

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	21/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC052744
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Quality Protects Children Ltd
Registered person address	Quality Protects Children, Pacific Chambers, 11 - 13 Victoria Street, Liverpool, L2 5QQ

Responsible individual	Mr Anthony Nolan
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Janine Shortman-Thomas

Inspection date	21/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC052744

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is requires improvement because:

- Staff and young people are not supported or managed by a suitably qualified manager. As such one young person has been placed at risk of harm and staff have not been provided with consistency and continuity to ensure the service continues to develop and improve.
- Present recruitment processes for staff are not robust and checks identified within regulation are not systematically undertaken. As a result young people's safety and well-being is being compromised.
- Young people are not fully protected from harm as staff and managers do not understand their safeguarding responsibilities and follow safeguarding policies and procedures when allegations are made against members of staff.
- Notifications of significant events, such as allegations against staff members or significant incidents are not shared with all agencies, such as the placing local authority, Local Area Designated Officer or Ofsted within the prescribed timeframes.
- Young people's confidentiality is not fully maintained as information pertinent to them is distributed via non secure web addresses and taken out during social activities.
- Professional supervision for clinical staff that are identified within the home's Statement of Purpose as employees of the company do not receive appropriate related supervision. As a result staff are not fully supported to reflect upon their practice to ensure continued professional development.

The children's home strengths

- The organisation responded promptly to the safeguarding issues raised within the inspection. Arrangements have been identified to ensure young people's safety and well-being is promoted.
- The selection and matching processes in place for admission ensure young people benefit from successful and planned transitions into the home.
- Young people have been supported to re-engage with an education provision suitable for their needs. They achieve high attendance rates and are making some progress from their individual starting points.
- Young people are supported and enabled to enjoy a wide range of social activities and have been given the opportunity to engage in activities that they have not previously experienced.
- Effective partnership working with parents ensures contact with significant family members is actively promoted and facilitated for all young people.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
28: Fitness of manager. The registered provider must appoint a suitability experienced manager ensuring that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to that person in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 28(1)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	28/08/2015
32: Fitness of workers. The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety, specifically ensuring that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to all staff members in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(d))	28/08/2015
33: Employment of staff. The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice related supervision by a person with appropriate experience, specifically in regards to clinical psychologist whom are identified as employed by the organisation. (Regulation 33(4)(b))	28/08/2015
34: Policies for the protection of children. The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect. This must set out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. Specifically ensuring that these procedures are followed fully in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect being made, with all agencies being notified without delay. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b)(2)(b))	28/08/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure the registered provider has a system in place so that all serious events are notified within 24 hours, to the appropriate people such as the placing local authority and Local Area Designated Officer. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 63, paragraph 14.13)
- ensure that all staff are familiar with information sharing requirements relating to children they care for and adhere to these, in particular regard to the storing of confidential information whilst out of the home and distribution of young people's information via non secure internet connections. (The Guide to Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.7)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This service provides residential accommodation for up to five young people with a learning disability. The home is owned by a private company who enlist the support of a clinical psychologist to support them with their care practice.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/07/2014	Full	Good
06/06/2014	Full	Inadequate
29/01/2014	Interim	Good Progress
27/06/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	requires improvement
The relationships between young people and staff are mixed. Some young people are beginning to develop supportive, and trusting relationships with the core staff team, with one young person reporting, 'I love it here, the staff are great.' However other young people have yet to build positive and nurturing relationships and do not feel fully supported and completely protected by the whole staff team. For example one young person has expressed their concerns regarding comments made to them from one member of staff. While the manager initially listened to the young person's concerns and removed the identified staff member. The manager later allowed the staff member back into the home for a short period of time, without a robust investigation taking place, or any consideration being given as to how this would impact on the young person's emotional well-being. As a result one young person's anxiety levels increased and their emotional well-being was comprised. Young people benefit from smooth and successful transitions in to the home. Detailed assessments and transition planning ensures young people feel informed and prepared for their move. They are supported to gain some insight into the management of the home, the staff, and the other young people living there before they move in. This is achieved by sharing pertinent information with them prior to their move. Young people also benefit from introductory visits to the home and have enjoyed joining activities with other young people within the home to ensure positive relationships can be nurtured at the point of admission. Young peoples' assessments identify their strengths, needs and vulnerabilities. Adequate partnership working with child adolescent mental health services, behaviour support services, parents, young people and social workers ensures any emerging needs are appropriately addressed by the required agency. This has enabled young people to re-engage with education and access the health and well-being input they require. Young people are supported to develop and review their care plans and are involved in the decisions that affect the day to day running of the home. Staff seek young peoples' wishes and views through one to one informal discussion, individual key work sessions and weekly meetings, as well as a number of formal	

consultation feedback systems which have recently been introduced. In the event young people do not feel listened to they are aware of their rights to contact outside services for support. Young people are assisted to access independent advocacy services and one young person has successfully used advocacy to support a request to maintain their current placement within the home. Some young people comment that staff listen to them and try where possible to implement any requests, explaining the reasons why in the event these cannot be granted. One young person stated the home now had a rabbit following their request, and understood why they were not permitted to go to a sauna as they were too young. As a result young people are involved and empowered to make decisions that affect their lives and feel valued and respected as individuals.

Young people make good progress with regard to their education. Proactive relationships with education providers have ensured young people who have not previously accessed education are now accessing a suitable education provision. All young people who attend school have high attendance rates and are making some progress from their individual starting points.

Positive working relationships with health professionals and an active and varied activity schedule. Such as hill walking, going to the gym and swimming, and a healthy and well balanced diet ensure young people benefit from good physical health. Through regular monitoring of young people's health, managers, parents and staff identify when young people require additional support and access this from a range of services. General medical practitioners, nurses for looked after children and dieticians have been sourced and contacted to support one young person in particular. This co-ordinated response and support has assisted one young person to make improved health and activity choices. This has assisted them to manage their weight more effectively and enjoy improved physical health.

Staff support young people to increase their independent living skills in line with their age, ability and level of understanding. Young people are equipped with the basic skills they require such as cleaning their rooms, keeping the home tidy, budgeting and preparing simple snacks. This supports young people to develop their skills in a safe and supported environment in preparation for semi-independent living and adulthood.

A particular strength of the staff team is in developing and maintaining positive working relationships with young people's family members. Staff work hard to ensure family members are kept informed of their children's developments and achievements, with one parent commenting, 'They keep us informed of everything and always ask for our advice. It's a fantastic place. We are glad we found it.' These positive working relationships ensure that positive and regular family contact

is maintained and actively promoted and facilitated for all young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Young people are not fully protected from harm as the manager and staff do not understand their safeguarding responsibilities nor follow safeguarding policies and procedures when allegations are made against members of staff. An allegation made by one young person and witnessed by three staff members was not reported to the manager until the following morning. The manager concluded a fact finding investigation independently without advising the social worker or the safeguarding manager for the company, and did not involve the Local Authority Designated Officer until four days later. In addition the manager allowed the member of staff to return to work whereby a further incident occurred between the young person and member of staff. The actions of the manager placed the young person at further risk of harm. The organisation responded promptly to the safeguarding issues raised within the inspection. Adequate interim management arrangements have been identified to ensure young people's safety and well-being is promoted. Young people's confidentiality is not fully maintained. Records within the home are stored securely and only shared with those who have permission to view the information. However staff are permitted to leave the home with young people's daily files and medication sheets with no facility to store this information securely while they are out. In addition detailed and sensitive information pertinent to one young person has been distributed via a non-secure web address. This practice compromises young people's rights to confidentiality and safety. Young people's behaviour is being managed adequately. Systems are in place to encourage positive behaviour and this is reinforced by a positive behaviour system which has been recently introduced. For example young people achieve tokens for undertaking tasks within the home such as engaging positively with staff and other young people. This preferred behaviour is rewarded with tokens which are then exchanged for money. One professional is unclear how effective this will be for a young person in the longer term, but staff and young people are confident this is improving behaviour for others within the home. Physical intervention is used as a last resort by adequately trained staff when young people are not able to regulate their emotional responses. Debriefs following the incident with staff and young people enable the young person to reflect on their behaviour and identify other means of managing their emotions. It also	

affords staff the opportunity to evaluate their care practice to continue to develop their knowledge. Management oversight is undertaken within the required timeframes and care practice is amended to reflect the learning taken from this. For example, the manager's evaluation highlighted an increase in the use of physical restraint for one young person. A professionals meeting was subsequently convened and additional support secured from specialist services such as child and adolescent mental health teams, and positive behaviour management teams. This has led to a reduction in the use of physical intervention for one young person.

Incidents of missing from care are responded to adequately, with the number of incidents reducing significantly since the home varied its registration in February 2014. Staff are familiar with the protocols that are in place and the needs of individual young people. They implement the risk management plans, which are reviewed regularly and consistently. When young people go missing from home staff make attempts to contact and locate them, and inform parents and professionals, keeping them all updated regularly. Staff ensure safe and well checks have been undertaken on the young person's return to the home to ensure all pertinent information can be obtained to inform future care practice and reduce further incidents occurring.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
Following the last full inspection of this home, the organisation has undertaken some major changes. A review of the service by the organisation has resulted in its registration criteria and subsequent conditions of registration being changed. The service now provides care and accommodation for young people with a learning disability and the home's Statement of Purpose has been amended to reflect this. During this change period the home has also experienced more instability as there have been two further managers in post since the Registered Manager left in May 2015. The current manager, who was suspended following the inspection, has made their application to Ofsted to become the Registered Manager. Present recruitment processes for staff are not robust; with required checks not being systematically undertaken. The manager was appointed without any application or interview process, and she and some staff have commenced employment without the organisation systematically undertaking satisfactory disclosure and barring checks, or obtaining references and verifying these when they have been undertaken. As a result young people's safety and well-being is being compromised.	

At present there is not a robust system in place to ensure the details of any significant event or incident are passed on to the relevant agency. For example allegations against staff members or significant incidents involving young people are not shared with all agencies, such as the placing local authority, Local Authority Designated Officer or Ofsted within the prescribed timeframes. As a consequence cohesive and transparent investigations are compromised and young people's welfare and safety is not supported.

There are sufficient staffing levels in the home to ensure staff can provide the level of services and support as identified within the Statement of Purpose. A number of new staff have joined the team and bring with them a range of new and different skills. There are arrangements in place to ensure the staff who do not hold the required relevant qualification to undertake this to further support them in their work with young people.

During the inspection young people were seen to be happy in the home and had lots of conversation and interaction with staff. Staff talk positively about working at the home and said they feel supported to deliver a suitable standard of care by the management team. Regular team meetings, monthly supervision and relevant training ensure staff are mostly kept up to date with young people's changing needs. This helps young people consistently receive the level of support relevant to their individual needs.

Professionals are complimentary about the services the company provide and feel the input from a new clinical psychologist is of benefit to the home and ultimately the young people. The clinical psychologist is motivated to improve the lives of young people by being integral to care planning practice. She speaks highly of the staff team and organisation and is eager to begin her work. While she undertakes peer supervision as part of her additional duties outside of the company, she has yet to be provided with clinical supervision for this specific area of her work. As a result she is not fully supported to reflect upon her current practice to ensure continued professional development in this specific area.

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 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
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