

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC047978
Inspector	Amanda Ellis
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Blue Mountain Homes Ltd
Registered person address	17 Leeland Mansions Leeland Road London W13 9HB
Responsible individual	Pradeep Kumar Manaktala
Registered manager	Margaret Jacqueline Smith
Date of last inspection	08/10/2013

Inspection date	12/06/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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
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Full report

Information about this children's home

The home, owned by a company, provides care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is also a school on site where young people can access education if this is appropriate to their needs. The home is set within a 14-acre site which contains a small working farm, also owned by the company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/10/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
14/05/2013	Full	adequate
28/01/2013	Interim	good progress
29/08/2012	Full	good

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
4 (2001)	ensure a copy of the Statement of Purpose is provided to Ofsted which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1 (Regulation 4 (1)&(2))	18/07/2014
31 (2001)	ensure suitable washing, kitchen and laundry facilities for use by staff and, where appropriate, children accommodated in the home are available, specifically in ensuring a kitchen environment which reflects a domestic setting (Regulation 31 (3))	18/07/2014

31 (2001)	ensure the children's home is suitably furnished to meet the needs of the children accommodated and achieve the aims and objectives set out in the statement of purpose, with specific reference to the provision of appropriate seating furniture (Regulation 31 (4)(a)&(b))	18/07/2014
34 (2001)	ensure the registered person establishes and maintains a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at appropriate intervals and for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. This system shall provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulations 34 (1)(a)&(b), 34 (3))	18/07/2014

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people thrive and develop whilst living in this home. They recognise the improvements they have made in their own behaviour. One young person stated 'I have achieved things I did not imagine could be possible'. Young people are nurtured and treated with respect. This helps them develop a strong sense of self-worth. Consequently they build the emotional resilience necessary for healthy psychological well-being.

Young people enjoy good health and receive appropriate routine and specialist health care to meet their identified health needs. They are encouraged to eat healthy diets and take part in physical activities. Some young people potentially compromise their health through activities such as smoking, alcohol use and self-harm. In such circumstances they are supported to learn about the associated risks. Consequently they are able to develop an understanding of issues that will help them to a healthier life in the future.

Some young people are achieving good attendance and attainments in their education given their starting points. One young person has recently been accepted for a course at college. All young people are engaged in education provision. This promotes young people's confidence and encourages them to achieve their educational potential.

Young people benefit from the promotion of contact arrangements with their parents, family and friends. One young person has been supported to maintain contact with family who live a long way from the home. Following visits where they have been accompanied and supported by staff, they are now able to spend time alone with their family. Staff work hard to establish good relationships with parents and this has enabled young people to enjoy better contact. Young people are encouraged to make and sustain appropriate friendships with their peers and enjoy overnight stays with their friends.

Young people participate in an independence programme to learn practical skills such as shopping and cooking, budgeting and washing. As a result, young people develop appropriate self-care and independence skills in readiness for moving placements and eventually leaving care.

Quality of care **good**

Young people benefit from positive relationships with the staff team. They say they feel very well cared for and looked after. Where young people express concerns or preferences relating to staff these are listened to and acted upon. One example is young people influencing the choice of new staff members. They are now involved in the recruitment of new staff. This means staff and young people work together to provide a positive and supportive environment.

Young people are aware of the complaints procedure and are encouraged to raise any concerns. Complaints are well recorded and responded to in a timely manner. This means young people feel listened to and are aware their concerns are taken seriously.

Young people receive individualised care, based on their identified needs including those relating to culture, religion, language and ethnicity. Comprehensive care planning identifies areas for development, which is inclusive of young people's individual needs, skills and abilities. Staff work consistently to address these individual needs and promote young people's emotional and physical well-being.

Young people benefit from robust health care provision, which meets their holistic health needs. Staff work with a wide range of professionals to meet the specific needs of young people, including input and support from specialist mental health professionals locally. One professional commented: 'This home is really good. Probably one of the best I have worked with and I have worked with many.' As a result, the physical, emotional and psychological health of young people is promoted.

Young people of school age benefit from support to take an active part in education. They attend the provider's own on-site school or attend other educational provision. Young people who are beyond compulsory school age receive encouragement and support to attend college and undertake part-time employment. Consequently, young people live in an environment where education is seen as paramount. This means they gain the knowledge and skills necessary to provide good opportunities in the future.

Staff support and encourage young people to engage in a wide range of leisure pursuits that are both enjoyable and stimulating. The home has a small farm where young people learn to care for animals. Some young people enjoy going to the cinema, eating out or simply spending time with their friends. This means young people benefit from exploring their potential and develop social skills through participating in a variety of enjoyable activities.

The accommodation provides space for privacy and communal activity. It is in a rural area within its own large grounds. Young people personalise their bedrooms and influence the decoration of the home.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

Young people confirm that they generally feel safe living in this home. Parents and professionals are confident that the service consistently safeguards and keeps their young people safe.

Young people have comprehensive individualised assessments of risk, which cover aspects of their potential behaviour, such as self-harm and going missing from care. Risk assessments are detailed and regularly reviewed. Consequently they are effective in enabling staff to identify potential risks and provide strategies to help to minimise these.

Self-injurious behaviours have been a dominant behaviour for some young people. The well-trained staff team have provided appropriate support to young people to help them manage their behaviours and reduce risks. Staff work proactively with specialist outside agencies such as the child and adolescent mental health service and have access to a therapist commissioned by the home. Consequently these behaviours have significantly reduced for individual young people. This means they have been able to return to their families and benefit from increased levels of independence.

Staff work hard to enable young people to moderate and improve their behaviour. Young people confirm that the use of sanctions is fair and they understand that the boundaries in place are there to ensure their safety. Young people are invited to sign all records relating to the use of disciplinary measures. This enables young people to comment on their care and helps them develop understanding towards and responsibility for their behaviours.

Physical intervention is used as a last resort and to safeguard young people. Staff are trained in the use of physical restraint and training is kept up to date. The manager ensures that young people are aware of their right to complain and receive any medical attention if required or requested. The manager monitors each incident, ensuring that the intervention is necessary, applied correctly and comprehensively recorded. Consequently young people are being safeguarded as practice is safe and under continuous scrutiny.

Incidents of young people going missing from care have significantly reduced over time and are now minimal. Positive relationships with the local police and the use of established protocols enable staff to safeguard young people who place themselves at risk when missing from care. Risk assessments are up to date and regularly reviewed. Young people are encouraged to discuss issues in relation to being absent and receive a positive response on their return. As a result, they benefit from assistance in gaining insight into their behaviours and the associated risks.

Where young people report incidents of bullying within the home staff are proactive to minimise such occurrences. High staff ratios ensure rigorous monitoring which

reduces the likelihood of bullying. The home provides an environment of care and support where bullying is not tolerated.

The organisation's effective recruitment procedures enable the careful selection and recruitment of staff. Robust recruitment processes and the recording and monitoring of visitors to the home further ensure the protection of young people from potential harm.

The home is safe and well maintained. The home has a programme of maintenance, which ensures timely repair and remedial work. Health and safety checks, including fire equipment and drills, are current and environmental risks assessments are in place. As a result, the building is safe, appropriately secure and young people are protected from harm.

Leadership and management

good

The manager became registered in this post in April 2008. She has a National Vocational Qualification at Level 4 in health and care with children and young people and Level 4 in leadership and management. These are suitable qualifications for the post of Registered Manager.

The home benefits from the leadership of a highly experienced Registered Manager. A knowledgeable and dedicated deputy manager supports the management of the home. All young people and staff speak with high regard about the management team. One young person said 'They are amazing; they will do anything for you!'

Young people benefit from a home that has improved standards since the last inspection. There was one requirement made at the last inspection. The provider has made improvements to the maintenance and decoration of the home, making the home look fresher. However further shortfalls have been identified with the standards of furniture in communal areas. This specifically relates to worn and damaged settees in all living rooms. Additionally, the kitchen does not sufficiently reflect a domestic or homely environment, being well worn and in need of refurbishment. Further requirements have been set because of this shortfall.

The recommendation to improve upon consultation with young people has been fully addressed. Young people feel they are able to express their views and feelings at any time in addition to attending regular young person's meetings. Some young people prefer this to a more formal meeting and enjoy one-to-one time with staff. The Registered Manager also meets individually with young people to discuss their views about their care. These combined consultation processes mean young people are actively involved in the running of the home and in their individual care.

The manager has demonstrated a commitment for continual improvement. Development plans for the forthcoming year are being updated and reflect proposals

to improve outcomes for young people. The manager understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home and takes action to tackle weakness and make improvements.

Staff benefit from good quality regular supervision. They say they feel supported by the manager. All staff receive annual appraisals. Regular team meetings are held to discuss good practice and raise any issues or concerns. This means staff are fully supported to meet the needs of the young people.

All staff undertake a structured training programme. Training is available on a wide range of topics that are relevant to the individual needs of young people. This means staff expand their knowledge, skills and competency, which in turn ensures young people's needs continue to be met.

Regular visits from the provider ensure that the quality of care is routinely monitored and evaluated. The Registered Manager undertakes regular internal quality assurance checks. These reports are supplied to Ofsted as required and demonstrate rigorous monitoring practice. However, they fail to identify how the quality of care will be improved in the home and do not include consultation with young people, parents and placing authorities.

The home has a Statement of Purpose and young person's guide. This ensures staff and young people are clear about the aims of the home and the service and facilities provided. However, the Statement of Purpose does not sufficiently reflect recent regulatory changes.

Records are clear, up-to-date and stored securely. All notifications are progressed as required and appropriate action is taken to follow procedures and protect young people.

The home demonstrates capacity for continuing improvement based on its record of accomplishment and performance since the last inspection.

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.