

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	16/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC044224
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Progress Care and Education Limited
Registered provider address	5th Floor, 80 Hammersmith Road, London W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Katherine Bridon
Registered manager	Lisa Garrett
Inspector	Pam Nuckley

Inspection date	16/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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

SC044224

Summary of findings

The children's home's provision is good because:

- Young people have limited communication skills and understanding but the staff team understands each young person's unique way of communicating. One young person is using a pictorial communication system to express his emotions.
- All the young people have made small but measurable progress at this home. A professional said, 'His progress may be small but in real terms this is massive for him.'
- Young people receive a high level of supervision that keeps them safe in the home and out in the community. They have warm, trusting relationships with staff, which further protect them.
- Developing young people's personal and social skills is a key strength of the home. As a result, young people are learning to wash and dress themselves and they now spend time in the local community.
- Young people are much more able to manage their own feelings and anxieties. As a result, they can indicate when they are distressed rather than hitting out.
- All young people are treated with the utmost dignity and respect. They are very clearly seen as individuals with their own interests and needs. For example, intimate care is done as sensitively as possible.
- Young people are cared for by a compassionate and committed group of staff who want them to achieve their personal goals. Effective partnership working with parents, carers and the placing authorities ensures consistency of care.
- The manager is continuing to improve the home. There have been a lot of changes and developments, but she has ensured that this has not had a negative impact on the young people. Some shortfalls were identified in members of staff's knowledge in safeguarding, evidencing progress of young people, identifying risk in the community, having written contact arrangements in place and members of staff using overall statements within documents. These shortfalls have not had an impact on the good care given and the progress that young people make.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard the registered person must ensure: (1)(a) that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. This is specifically in relation to showing their progress within their records and any action staff need to take to secure positive outcomes.	31/01/2017
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure: (2)(a) that staff: (iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm; (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person; (e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.	31/01/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The location review should include the identification of any risks and

opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

This is specifically in relation to ensuring that these risks are considered when accepting referrals to the home.

- Both the arrangements for contact and any contact details must be included in the placement plan agreed between the registered person and the child's placing authority and updated regularly. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.15)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children who have learning disabilities. All the children attend the company school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/10/2015	Full	Requires improvement
05/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/11/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
This home specifically looks after young people who have autistic spectrum disorder and associated learning difficulties. A social worker said, 'These young people are at the high end of the spectrum. Therefore, they function at a very early age. This home is excellent at doing things at their pace and having good outcomes.' She continued to say, 'I have placed young people here before and would recommended it to anybody.' A parent said, 'We are very happy with the care he receives. He has a great experienced staff team around him which understands his complex needs and wants.' Young people settle well into this home because their introductions and moves are planned well. One parent visited the home and liked it so much that she waited 16 months for a bed to become available for her son. In the meantime, members of staff visited the young person in his home, in his current placement and in school. This meant that the young person was familiar with the staff team and the home understood his needs well. As part of this process, a compatibility assessment is completed. This ensures that the staff team can care for each young person safely and give them individual time. The outcome of these good arrangements means that young people settle quickly and well. Young people make small but measurable progress because they live in a stable, nurturing and supportive environment. However, this is not always demonstrated in their main records. For example, the home has lots of information around young people's education, such as school reports, achievements and other documents that have not been drawn into their main education plan. This does not give a clear picture of the improvements that they have made. Young people are cared for on a two-to-one basis. This means that they have a high level of support and have quality time with members of staff. The staff team makes good use of pictorial cards to help young people in their routines. Therefore, they know when it is time to get ready for school or to go to bed. A parent said, 'He is now able to communicate what he wants and this has lessened his anxieties.' All the young people attend the company school and have 98% or above attendance. Members of staff support them in school and school reports show that they are progressing well. For example, one young person can now sit for a period of time, make sounds with musical instruments and is learning to travel using public transport. One young person has some speech and the staff team spends time reading stories with him to improve his vocabulary. This shows that young people are developing in line with their needs.	

Young people's health needs are robustly and closely monitored. Most of the young people are prescribed controlled medications. The home has a clear and robust system for recording, administering and disposing of medication. For example, two staff sign to say that the medication has been given. Members of staff are able to do this because they have received good training in the storing and administration of medication. One young person is waiting for an immunisation and the home is working closely with a health professional to see how this can be achieved. Some young people require assistance with their personal hygiene and have toileting programmes to help them to become more independent. Members of staff are acutely aware of the privacy and sensitivity that this requires. As a result, some young people have made some progress in this area.

Young people have a range of activities that they like to do. They visit soft play areas, go swimming and visit parks and beaches. They also like to play with sensory toys or items, such as feathers, or do arts and crafts within the home. The staff team ensures that they do not experience any barriers in being able to participate in activities within the home or community. This includes planning activities well in advance and identifying any perceived issues or risks for young people and eradicating or reducing these. A social worker said, 'At his last placement he was doing repetitive things. At this home they try new things with him. I find this really refreshing and this expands his experiences.' The home is rightly proud of how they capture young people's achievements. Each young person has a book of photographs that shows them enjoying activities and celebrating important dates in the year. For example, eating kangaroo burgers on Australian night. They have had themed nights around Halloween and the Chinese New Year and have made masks to celebrate these occasions. These photographs will help them to understand their time at this home.

Developing young people's independence and life skills is a good strength of the home. Staff work tirelessly to support young people in developing skills for life, such as preparing meals. As a result, some young people are now able to prepare simple meals, snacks and drinks with minimal support from staff. Other young people are able to go shopping and to select items of their choosing. Another young person has learned how to use a knife and fork. This has enabled him to go out and have meals in restaurants and cafes.

Young people are able to maintain and keep in contact with people who are important to them. One young person sees his sisters and brothers monthly. This takes a lot of planning as all of the siblings are with different carers. However, they all enjoy going out on an activity together and they have recently celebrated the young person's birthday at the home. Other young people's contact has varied because of the wishes of their parents. Some visits have been reduced and then built up again. However, young people's care plans do not explicitly record what the arrangements are. For example, they do not record the dates, times and who is taking or collecting them. This does not help staff who are unfamiliar with their

routine to know what is expected of them.

All the young people have difficulty in processing sensory information. For example, loud noises, smells and bright colours can be upsetting for them. When all of the young people came to the home their bedrooms were a blank canvas, with no additional furniture, pictures, toys or soft furnishings in their rooms. The staff team has worked extremely hard in introducing these items for their pleasure. One young person now has wallpaper with cars on and his toys in his room. Another has a television and another has sensory lights and soft furnishings. This means that they can spend quiet time in their room and their rooms reflect their personality.

Transitions for young people into adult services start at an early age. A new transitional social worker said, 'This is because specialised services are hard to find and because we have a good 18 months to plan and prepare we can look at different options.' She continued to say, 'The home has provided me with an excellent report of his needs and we are all working together to find the right placement.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are protected as staff have a very good understanding of their individual needs and vulnerabilities. They are fully safeguarded because they have a high level of supervision in and out of the home. Positive relationships with social workers, parents and health and education professionals mean that staff are fully aware of any issues which may have an impact upon young people's safety or well-being. In contrast to this, several members of staff were unable to tell the inspector confidently what action they would take if they came across a potential safeguarding concern, such as removing an adult away from a potential safeguarding situation. This does not ensure that all members of staff have a secure understanding of the home's safeguarding and child protection procedures. All the young people at this home have difficulty in processing information and in expressing themselves. The home has been successful in reducing one young person's anxieties. The home is using a pictorial board game and flash cards for him to express himself. They changed the moving pieces in the board game to cars, as this represents his interests. The young person is now able to show a card that represents his emotions and put this with simple words. For example, he said, 'Go away... (manager's name), I am angry', while showing her an angry faced picture card. In addition to this, the home has devised 'social story reference'	

books for the young people. For example, one young person has anxieties when travelling in a car. The book has a picture of a car, of him putting a seat belt on and a map of their journey. This helps the young person to know what to do and where he is going. These significant achievements have reduced levels of anxiety, physical assaults and self-injurious behaviours.

Young people learn to modify or improve their behaviour to an acceptable level, through simple reward schemes. One young person receives a smiley face for every hour that he behaves well. When he hits his target he receives a pound. He works hard to accomplish this, as he enjoys spending his money on new toy cars. The home is also intuitive in understanding when a young person's behaviour has changed. For example, one young person was showing signs of being distressed more than normal. His parents had reduced his contact with them as they were finding it difficult to manage his behaviour. The home worked closely with his parents and he is now seeing them regularly. As a result, his anxieties have reduced.

Young people do not go missing from care as they are supervised effectively at all times. Comprehensive procedures are in place if a young person goes missing, and these are clearly understood by staff.

Positive behaviour is promoted consistently and effectively. This is because members of staff understand each young person's specific behaviours and their potential triggers. They are vigilant and respond quickly and efficiently to the young people's ever changing needs. Staff address difficult or challenging situations effectively, which avoids the behaviour escalating. They use distraction techniques effectively and use constant phrases to reassure young people. When young people are held for their own or others' safety this is done in line with informed training techniques. The recording of any incidents is usually completed well, but on occasions members of staff have used overall statements, such as was 'self-injuring' rather than explaining the behaviour. Therefore, the severity of the behaviour is not clear in indicating why the intervention was needed.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and there is a clear audit trail of the checks carried out on staff to ensure that they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people. Young people's safety and well-being is enhanced as all visitors to the home are well supervised by staff.

The manager has recently secured agreement to extend the back of the property. This will give a bigger bedroom for a fourth young person and additional space for young people to live in. The architect's plans have been submitted and approved and the work will start in 2017. All appliances and utilities are checked and maintained, as and when required. Each young person has an evacuation plan of support, in case of an emergency. This helps staff to know what support they need to evacuate the building safely. However, the home's location risk assessment does not discuss the immediate risks in the locality. The home is on a busy main road.

The report says that there are gates on the property that are closed at all times and that young people are taken out of the back entrance, but on the day of the inspection there were no gates on the front of the property. Further to this, the home has not sought soft intelligence from the police to assess risks from the public or places of risk in the area. This does not fully ensure that young people live in a safe environment.

In general, the young people live in a home that is well maintained, furnished and decorated. However, the staff toilet and washing facility was found to be unhygienic. Although, this is not specifically covered by regulation, it is an area of concern. The manager rectified the issue on the day of inspection.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager was registered with Ofsted in October 2015. She has been in place for just over a year and has brought good leadership and direction to the staff team. Members of staff, parents and professionals spoken to as part of this inspection were very complimentary about her. A parent said, 'The management team is expertly led by the manager. She is open, honest and always welcoming. Great communication and she is always available if we have a problem.' The manager has a recognised management qualification and numerous years of experience in caring for young people. A social worker said, 'Her knowledge and professionalism is outstanding.' Another said, 'She is a beacon for other services to follow.' This home has recently been taken over by another social care provider. There have been no changes to the good care that young people receive because of this. However, the manager and staff are slowly introducing and getting to know the new paperwork and systems that this new company has. The manager is supported by an enthusiastic deputy and staff team. Members of staff have the young people's wishes and individual needs at the heart of everything they do. This is echoed by social workers and parents who said they would strongly recommend the home to other parents. Staff are well supported by the leadership team and have equal access to a range of training opportunities. Most staff are qualified in caring for young people. Other staff are at different stages of completing a similar award. This means that young people are cared for by a well-trained staff team. Members of staff regularly have their performance and their individual development	

needs identified, through professional supervision. This means that they have the opportunity to reflect upon their practice and consider further ways of enhancing their performance or career. Members of staff also have regular team meetings. The manager ensures that any new changes are thoroughly discussed, such as a change in a young person's medication. The staff have the opportunity to discuss any actions that have been raised within the regulation 44 report. As a result, any action can be addressed quickly. Members of staff say that staff meetings also help them to learn and gain additional knowledge. For example, they recently had a quiz on the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. Therefore, they are much clearer of what to record and what their roles and responsibilities are in each area.

The home's statement of purpose is regularly updated. This provides parents, carers and placing authorities with an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of the care and support provided to their children. The home's development plan is currently under review to reflect the change of provider and the alterations to the home.

The manager reports all notifiable incidents correctly and without delay. She ensures that all suitable action is taken to ensure that young people are fully safeguarded. For example, one young person returned from contact in a lethargic way. They noticed that there was less medication in the bottle than there should have been. The home sought medical advice and discussed it with his social worker and parent. As a result, the pharmacy now provides separate bottles of medication for home contact.

The quality of care provided in the home is robustly monitored by an independent visitor and by the manager. Staff are able to discuss, reflect and make changes when any shortfall is identified. The manager has recently challenged the company as there have been four new visitors within the last four months. She said that although this gives a wide range of views about the home, it does not give her and the staff, but more importantly the young people, consistency.

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 children looked after 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

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