

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC039087
Inspector	Mark Kersh
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Carol McKenna
Date of last inspection	05/03/2014

Inspection date	30/07/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	Ofsted received a complaint in April 2014. An investigation visit was carried out and two requirements were made. These requirements have been complied with.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
-------------------	-------------

Young people receive highly personalised and well-planned care whilst living in this home. The staff team place the needs of young people at the centre of their practice and works positively and proactively with involved agencies. This leads to improved outcomes for young people over time. Their health, education and social care needs are well met by the staff team.

Young people are happy in the home. They have developed good quality relationships with staff and feel safe. Instances of risk taking behaviour such as running away are rare. Young people's records highlight any concerning behaviours which ensures that staff are aware and able to use protective measures to safeguard young people from risky situations. Young people develop a sense of belonging.

Young people are actively involved in consultation and service development through regular house meetings and individual work. Young people know that any issues or concerns will be dealt with appropriately by staff. Young people receive clear information about making complaints, but state they do not feel the need to do so.

Young people are supported to engage in activities in the home and various communities.

Leaders and managers have insight into the home's strengths and weaknesses and are proactive in developing the service. Staff show resilience in working with young people who often need stability and consistent boundaries. Two requirements are made as a result of this inspection in relation to staff training and staff references.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is a 72-foot narrow boat that travels around the canal network. It provides care and accommodation for up to one young person with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2014	Interim	good progress
22/05/2013	Full	adequate
13/02/2013	Full	inadequate
25/07/2012	Interim	good progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
26 (2001)	shall ensure full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2 (Regulation 26 (3) (d))	12/08/2014
27 (2001)	shall ensure that all persons employed by him—(a) receive appropriate training; and (b) are enabled from time to time to obtain further qualifications appropriate to the work they perform. (Regulation 27 (4) (a) (b))	30/09/2014

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make positive progress in many aspects of their lives, in the context of their extremely challenging starting points. The staff have high expectations and provide encouragement, incentives and celebrate any progress. Consequently, young people develop a positive view of themselves and are proud of their achievements. Staff support young people to consider their cultural, religious and identity needs through regular key work sessions. This leads to improved emotional resilience and prepares them well for their eventual move to independence.

Young people are having their needs well met within the home. They are in good health and regularly attend health appointments. They understand the importance of maintaining a healthy lifestyle and take part in a variety of activities, which helps them maintain a healthy lifestyle. Young people do not engage in risk taking behaviours such as the misuse of alcohol and drugs. As a consequence, young people are achieving positive outcomes in terms of their physical, emotional and psychological health.

Young people are attending education and are making good progress with their individual attainment taking into account their previous experiences and histories. Young people who previously had poor attendance are now regularly attending and enjoying the experience. Young people have aspirations for their future and are confident in gaining good results when the time comes for them to sit their exams.

Young people said their views, wishes and opinions are listened to by staff and they are able to have input in to the day-to-day running of the home. For example, staff have set up activities that they have requested and have changed menus at young people's request. This helps young people to develop a sense of belonging and to build trusting and open relationships with staff.

Young people maintain regular contact with people who are important to them. This helps to sustain key relationships which offer not only valuable insights about their backgrounds, but possible long-term options for support. Individual contact arrangements are appropriately supported and facilitated by staff. Young people confirm that they understand their contact plans and the arrangements that are in place. Placing authorities are positive about the flexibility of the home in providing these arrangements. A social worker said, 'Staff are achieving excellent results with our young person, they are more settled now than they have been for a long time and they have some kind of belonging'.

Quality of care **good**

Staff interact positively and develop constructive relationships with young people. As a result, young people feel secure and are aware that staff are concerned about their wellbeing and development. Young people benefit from positive relationships with staff. A young person commented, 'Staff give you space, they listen to you.' This positive relationship is fostered by staff enforcing appropriate boundaries and remaining consistent in their approach to young people.

Routine consultation with young people on areas for improvement ensures their views are sought and when possible acted upon. There is an emphasis on including young people in decision-making about their personal plans and also in the development of the home. Key work sessions, house meetings and daily discussions provide opportunities for young people to express their views and influence the running of the home. Young people are encouraged to bring issues to these forums and know how to make a complaint. Records indicate that young people have not made any complaints since the last inspection. Young people spoken to felt staff resolved any grumbles or concerns and they have not needed to make a formal complaint.

The staff team ensure that young people have a detailed and relevant placement plan in place. This clearly sets out their needs and how they will be met. Young people read, sign and make comments on their plans. The staff team are committed and chase any missing information from the placing authority, which ensures young people's plans in the home are up to date and relevant. Records reflect their commitment to ensuring that health assessments, care plans and other key documentation are received and considered in a timely manner.

Staff promote a good education experience for young people, by active daily communication and by demonstrating a sound interest in school achievements. They extend young people's learning by involving them in many different community activities such as local events which helps develop social skills. Young people get to meet new friends as they travel around the canal network and they say they do not feel isolated.

Young people live and travel around the canal network on a 72 foot narrow boat, which provides them with all the home comforts of a family run home.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are cared for in a safe and nurturing environment. Young people said they feel safe at the home and well cared for by the staff team. Young people placement plans clearly identify risk factors and these link with the risk assessment which detail how risks are to be reduced. Bullying is not an issue at the home as this is a single occupancy placement

Young people rarely go missing and this has been a marked improvement where a

young person was frequently missing from their previous placement. There has been one period of missing behaviour and this was just for a short period of time and staff acted appropriately to minimise any risk. Risk assessments and placement plans highlight concerning behaviours and the factors that trigger these behaviours. This ensures that staff are aware and able to take the protective measures to safeguard young people from risky situations. A young person said, 'Since being on the boat I am turning my life around, and I don't want it turning back'.

The home has clear policies and procedures on behaviour management which are adhered to in practice. The main focus is positive reward and reinforcement. Staff give young people incentives and rewards not only for their achievements but also for good behaviours. There have been no restraints or consequences imposed since the last inspection of the home. Staff demonstrate effective behaviour management strategies and successfully engage young people in modifying their behaviours. While staff have completed training in safe restraint and behaviour management, some staff need a refresher course in order to keep them up to date with relevant guidelines.

All staff files were checked as part of this inspection. New staff are suitably vetted and checked to ensure they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people. However, for staff that have worked for the organisation for a considerable amount of time, there were no references on file.

Daily health and safety checks are carried out as part of the boat management system and these are understood by young people. Fire equipment checks are completed appropriately and young people participate in regular fire drills to ensure they can evacuate the boat in an emergency.

Leadership and management

good

There is a Registered Manager in post who has managed the home since December 2011. The Registered Manager has completed a National Vocational Qualification at level 4 in management and level 4 in children and young people. The manager also intends to work towards a level five diploma. The manager is appropriately skilled and qualified for the role.

Ofsted received a complaint on 16 April 2014 and following an investigation visit requirements were made in relation to notifications and records of accidents. These requirements have been complied with and an action plan has been received.

Development plans are in place and these show the need to replace existing windows and have a new bathroom fitted on the boat. The manager understands the strengths of the home and is aware of the areas for development. Staff report that morale is good amongst the team and they have clear direction and leadership. Their enthusiasm is to get it right and to raise the quality of care for young people is

evident as they use the opportunities for supervision, team meetings and daily handovers.

There were no requirements or recommendations from the previous inspection. Two requirements have been made at this inspection in relation to training and staff references.

The home has a Statement of Purpose and young people's guide which accurately reflects the home and gives clear information for placing social workers, parents and young people.

Monthly monitoring reports are undertaken by an independent visitor. This level of monitoring is effectively used by the staff team, ensuring action is taken to address any shortfalls. For example some staff require refresher training. The manager monitors the activities of the home to ensure a continued good quality of care is maintained and she challenges placing authorities to ensure that the care planning arrangements are in place. Notifications of significant events are sent to Ofsted and appropriate action has been taken by staff following any incidents.

Young people's case files are maintained to a good standard. Young people are encouraged to, and do, add their own views and comments. There are detailed chronology reports and records of young people's progress, achievements and activities are of a good quality. These create a unique record of the young person's time living in the home.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.