

Children's homes – interim inspection

Inspection date	02/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC047978
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Blue Mountain Homes Ltd
Registered provider address	Flat 17, Leeland Mansions, Leeland Road, London W13 9HE

Responsible individual	Pradeep Manaktala
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford

Inspection date	02/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. The home continues to provide good quality care to young people. The previous registered manager has left since the last inspection and there is a new acting manager in post. This means that there has been a period of transition and change. In addition, there have been three new admissions to the home recently. The new acting manager has been working at the home for eight weeks. She is experienced and has good insight into the complex needs of young people. She has brought in some new ideas, and has spent time with the relatively new staff team to scrutinise practice and further improve the quality of care. Staff report that her ideas have been well received and that they feel confident in her approach. One member of staff reported a 'good feeling' about the home. The new manager's developments include: ■ Better care planning, including a 'front sheet' that has been added to care plans so that essential information can be seen at a glance. ■ New risk assessments, which include very clear and useful information about triggers for particular behaviours, such as self-harm and going missing. ■ Improved information for young people about advocacy and about how they can raise concerns. The requirement from the last inspection about agency staff recruitment has been removed. The home has not used agency staff for a number of months and does not plan to do so in the future. There has been a positive response to the three recommendations made at the last inspection. The environment has significantly improved. Each room has been redecorated and there are new carpets, curtains and soft furnishings. The more pleasant environment will ensure that young people can feel proud of their home. A recommendation about induction and training of agency staff has been removed because agency staff are no longer used. One recommendation is repeated. This relates to the clarity of care plans. One care plan was found to contradict a risk	

assessment in relation to how staff should supervise and monitor a young person during periods of self-harm. This has not had an impact on young people, because staff are clear about what should happen. There is recent evidence that the young person has been well supervised and monitored during a period of high-risk behaviour. This recommendation is repeated to ensure that young people are not adversely affected in the future.

Young people's experiences are good. Many have experienced a reduction in incidents and are more settled in their behaviour. Joint working with other professionals is good. There is a network of other professionals close at hand, should young people need extra support. These professionals assist young people with the difficulties they face so that young people consistently get the help they need.

There is a focus on ensuring that delays in identifying educational placements for new admissions are kept to a minimum. One social worker told the inspector: 'I am happy with education, they have escalated issues to the virtual school'. Not all young people attend school or engage effectively with education. However, the creative approach from staff ensures that young people are as engaged as they can be. It is acknowledged that some young people will struggle to get back into school because of their risk-taking behaviour and that, for some, educational progress is highly likely to be slow. Time is taken to think creatively about the best educational approach for young people. Young people who are more difficult to engage have their education highly tailored towards their individual needs. Although there is good educational planning in place, some staff do not understand young people's educational history. This limits their ability to build on previously successful strategies and means that planning is not fully informed.

Bank staff and staff from other homes are now used as an alternative to agency staff. This means that they know young people better. They are already very familiar with company procedures when they work at the home, for example safeguarding and behaviour management procedures. Staff from other homes always read young people's information prior to working with them. However, their induction is not documented. The acting manager is not clear about what should be included in their induction and cannot monitor whether this has taken place effectively. This has not adversely affected young people, but has the potential to do so if not addressed.

Young people are only admitted to the home if the acting manager feels that the placement is appropriate and that other young people will not be adversely affected. One social worker said that one young person's recent admission had been, 'well managed'. They commented that the young person had been very positive and complimentary about this. Equally, when young people move out, they are well prepared and supported by staff. The home also offers support after the move. The support is then gradually reduced as the young person settles in. Young people are able, when appropriate, to keep in touch with staff after they have left and important ties are not broken too quickly. This helps young people to be

successful in their new lives when they leave care.

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and cares for young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/11/2016	Full	Good
22/01/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/07/2015	Full	Requires improvement
07/01/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that a child's care plan forms the basis of their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.1.) This is in relation to the care planning process, which is not always clear on how young people's needs should be met.
- Ensure that the workforce plan details the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction, probation, core training and supervision of their practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8.) This is in particular relation to staff induction for staff working at the home from other homes in the company.
- Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and next steps for learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.11)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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