

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	12/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC051513
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Diane Beckitt
Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic

Inspection date	12/10/2016
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

SC051513

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are happy and settled. They make good progress from their starting points in all areas of their lives. This is because staff are committed to providing a very good standard of individualised care.
- Young people have excellent relationships with staff. They know that staff care about them and want the best for them. Their self-confidence and emotional resilience improve as a result.
- Staff are very good at enabling young people to change their unsafe and risk-taking behaviours. Young people become safer.
- Education, training and employment are top priorities. Staff work tenaciously to ensure that young people are able to reach their full potential.
- Young people receive good practical and emotional support in preparation for adulthood and independence.
- Staff are totally committed to working closely with a range of professionals to ensure that all young people's needs are addressed.
- Although the care is good, some aspects of leadership and management require improvement. Four requirements have been made regarding admissions procedures, care records, management monitoring systems and the home's statement of purpose. Three recommendations have been made about record keeping, return interviews and recruitment checks for agency staff.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/09/2015	Full	Good
12/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/07/2014	Full	Good

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

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Statutory requirements

Requirement	Due date
6. The quality and purpose of care standard. In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered person must ensure: (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (a) understand and apply the home's statement of purpose. This is with specific reference to adhering to the home's registration conditions.	12/11/2016
12. The protection of children standard. In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure: (2)(a) that staff— (i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. This is with specific reference to ensuring that all young people's care plans and risk assessments include details of all identified needs and risks, and the actions to take to meet their needs and minimise identified risks.	21/11/2016
13: The leadership and management standard. In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must: (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	21/11/2016
The registered person must notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement of purpose within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(b)).	21/11/2016

Recommendations

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

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30.)
- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that the recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1.) This is with specific reference to obtaining evidence that agency staff used have been subject to the relevant recruitment checks.
- 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.) This is with specific reference to ensuring that records of sanctions and complaints are fully completed and that they are signed and dated by managers.

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people make good progress because they receive very good support from a committed staff team that wants the best for them. Young people benefit from trusting and open relationships with staff and, because of this, they become more confident and emotionally resilient. A young person commented, 'Staff care and take notice of what I need.' Young people's physical and emotional health improves, which also means that their safety improves. Staff work closely with a range of professionals to ensure that young people can access support from appropriate health agencies. Young people also learn how to access health services independently. Young people do well in their education, training and employment. Staff give good practical and emotional support to each young person. This includes helping some young people to reintegrate into school or college. For example, staff discussed and produced a plan with a young person to visit his new college placement prior to the start of term. This included staff working closely with college staff. The plan included practical support with orientation around the college and transport arrangements. This individualised support has helped to reduce some of the young person's anxieties and helped him to settle into college life more easily. Staff are also good at helping young people to understand how to cope and succeed in the workplace. Young people are undoubtedly central to decision-making. Staff take young people's views and suggestions seriously and act on them. Staff always explain the reasons why a request has not been agreed, which helps young people to understand and learn from these situations. Staff actively support young people to become as independent as possible. Individualised risk management is key to young people acquiring a range of independence skills. Young people learn a range of practical skills such as cooking and cleaning, as well as becoming more emotionally resilient. Staff help young people to access opportunities that young people who are not in care often take for granted. For example, staff have supported a young person to purchase a motorcycle and take the motorcycle test. Transition planning is very good. Staff work very closely with parents and relevant professionals to give young people the best possible chance of a smooth and successful move. Plans are reviewed regularly to monitor progress and identify any barriers which may hinder the young person's transition. Young people are able to pursue their interests and hobbies, as well as having opportunities to try new activities. Staff ensure, as much as possible, that young	

people do not miss out on ordinary life experiences. For example, staff organised for all young people to go to their school prom. Young people were able to get dressed up and staff organised a limousine to take them to a restaurant for a meal. All young people and staff really enjoyed this experience together.

Young people live in an environment which is decorated and furnished to a very high standard. Their presence and personalities are evident throughout the home. Certificates of achievements and photographs are displayed with pride.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people's safety improves because staff support them to take controlled risks in a nurturing environment. With the help of staff, young people learn how to keep themselves safe and their risk-taking behaviours reduce significantly overtime. This means that they have more freedom and they acquire a range of independence skills. Young people told the inspector that they feel safe. One young person said that 'the good thing about moving here is I am staying out of trouble'. Young people have individual risk assessments but in some instances they lack detail. For example, a young person's risk assessment does not include the risk of the young person occasionally smoking in their bedroom. Although staff have an in-depth knowledge of young people's needs and risks, the omission of certain information has the potential to affect the delivery of safe care. Staff receive a range of training including safeguarding, managing young people's behaviour and managing self-harm. Staff fully understand their responsibilities in reporting any safeguarding concerns and notify relevant agencies, including Ofsted, when necessary. Staff are very skilled at managing young people's behaviours. Their approach is nurturing and based on the recognition and praise of young people's achievements. Staff successfully use de-escalation techniques, which means that restraint is very rarely necessary. Sanctions are rarely applied, but they are appropriate when used. However, records do not always have sufficient detail about when a sanction has been reviewed and lifted. Management monitoring systems have not identified this shortfall. Young people's safety improves because missing from home incidents reduce over time. Appropriate risk assessments are in place and staff are clear about actions to take in the event of a young person going missing. However, records of return interviews are not always kept and, in some cases, return interviews do not take place.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The registered manager has many years' experience of working with children and young people in a residential setting. She has relevant qualifications including a management qualification. However, the leadership and management of the home require improvement because management monitoring systems are not robust. Although these weaknesses have the potential to impact on the quality of care provided, there is no evidence that the shortfalls have negatively affected the experiences of young people. Since the last inspection, the registered provider made an inappropriate decision to admit a child to the home when it was already at full occupancy. This meant that the new admission stayed in the bedroom of another child who was on holiday. The on-call residential manager at the time raised significant concerns about this, but was directed to admit the child. Ofsted have since met with the senior managers of the local authority who gave reassurances that this will not happen again. Recruitment practices for permanent staff are generally good. However, the registered persons have not ensured that agency staff have had all the required recruitment checks. This means that managers cannot be assured that all staff are suitable to work with vulnerable young people. The registered manager started to address these shortfalls during this inspection. Shortfalls were identified in relation to the quality of record keeping. Although care plans are generally detailed, in one instance a young person's care plan lacked detail about prescribed medication. This means that the registered manager has not fully addressed the requirement made at the last inspection. In addition, records regarding young people going missing do not always include details of when the young person returned. Young people know how to complain. However, they rarely make a complaint because they feel able to resolve any concerns informally. Records of complaints demonstrate that the registered manager takes complaints seriously and deals with them promptly. However, some records lack detail about the outcome and feedback to the complainant and are not always signed and dated by the registered manager. The home has a detailed statement of purpose that informs young people and key stakeholders about the services provided. It is updated when necessary but the registered manager does not always send an amended copy to Ofsted as required. All staff have the level 3 qualification in working with children and young people. They work enthusiastically and tenaciously to give the best possible care and opportunities to young people. They told the inspector that they work very well as a team and feel valued and supported by the management team. They receive regular supervision that they find useful.	

Staff are committed to close partnership working which they see as essential to ensuring that young people receive the care and support that they need. Feedback from professionals confirms that staff work well with them and keep them updated about the care and well-being of each young person.

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 that 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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

© Crown copyright 2016