

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	16/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC039897
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Dudley Metropolitan Borough Council, Council House, Mary Stevens Park, STOURBRIDGE, West Midlands, DY8 2AA

Responsible individual	Post vacant
Registered manager	Melanie Hollman-Dryden
Inspector	Andrew Hewston

Inspection date	16/09/2015
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	Requires improvement

SC039897

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people develop when they are at the home, specifically in their educational ability and their self-confidence. They enjoy being with staff, who provide positive role models and are enthusiastic in their role. Staff have high aspirations for the young people and inspire them to develop their educational abilities.
- Young people's contact arrangements are strong and staff help to develop relationships with their families and significant adults.
- Young people's health is supported consistently through well-considered menus and the promotion of activities. Good links are in place with psychological services, who help young people on an individual basis and the staff team.
- Good safeguarding procedures mean young people feel safe in the home and with staff. Behaviour management systems are well understood and young people are keen to gain tokens and subsequently rewards.
- The staff team are well supported by a strong management team. Supervisions, appraisals and a good training routine help to develop both individual staff and the team.
- There are some areas for improvement. The home's responsible individual is in the process of change, although formal documentation to Ofsted is incomplete. Planning is not detailed enough to fully support the development of the young people. Staff do not consistently follow planned risk assessments at all times.

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
The registered person must give notice in writing to HMCI, as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so if there is any change in the identity of the responsible individual. (Regulation 49 (e)(iii))	30/10/2015
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular reference to placement planning, the responsible person must ensure that staff- (2)(b) (ix) make decisions about the day-to-day arrangements for each child, in accordance with the child's relevant plans.	30/10/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. This is with regard to staff adherence to activity risk assessments. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 39 paragraph 9.5)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is one of five local authority homes. It is registered for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and is situated within an urban area.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/08/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
11/10/2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people enjoy being at the home and develop in their abilities and self-esteem as they become settled. Admissions to the home are planned in the majority of cases, and where possible involve young people visiting the home and staff visiting them before they are admitted. Relationships between staff and young people are positive; young people know who they would talk to if they had concerns. Staff are positive role models and talk with enthusiasm and knowledge of the developments that young people have made. Staff consistently look to provide regular and varied activities for young people to enjoy. A young person was able to discuss three holidays he had enjoyed over the summer. This included an independent adventure holiday which had involved in-depth planning between the home and the organisation prior to his departure. This is a significant improvement in his abilities since his admission to the home. Young people have had sleepovers at their friends' houses. This has enabled them to have the same social experiences as others of their age. Staff make early plans about young people's contact with their families and friends and consistently support these arrangements. They facilitate visits to the home, which are mainly planned around an activity, or having a meal. Staff ensure their presence is not intrusive or undermining. They regularly talk to parents, provide them with updates and routinely involve them in planning their child's care. Staff promote a healthy lifestyle and encourage young people to attend health appointments. Health interventions are good; staff offer significant support to young people that are worried about their health and are well trained about young people's specific needs prior to admission. Good arrangements are in place for staff and young people to receive guidance and support from psychological services. All young people have educational placements. Staff work well to ensure that regular communication is completed between the home and school. One teacher stated that: 'The home are very supportive, contact between me and the manager is daily, she is always available when I want to get in touch.' A young person attended school for additional support during the school holidays to develop their abilities. This encouragement of young people to achieve shows consistent high aspirations from the staff team. The home is a pleasant and homely place to live, with pictures of current and previous young people on the walls. Young people have an input into their own	

bedroom designs and decisions about furnishings within communal areas. This ensures that they take responsibility for their environment and reduces damage.

Young people's views are listened to within differing forums, including key-working and group meetings. They get good written feedback and staff talk about young people's views in their staff meetings. They are subsequently able to see what staff think and do about their views. They know how to raise concerns about their care and the staff team responds to complaints swiftly. One record of the investigation and outcome of a complaint was not in place, but added at the time of the inspection, showing the work completed at the time the concern was raised.

Young people are encouraged to develop their independent living skills. They each manage their own laundry, and keep their rooms clean and tidy. They are encouraged to prepare their own snacks and help with cooking and shopping. As a result, they are starting to develop the skills they will need to live independently in the future.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people are safe in the home and say they feel safe. Their strong relationships with staff further support their well-being and feelings of security. One young person stated that: 'they make sure I'm safe, they look after me and moan if I'm doing the wrong thing and make me think about my behaviour.' Risk assessments cover a range of areas that relate to their care. They show a decreasing level of risk as young people become more settled at the home. A good locality risk assessment raises staff's awareness of concerns that may affect young people in the vicinity well. Safeguarding concerns are responded to swiftly. Records show that the manager works well with child protection teams, completing actions set from meetings. Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding reporting safeguarding concerns and training is updated regularly to protect young people. Young people go missing from the home on occasions. Links between the home, police and the young runaways' team are strong and strategy meetings help to examine the causes of absence as well as developing strategies to decrease their incidence. Behaviour management systems are effective, with young people being able to discuss the tokens and how they are gained and spent. One said: 'you always get	

more when you first come, to encourage you to do well and enjoy the rewards.’ Sanctions reflect a restorative justice model and, consequently, young people reflect on their negative behaviour. Restraints are rare, with clear records of their use within incident reports and the home’s log. Good debriefs are completed with both staff and young people following such events to decrease the need for them to occur.

Staff recruitment is completed in line with regulations and available online and within the home’s files. Checks support the safety of young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
The home has a strong and experienced management team that lead the home well and strive to develop good practice. The registered manager has been in post for eleven years and has a registered manager’s award qualification. The home’s responsible individual is in the process of changing, although no formal notification has been received by Ofsted. The registered manager has a very good awareness of the young people in the home, and the abilities of the staff team. They complete monitoring of records and devolve additional responsibilities to the senior team. External monthly monitoring reports are good and give a strong indication of the way that the home is working. They are now sent to Ofsted regularly, so this meets the requirement relating to this area at the last inspection. The staff are responsive to the findings of these reports, showing a willingness to improve and develop. The development plan further highlights achievable outcomes for the staff team and the care of the young people. The registered manager challenges other professionals where necessary, including ensuring that appropriate young people are in placement and that staff receive necessary training. Staff did not sufficiently challenge the organiser of a recent holiday, where sleeping arrangements were different from the activity risk assessment. Although this did not raise any safeguarding concerns, arrangements were not in line with expectations. The home’s statement of purpose gives a good evaluation of the young people they are able to work with as well as those that they are not. The home works in line with this document. The registered person responded to an emergency placement, which took them over their registered numbers for less than 24 hours. Staff responded professionally and took appropriate action the next day to	

safeguard both the young people already in the home and the overnight admissions.

Placement planning is basic and does not consistently give a clear picture of the expected daily care of the young people. Poor placement documentation highlighted at the last inspection continues to need development. In practice, staff routinely monitor and discuss young people's needs, development and progress, through daily handovers and team meetings.

The manager monitors and develops staff performance. They receive purposeful appraisals, supervision and support. All staff have a relevant childcare qualification. The home has a detailed training plan, which the manager uses to ensure mandatory training is up to date.

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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