

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	15/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC039087
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Care Afloat Ltd.
Registered person address	158 Birkrig, SKELMERSDALE, Lancashire, WN8 9HP

Responsible individual	Mr Michael Fletcher
Registered manager	Mrs Carol McKenna
Inspector	Mr Mark Kersh

Inspection date	16/06/2015
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

SC039087

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The care provided is individualised in line with the assessed and plan needs of young people
- Staff members provide consistent care to ensure good quality relationships exist between them and young people
- Good arrangements are in place to meet the health, education and emotional well-being of young people
- Young people are involved in the day-to-day running of the service, their views wishes and feelings are listened to and acted upon
- Risk assessments are robust, detailed and include strategies for ensuring young people's safety when travelling or should young people go missing
- Clear consistent boundaries are in place to manage young people's behaviour
- Planning for accommodation must ensure young people sign up to this service in order to experience the full services available. Space and privacy is limited. Some young people, who require space, will not be suited to this service.
- Staff members are clear about the safety of young people and are trained in safeguarding in order to protect them
- Young people who do experience this service make progress from their starting points. Management arrangements are sound and supportive towards staff members and young people
- The service is meeting the aims and objectives as set out in the Statement of Purpose document. This document has been revised and updated but has not been sent to Ofsted in line with regulations

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 Management and administrative regulations notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3) (b))	31/07/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

- The service is registered to accommodate one young person with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties
- The service is privately owned
- This service provides young people with single occupancy accommodation on a 72 foot narrow boat which travels around the canal network

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/07/2014	CH - Full	Good
05/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
From their starting point young people who adapt to life on-board the narrow boat do make progress. They improve their education attendance and participation while experiencing a range of stimulating activities which they enjoy. Young people engage in the day-to-day operation and say they feel listened to and their views are integrated into all decisions made. A young person says, 'It's really good and I have learned a lot and feel part of the crew.' Young people engage in a competency crew course which ensures they fully understand how the narrow boat operates along with the safety measures in place along the waterways. A small and dedicated staff group enables young people to build trusting relationships and experience group work. This provides them with consistency and helps to develop their social interactions, building confidence. Staff members spend time with young people and say time is invested with them 'showing them the ropes'. The young person is responding well, making progress and fully enjoying their experiences. Information is available to young people should they raise a concern or complaint. These are clearly recorded and provide young people with a response to any issues raised. There has been a delay in the response to one issue a young person raised and the manager has put systems in place to ensure all issues are now responded to in a timely manner. The young person is satisfied with these actions and reported no issues or complaints during this inspection. Young people are able to attend the organisations own school and the service has the use of a fleet car in order to transport young people to and from school from the various locations the narrow boat visits. For those young people who are not able to manage a classroom environment, qualified teachers visit them on-board and provide them with education and work to complete. These arrangements ensure young people do not fall behind in their education work. There is an education and activity timetable and the young person has made significant progress considering their previous poor educational attendance. They engage well and complete additional courses in relation to boat safety. This provides them with information in order to minimise risk and understand the routines on-board. Young people's health needs are identified and met. They are registered with health services, have a health medical and use local health walk in centres, if	

needed, when the location of the narrow boat is too far away from their registered practice. Specialist help is available to young people and the service maintains links with health professionals. This provides young people with emotional or psychological support to assist them to understand their past experiences.

Young people are fully involved in daily routines and say they enjoy their experiences. They engage well in the shopping, cooking and maintenance on-board and this will benefit them as they approach adulthood. Young people participate in their review meetings and have a say in their future plans. This organisation has other registered homes within the community where young people can move into when they are considered to meet the threshold for group and community living. Previous young people who have experienced this service have moved successfully from the narrow boat into a local community.

As space is limited on-board not all young people will adapt to this service and careful planning and a commitment from young people is needed in order for them to enjoy the experiences on-board because space and privacy can be compromised.

Arrangements for contact with young people's families and friends are in place. Staff members transport and supervise contact and young people have their own agreed free time with their own friends from their local area. This ensures they keep in touch with those people who are important in their lives.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people say they are safe and feel safe living on the narrow boat. Young people do not currently present any issues which may give rise to safeguarding concerns. All staff members are trained to recognise, respond and report any suspicions of neglect or abuse. The young person report they feel comfortable and confident to approach any staff member or the manager about any concerns. Detailed risk assessments are in place and currently all risks are assessed as low. There are no current issues with young people offending, misusing drugs or alcohol, smoking, self-harming, going missing or being sexually exploited. Detailed strategies are in place and understood by staff members and young people. Records show two occasions where a young person has been absent from the narrow boat and this is a significant reduction on previous behaviours. This reduction is a result of agreed arrangements for contact being in place and the	

rural nature of the narrow boat setting. Where incidents occur staff members follow young people should they go off board without permission and keep in contact with them ensuring their safe return to the narrow boat.

Behaviour management plans are agreed by young people. There have been few incidents of negative behaviour and staff members and the manager are mindful to not unnecessarily involve the police. This ensures young people are not criminalised for their behaviour. A professional says, they feel the home works very well with young people and that marked changes and progress has been made. She described the services as, 'very good' and confirmed that communication between each other is regular and that the manager always updates her on a regular basis.

Young people work towards agreed incentives and rewards and they respond well to this. As a result, progress has been made in education, behaviour and missing from care. All staff members are trained in behaviour management and restraints do not take place, as limited space would make this unsafe to do so. Staff members are skilled and use de-escalation techniques and humour to divert and change young people's behaviour. Records for rewards achieved by young people far out way any sanctions imposed for inappropriate behaviour.

All staff members are checked to ensure they are suitable before commencing work on the narrow boat. Robust practices and periodically re-checking existing staff members prevents unsuitable people from being recruited or having the opportunity to harm young people and place them at risk.

The manager and skippers have the relevant qualifications, experience and skills to operate the narrow boat. All health and safety certificates for the narrow boat are in date in line with the relevant regulations and guidance for operating on British waterways. Daily checks in which young people are involved in are carried out and include evacuation procedures. Various location risk assessments and an electronic tracking device are in place. These arrangements ensure young people; staff members and visitors are safe when on-board or travelling to the destination of the narrow boat.

Improvements have been made to the narrow boat since the last inspection. All windows have been replaced with double glazed units and a new shower unit has been installed. These contribute to a better experience for young people during their stay.

	Judgement grade
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The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The Registered Manager is suitably qualified and has the relevant experience and skills to manage the service. She has completed NVQ 4 in caring for children and young people and in leadership and management. All staff members and the manager know the young people's needs well and prioritise their daily routines. This provides young people with stability and enables them to make progress in line with the plans made and agreed with them. The staff members and external professionals all agree progress is consistent. The manager has effective arrangements in place to ensure all staff members receive regular supervision. Staff members confirm they feel supported well by the manager and say their annual appraisals are on track and ready for completion. This enables individual staff members to discuss the present needs of young people as well as identifying their own areas for professional development. The manager receives regular supervision from the responsible individual Recent improvements within the organisation are made in relation to training which is specific to the manager and staff members on the narrow boat. This takes into consideration some of the issues that may arise on-board, such as, behaviour management. The manager has refreshed all staff members in relation to acting on concerns or complaints made by young people. All staff members report that training is good and focussed around the needs of young people. The manager knows the strengths and weaknesses of the service and has plans in place to take effective action. She regularly reviews the quality of the services provided. An independent person visits the narrow boat each month and monitors the operation of the service taking into account the views of the young people, their families and placing authority. These arrangements ensure a rigorous and impartial assessment is carried out regularly and any actions identified are rectified quickly to safeguard and promote the welfare of all on board. The service is meeting the aims and objectives as set out within the Statement of Purpose document. Copies are available on the narrow boat and on request to head office. This document has been revised and updated as and when staff members leave or new staff members join the service and to bring it in line with new regulations. Copies of any such revisions have not been received by Ofsted. As a result, a requirement is made. This is to ensure Ofsted are aware of any changes made to the service. This does not impact on the quality of care provided to young people. The staff group is small and there are always two staff members on-board. All staff members and the manager work full weekly shifts and this provides consistency and continuity to young people. Contingency plans are in place should staff need	

'down time' as a result of any prolonged disruptive behaviours displayed by young people. The manager covers any shortfalls in staffing ensuring disruption to young people's care needs are minimised.

The manager is proactive and not afraid to challenge services when she feels young people are not receiving the appropriate support. For example, a young person's social worker has left and although this was planned and known by a young person, the placing authority has not put a replacement social worker in place to support them. The manager made representation to the placing authority and is advocating on a young person's behalf. This is to ensure effective partnership working can continue to protect and care for a young person.

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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