

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	27/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC053145
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Partners in Care
Registered provider address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS5 3BT

Responsible individual	Sonia Bennett
Registered manager	Violet Dennison
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	27/09/2016
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	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC053145

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people's progress is far beyond expected levels in a number of different areas. Staff are committed to progressing young people and are tenacious and imaginative about ways of doing so.
- Challenging behaviours are dealt with in a calm, consistent and predictable manner, which results in young people having a clear understanding of boundaries. Their behaviour improves over time.
- There is a strong ethos of multi-agency working and the home draws upon the resources of a wide range of different agencies in order to ensure all-round support is provided to a high level for young people.
- When young people's placing authorities are not providing them with a good service, the home advocates tirelessly on their behalf to ensure that they get a better service.
- When education is not in place for young people, staff at the home work hard to help identify appropriate provision. Attendance at education is a particular area where young people have excelled from their starting points.
- Young people's risks dramatically reduce from their point of placement. Risk assessment and management are clear strengths of the home. Staff go beyond expected levels to ensure young people's safety.
- The home looks and feels like a family home. It provides a lovely, warm and comfortable environment where the young people clearly feel at ease and are confident in their surroundings.
- Contact with young people's friends and family is well supported and can progress to longer periods including overnights for some young people as they learn to regulate their behaviour and improve their understanding of risk.
- The staff team feels well supported. The staff team is offered good opportunities for development and progression, although some members of staff have not achieved their level 3 diploma in residential childcare within the specified time period.

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
32: Fitness of workers The registered person may only employ an individual if the individual who works in the home in a care role has, by the relevant date, attained the level 3 diploma for residential childcare. (Regulation 32 (4)(a), (5)(a) and (b))	27/01/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Everyone working at the home must understand their roles and responsibilities and what they are authorised to decide on their own initiative. There should be clear lines of accountability. Each home must have clear arrangements in place to maintain effective management when the manager is absent, off duty or on leave. This specifically relates to ensuring that all staff implement the visitor policy for all visitors to the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. This relates specifically to ensuring that all staff receive supervision at the frequency stated by the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately run home is registered to accommodate three children or young people. It is registered to provide care for children or young people who may have behavioural or emotional difficulties. Placements may be short-, medium- or long-term.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/09/2015	Full	Good
11/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/11/2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Young people at this home have complex and challenging individual needs. The staff team shows great skill and tenacity in promoting and sustaining young people's progression, with examples of highly creative and innovative approaches to meeting young people's needs and ensuring the best possible outcomes for them. The progress that young people make has a highly positive impact on their future life chances. Young people living at this home benefit from a staff team that knows them exceptionally well and can plan their care around their highly specific individual needs. The level of detailed knowledge about each young person enables staff to be alert to the subtle nuances in behaviour and respond to those with practiced ease and familiarity. This ensures a high level of success in intervening in escalating situations and getting the best out of the young people. The relationships between staff and young people are extremely positive, and observations evidence a high level of humour and warmth. When young people show controlling and manipulative behaviours towards certain staff, or favouritism, this is understood and the staff team works as a whole to make sure that none are undermined. Staff go beyond expected levels to develop and maintain positive relationships with young people where they feel that this would benefit a young person. Young people make exceptional progress in many areas. All young people are in education. Young people who have been out of education for significant periods are settled and achieving in education and making good progress. Other young people have school placements identified through the relentless efforts of staff at the home. One young person who was out of education for a long period is now attending full-time college. Staff have also worked tirelessly to secure education, health and care plans for two of the young people to evidence the support that they need in each area and to ensure that their care package is coordinated. A young person who was chaotic on arrival has now settled and has managed to successfully attend a ten-day cadet camp over the summer holidays. Other young people are involved a variety of activities such as youth clubs and work experience. This provides them with opportunities to develop social networks and gain vital life experience. Another young person has successfully completed the Prince's Trust course and received numerous awards and certificates for this. Young people are healthy. They follow a healthy diet and are encouraged to be active. Some staff have interests in outdoor activities and encourage young people to become involved and participate. Young people benefit from research-based practice in relation to promoting positive mental health and well-being. The	

company clinical psychologist provides advice to staff and some staff themselves research methods of supporting young people. An example of this is the use of 'Healing Hands' which uses sensory materials to help emotional regulation. Further staff research has enabled a specific bereavement counselling service to be identified for a young person.

Staff have undertaken extensive research to develop and assess young people's independence skills and have produced their own resources to implement this. One young person is approaching a point of transition and very detailed work is in place to support her to acquire skills to prepare her to live more independently. Young people are routinely involved in learning skills to prepare themselves for adult life and are given incremental responsibilities to develop these skills. One young person has made great progress in maintaining cleanliness and tidiness in her bedroom.

A great deal of effort goes into ensuring that young people's wishes and feelings are gathered and listened to. Key worker sessions are of a very high standard and day-to-day positive interactions allow young people to express their views. Young people feel that they can talk to and trust staff and feel that they will be listened to and their wishes acted upon (where this is appropriate). Young people are supported to work towards their goals and have belief that they can be achieved.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Risk assessment and management are key strengths of this home. Young people report feeling safe and understand the actions staff take to ensure their safety, even when they do not like the adopted measures (for example checks on their social media). There are clear and consistent boundaries in place which are regularly reviewed and discussed at staff meetings. Staff are alert to the impact of consequences and regularly consider their effectiveness and make changes to improve the outcomes for young people. Incidents of going missing from the home have reduced significantly since the last interim inspection. In the context of one young person struggling to manage increasing independence and preparing to move on, and another young person struggling with coming to terms with his long-term plan, this is a significant achievement. The home works positively with the local police in following protocols for missing from home incidents and the police report very highly of the home's efforts to locate young people and return them when missing. Independent return interviews take place and the home takes action to chase these up if necessary. All young people enjoy some free time and this is carefully risk assessed and is flexible to be extended or retracted dependent on their risks and behaviours. This allows young people the responsibility to keep themselves safe in their free time	

and show to staff that they are able to regulate themselves and manage their behaviours, which in turn leads to increasing privileges and freedoms.

For young people who frequently walk off-site to smoke or who damage property within the home there is a constant consideration of what rewards/sanctions and consequences work best. Some good results have been achieved with the young person helping to fix the damage that has been caused and make use of damaged items, for example constructing a bird table out of a damaged wardrobe. One young person has taken up climbing which is an example of a positive response by the home to a young person who persistently climbs out of windows and onto roofs. The constructive and at times imaginative ways identified of managing difficult behaviours enable young people to make highly positive progress in relation to their risks.

Restrictive physical intervention is used less frequently than previously. Records relating to physical intervention show the broad measures that staff use to de-escalate challenging behaviours before they resort to physical means. Staff do not criminalise young people for behaviours which could easily be referred to the police, but instead continue to try to work proactively to maintain boundaries through more positive means. This is of particular significance to the young people who have aspirations for careers in the armed forces where any criminal convictions could hinder their prospects.

Some young people were high-risk victims of child sexual exploitation at the point of placement. Not only have their risks dramatically reduced, they have now evidenced that they can recognise early warning signs and correctly share information and concerns with staff. One young person has achieved overnight contact in her home area which was previously not thought possible.

There are specific risk assessments in place and followed in practice for young people believed to be at risk of radicalisation.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home is led by a very experienced and suitably qualified registered manager with the support of a deputy manager and two and a half shift leaders. Each team has three team members and this ensures a high ratio of staff to young people, resulting in young people having a good level of one-to-one time and opportunities to do different activities. The staff team is well balanced, diverse and relatively stable. Staff skills are used to the home's advantage with some staff excelling in cooking and others in outdoor activities, which enhances the opportunities for young people's learning and experience. Staff undertake a wide range of training and there are opportunities for development through the introduction of a new personal development plan. Staff	

report high levels of satisfaction with the supportive ethos of the home's managers. Some staff supervision sessions have not been completed to the home's stated frequency and this has resulted in a recommendation. However, the staff report access to support and advice daily. In addition, one new staff member was not fully aware of the home's policy and procedure in relation to visitors to the home. A recommendation is made in respect of this. Gaps in staff training have led to a requirement, as not all staff have achieved their diploma level 3 in residential childcare within the time specified in regulation. There is no evidence that these shortfalls have had any negative impact on young people.

Young people make continuous progress from their starting points. There is a sharp focus on monitoring progress and new six-monthly progression reports are being developed which will help young people to see what they have achieved. Young people's needs are clearly prioritised by managers and this is communicated effectively to the staff team.

Managers have a very good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses, and areas highlighted in this report for improvement or development had already been identified by managers at the time of the inspection. This evidences that robust internal monitoring systems are in place. External monitoring is also of a high quality and the home values the views of the independent visitor and feels that they are helpful in driving improvement in the home. There is a development plan in place which is relevant and further evidences that managers have a good understanding of the home's areas for improvement.

The home has developed good links with the other agencies involved in the young people's lives and communicates effectively with a range of professionals about the care of young people. When other agencies are not providing a good service to young people the home makes effective and persistent challenges on their behalf and has been very successful in this area to date (an example being ensuring an appropriate educational provision was identified for one young person who was being educated at home).

The statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and clearly sets out the ethos and objectives of the home.

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