

SC040642

Registered provider: Surrey County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for up to seven young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The age range of young people in the home is 15 to 18 years. The main home has five rooms and an additional flat with two bedrooms which has its own separate access.

The home is owned and managed by the local authority. The home is located in an urban area, with easy access to community resources and provisions.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 December 2017

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 28 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Flexible and adaptive care planning has supported the young people to make progress.

- The young people benefit from trusting relationships with the staff, which are based on mutual respect.
- Detailed risk assessments that have been developed with the young people have enabled them to reduce their risk-taking behaviour.
- Education and employment is promoted for all of the young people by enthusiastic staff.
- Staff successfully encourage the young people to become more independent.
- Leaders and managers focus on supporting the young people to achieve positive outcomes.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The training matrix is incomplete and does not reliably monitor staff training.
- The workforce plan does not detail the induction or training for staff and does not detail any gaps in knowledge or plans to address them.
- The policy relating to self-harm and suicide does not reliably inform staff of the potential signs for these issues or provide a clear process to follow should they arise.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/07/2016	Full	Good
04/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/09/2015	Full	Good

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
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development. (Regulation 33 (4)(a))	30/03/2018

Recommendations

- The policy on protection of children from abuse and neglect should include arrangements in relation to dealing with allegations involving staff in the home, e-safety and to counter risks of self-harm and suicide. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.19) In particular, review and revise the policy where appropriate.
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20) The plan should:
 - detail the necessary management and staffing structure, (including any staff commissioned to provide health and education), the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the homes Statement of Purpose;
 - detail the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction, probation and any core training (such as safeguarding, health and safety and mandatory qualifications);
 - detail the process for managing and improving poor performance.

The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home's manager. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people enjoy and benefit from warm relationships with staff, which are developed through a foundation of mutual respect. The staff hold young people in mind, valuing their relationships. This allows the young people to test staff out, knowing that they will provide them with consistent care and positive regard. One young person said, 'They truly care for me. I know they aren't just doing their jobs, as they go the extra mile for us.'

Admissions to the home are carefully considered. Pre-admission impact risk assessments provide a clear analysis of the potential risks, and strategies to reduce them. The staff take time to get to know new young people. They gently encourage them to participate in the home's activities and encourage them to take part in the weekly house meetings. A good example of this is the staff taking the young people to play pool to encourage them to participate in the meeting.

Staff at this home are excellent advocates for the young people. They champion their causes and are tenacious in ensuring that the young people receive the services that they require. The staff communicate effectively with the young people's network, ensuring that the young people can regularly spend time with key figures in their lives. An example of this is one young person being supported to increase contact with his grandparent. This has been a key factor in a reduction of some risk-taking behaviour for this young person.

Education and employment are a focus for the young people living at this home. The highly motivated staff encourage the young people to work hard in education and employment. One young person is now cycling to school independently. Another recently succeeded in getting his first paid job. Staff have ensured that the young people have been given opportunities for support with employment and training following their formal education. The encouragement from staff has resulted in all of the young people being engaged in education, employment and training.

Aspirations for the young people at this home are high. The staff encourage them to engage in a range of fulfilling and enjoyable experiences. The young people have had the opportunity to take part in a range of holidays, both in the UK and abroad. This enables the young people to have positive experiences which enhance their sense of identity and achievement.

Identity is recognised and valued at this home. The staff are skilled in supporting the young people to explore their individual identity. They have good knowledge of local resources that the young people can use if they choose to. The staff nurture the young

people, enabling them to develop their identity supported by adults who accept and respect their individual choices.

There have been times when staff have needed to support the young people in improving their relationships with each other. The staff have managed this sensitively, supporting them to work through their differences. One young person said, 'The staff are good at helping you; they really supported me when I needed them to.'

Plans for the young people leaving the home are carefully made. One young person was able to stay longer to enable a smooth move to her new home. Many of the young people who have lived at the home maintain regular contact with the staff. This is indicative of the positive relationships they have enjoyed, and ensures that they can continue to have support from key adults on their journey to adulthood.

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

The young people are involved in developing their own plans. An example of this is when one young person did not feel that a 'safety plan' was keeping her safe. She was able to negotiate, with staff, strategies that she felt would be more beneficial to her. This joined-up approach enabled the young person to have some control over her plans, which resulted in a reduction to her risk-taking behaviours.

Staff go to great lengths to keep the young people safe. Risk assessments are 'live' working plans that are regularly updated and adapted to the young people's changing needs. They provide staff with reliable information regarding individual risks, and clear strategies to reduce them. If young people do go missing, staff search the local area to locate the young people. They engage with them to try to agree their safe return. As a result of this, some young people have reduced this behaviour.

Inter-agency working is good. The staff are in regular communication with the young people's networks, including police, social workers and education teams. Staff advocate for the young people and ensure that other services are held accountable for their part of the care that the young people receive.

The staff focus on engaging the young people in developing plans that meet their individual needs. They are resilient in working with complex behaviours and have managed to work through extremely challenging times with the young people. As a result of this, two of the young people have re-engaged with staff and are now both focusing on achieving positive outcomes.

The home experienced a difficult dynamic when the behaviour of young people increased risks to the others. Leaders and managers made the difficult decision to move one young person on. In response, they dedicated more resources to the home to regain stability and refocus the young people in positive activities. As a result of this, the young people were able to positively engage with staff, and the home became settled. This investment in the home is indicative of the manager's passion to create stability for the young people.

The physical environment of the home is good. Recent decoration of the lounge and dining room ensures that the young people have comfortable areas to relax in. Health and safety checks, including the routine servicing of equipment, are all up to date.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been back in full-time post at the home since March 2017. She is suitably experienced and qualified. Her return to the service full time has met a previous recommendation that she be visible and accessible to staff. She has also ensured that supervision training has been provided to relevant staff and that supervision is regularly recorded and monitored. This meets the requirements made at the interim inspection in March 2017. However, a recommendation that the policy related to the risk of self-harm and suicide was revised has not been met. This is repeated.

Staffing has been difficult at times. Long-serving staff have moved on, while others have been off work on a long-term basis. A bank of staff who are known to the young people has been utilised to cover shortfalls. Recruitment has not been successful. The workforce plan does not reflect these difficulties or include a review of the recruitment shortfalls or gaps in skills. As a result of this, the shortfalls in experience and knowledge of the workforce are not sufficiently assessed.

Training for staff is provided by a combination of e-learning and direct courses. The registered manager provides workshops in addition to this, to complement the staff's learning. However, the training matrix is not up to date and could not be relied on to evidence that staff's mandatory training has been completed in time.

The registered manager has developed an efficient format for the care planning and risk assessment records for the young people. This live working document ensures that the progress and monitoring of care plans is frequent and effective. The internal monitoring provides information that, together with the independent reviews, the registered manager uses to drive improvements to the service.

Referrals to the home are scrutinised by leaders and managers. This enables them to assess the suitability of potential placements. When information provided falls short, leaders and managers are confident in addressing this with the placing social workers. Communication between the staff and other agencies is good. A social worker agreed and said, 'I feel we work well as a team for the young people.'

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: SC040642

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Quadrant Court, 35 Guildford Road, Woking GU22 7QQ

Responsible individual: Ian Forbes

Registered manager: Navjyot Dhanoa

Inspector

Sarah Olliver, social care inspector

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