulnerable young people. Because of this collaboration, potential concerns about the safety or welfare of young people are shared and	

acted upon in a timely manner.

Incidents of young people missing from care are low. Where incidents occur, robust partnership work with the police and safeguarding professionals ensure a timely response to safeguard young people. The missing from care police liaison officer said that, 'the home works well to protect young people.' Missing from care protocols for individual young people and clear risk assessments enable staff to take prompt and responsive action, with records being clear and detailed. Young people are offered 'return interviews' to discuss the circumstances leading to them going missing. However, these discussions are not undertaken by an independent person and do not fully meet protocols. While there has been no evidence to suggest a direct impact on safeguarding young people, it has the potential for ineffective practice.

There has been minimal use of physical restraint in the home since the last inspection. The home does not routinely use physical restraint as a method of behaviour management. All staff are trained to be able to undertake physical interventions. The format for recording such incidents is in line with regulatory requirements and each incident is reviewed by the manager. Consequently, young people are being safeguarded as practice is safe and under continuous scrutiny

Positive behaviour is promoted through a range of incentive and reward schemes. Additionally, unwanted behaviours are discouraged through a system of sanctions. Young people respond well to incentive systems and also understand the consequences of any negative behaviour and accept sanctions imposed. The use of sanctions is appropriate and reflects the staff commitment to promoting positive and socially acceptable behaviours at all times.

The organisation's effective recruitment procedures enable the careful selection and recruitment of staff. Robust recruitment processes and the recording and monitoring of visitors to the home further ensure the protection of young people from potential harm.

The health and safety of young people, staff and visitors within the home are prioritised. A range of regularly reviewed risk assessments cover all aspects of daily living. The home has a continual programme of maintenance, which ensures timely repair and remedial work. Health and safety checks, including fire equipment and drills, are current and environmental risks assessments are in place. The home has the prescribed level of public and employee liability insurance.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of	good

leaders and managers	
Young people receive good care because management arrangements have significantly improved and are now robust and effective. The Registered Manager became registered in this post in January 2010. He has a National Vocational Qualification at level 4 in Leadership and Management for Care services, which is a suitable qualification for the post of Registered Manager. He has relevant experience of residential childcare within the private sector. An experienced and dedicated deputy manager ably supports the Registered Manager. This ensures continuity of leadership in the absence of the manager. It also enables both managers to implement change and drive improvements to the home. The last inspection of this home in January 2015 resulted in a judgement of sustained progress. There were two requirements and one recommendation set at the last inspection. Since the last inspection, improvements in training and induction arrangements mean all staff have the full range of appropriate skills. Where the home has concerns about incidents of young people missing from care, they consistently contact placing authorities to request that care plans are reviewed. This means managers have satisfactorily addressed all of the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. The Registered Manager has a development plan. He uses this to plan, review and promote improvements within the home. The content of the plan illustrates that managers understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home. Development plans are underpinned by internal and external quality assurance processes, which monitor quality of care and identify areas that need to improve. These combined processes illustrate that managers are able to promote improvement and develop the service for the benefit of young people. Staff engage in regular supervision, team meetings and appraisals. They undertake a structured training programme, with mandatory training regularly updated and specific training delivered to meet the individual needs of young people. Consequently, young people benefit from a staff team who are accountable for their care practice and well supported in their professional development. Significant events relating to the protection of young people are notified to the relevant authorities and appropriate procedures are followed. This contributes to young people's safety. Past significant events include issues of young people making allegations against staff. The Registered Manager worked well with safeguarding professionals to investigate this issue. However, managers could benefit from ensuring they have up-to-date training in managing allegations to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to identify and manage any future concerns. The manager had developed a locality risk assessment, which provides an overview of known risks in the local area. While this document is comprehensive, it	

has not been formulated in consultation with relevant local agencies. This means managers do not have the necessary oversight of all information that highlights potential risks in the locality.

The Statement of Purpose provides a detailed guide for parents and placing authorities about the aims and objectives of the home and care provided. The home works in accordance with this document, and good quality care practice enables managers and staff to achieve its aims and objectives.

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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