

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	03/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC055153
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Thunderbolt Mobile Limited
Registered person address	158 Birkrig, SKELMERSDALE, Lancashire, WN8 9HP

Responsible individual	Michael Fletcher
Registered manager	Nichola Fairhurst
Inspector	Mark Kersh

Inspection date	03/08/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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	Good

SC055153

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Positive relationships exist in this service. Staff members understand young people's behaviours and work together to enable them to progress. Previous risk taking behaviour is significantly reduced
- From their starting point young people are valued, their health, education and psychological well-being is improved.
- Young people are fully engaged in daily life; they are listened to, trusted and given responsibility. This improves their confidence and self-esteem
- Young people live on a narrow boat or yacht. They travel around and enjoy new experiences and learn team work through planned activities
- Assessments identify young people's needs well. They are supported to plan for their future and be prepared for the next stage in their life
- Placement plans and risk assessments are detailed and assist staff to understand what young people need to meet targets
- Risks are significantly reduced as staff consistently follow strategies that keep young people safe
- Young people are safe and their views are taken into account when decisions are made. This allows them to take appropriate controlled risk
- There is clear oversight from managers in monitoring and analysing young people's progress
- The registered manager and deputy are supportive of staff. They feel well guided by them and staff are sufficient in number to meet the needs of young people
- Working in partnership is effective. The management team and staff work well with other professionals to support young people
- The service is meeting the aims and objectives described in the Statement of Purpose document. This has been revised and updated but has not been sent to Ofsted in line with regulations

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
16: Statement of purpose The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3) (a) (b))	07/09/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

- The service is registered to accommodate 3 young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties
- The service is privately owned
- The service provides alternative accommodation from one to 52 weeks, which incorporates activity based intervention work in order to offer an innovative programme for young people experiencing a period of difficulty or crisis. As written in the home's statement of purpose document
- Locations will vary, as young people will be quite literally 'mobile', using a variety of camping and bunk house facilities, caravans and cottages as well as our narrow boats and yacht as outlined in the home's statement of purpose document

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/02/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
13/10/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
21/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people form positive and constructive relationships with staff. They receive support from external agencies to help them understand and change some of their behaviours. Staff members know young people well and provide them with consistent messages and support; they spend time together on a daily basis. As a result, young people have a strong sense of belonging and trust which increases their confidence and self-esteem. Young people are part of this service; they are given responsibilities, and respond well to these. Their daily involvement includes checking safety features on-board, mapping routes and under supervision helm the narrow boat or yacht. Young people are capable in their role and have completed a competency crew course. This provides new experiences and they make progress from their starting point. Well organised routes ensure any medical needs are met by services in areas they travel to. These locations are known by staff members. Young people's health is assessed by a qualified nurse and they are registered with local services in the area they return to. Staff members are trained in first aid to attend to minor ailments, before seeking professional medical assistance. There are good arrangements with professional services for responding to young people's emotional or psychological needs. This ensures young people are supported to understand issues, respond to strategies and change their behaviour. As a result, progress is made. Staff members encourage young people to attend their on-board education provision and achieve in education. They have consistently managed 100% attendance and positively engaged. Significant progress has been made considering their previous education experiences. Work experience and additional certificated courses have increased their knowledge and is preparing them well for the future. The organisation has a registered school should young people feel they can manage a classroom environment. For those who choose this, travel routes along the canal network are kept local and they are transported to and from school. Young people are consulted about all aspects of the care provided. A young person confirms this and says, 'I feel very involved, they (staff) listen and help me, and I never want to leave here.' Regular meetings between staff and young people ensure views are sought, agreements made and plans put into practice. Young people are delegated authority in daily key tasks and feel very much a part of the	

team. A staff member says, 'we all play a part and are important as each other. The boats cannot operate without everyone's involvement.'

Positive feedback is given by young people's social workers with one saying, 'Staff have been brilliant and provided a very caring and nurturing environment with consistent and firm boundaries in place ensuring this young person's safety and well-being.' Another says, 'We were struggling to find a suitable placement for this young man, due to his extreme difficulties at that time and were concerned regarding the disruption to his life. The support in putting together the package was fantastic and provided the young person with the break he needed.'

Arrangements are in place should young people raise a concern or a complaint about their care. One complaint has been made since the last inspection. This is clearly recorded and the young person confirmed they were kept informed and is satisfied with the outcome. This shows young people are listened to and their concerns are taken seriously. Information is available to them prior to and after they move to this service.

This service is activity based and young people contribute to their individual activity planners. These include educational visits as well as interest and hobbies they enjoy. Recent trips include sailing to Belfast and visiting the museum, a trip to Holy Island, looking at a sacred site and surfing in Newport. Activities and education are combined well and young people benefit from team work and learn when trying new experiences.

Some young people live considerable distances from their family and friends, and travelling around increases this. There are agreed arrangements for young people to maintain these relationships and include overnight stays. Transport is not an issue and staff members have access to fleet cars. This ensures young people keep in touch with those who are significant in their lives.

As space is limited on-board not all young people will adapt to this service and careful planning with placing authorities and a commitment from young people is needed in order for them to benefit from the experiences. Space and privacy can be compromised.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people say they are safe and feel safe. Each young person has detailed written risk assessments in place. Where risks are assessed as high arrangements	

are in place and agreed with professional agencies. This ensures strategies are in place to manage risk safely and protect young people. Staff members demonstrate a good understanding of young people's risk; they know and follow the strategies in line with agreed plans.

There are no safeguarding issues at present and all staff members are trained to recognise and respond to suspicions of abuse. Risks are detailed around health and safety when on-board and cover the surrounding areas, such as, canal locks and tow paths. As a result, young people fully understand the dangers of living and travelling around waterways, and this keeps them safe.

Previous risk taking behaviour is significantly reduced. Young people are not associating with others who have negatively influenced them. They do not engage in drug, alcohol or substance mis-use and any links with previous gangs or groups are broken. This provides an opportunity to reflect and change their behaviours. Rural locations support this change and contribute to placement success. Young people who have moved on from this service have changed their ways and moved positively to other placements, for example, foster care, their family or independent living.

Missing or absence incidents are rare due to the different locations young people travel to. When travelling to and at destinations they are occupied in various on-board activities and outdoor pursuits. Being occupied reduces the need to be absent or missing.

Young people sign up to on-board rules and this has a positive impact on their behaviour. Restraint never happens as limited space would make this not safe to do so. All staff members are trained in de-escalation techniques and have meaningful relationships with young people. Reflective conversations enable staff and young people to quickly identify and address any issues as they arise. They respond well to incentives set by staff and agreed by them. Rewards for positive behaviour feature far more than sanctions imposed for inappropriate behaviour.

There is careful selection and robust recruitment practices that protect young people from being harmed by unsuitable people. All required boat certificates covering health and safety are in place and regular daily checks ensure any issues identified can be resolved promptly.

Since the last inspection the narrow boat has had new carpets fitted, old cupboards have been replaced with new ones and a new bathroom facility installed. There is a log burning fire and full heating system and fixtures and fittings are no different to those found in a family home. The manager and a young person confirm the yacht is in sound condition. This provision has not been seen at this inspection as it is moored up in Scotland.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The service has a registered manager who is experienced and enrolled on the level 5 Diploma. She is supported by an experienced deputy. Together they manage this service effectively and staff members are positive of the support they receive from them. Regular supervision enables managers and staff to discuss young people's needs and identify future training opportunities for themselves. Good systems are in place to measure young people's progress which are analysed by the registered manager. This system clearly shows the progress young people have made and sustained from the start of their placement. There is a detailed development plan in place. The registered manager is currently looking for suitable accommodation to increase the options as outlined in the Statement of Purpose document. For example, viewing suitable cottages to add to the narrow boat and yacht provisions. This will provide the service and young people with a wider choice of accommodation. The registered manager is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the service and has supporting documentation which shows progress and placement success. The service is fully staffed to meet the needs of young people. Recruitment and retention of staff is an area the registered manager is working on. As this is a mobile service some planned trips and activities are of long duration, and require long shifts to be worked. The registered manager and deputy cover for staff absences and holidays, reducing the need to use agency staff. Effective working practices are in place with external professionals and placing authorities. This ensures services are arranged to support young people and address their health and psychological needs. Professionals are positive about how the service keeps them informed and up to date with events. These arrangements benefit young people. Monitoring systems are robust and identify areas for improvement. The service is visited each month by an independent person who produces detailed reports that take in the views of young people, their parents and placing social workers. A prompt response by the registered manager actions any shortfalls identified in these reports. The registered manager has a system for monitoring and analysing the work of staff members. Together these systems improve the service and the care provided to young people. Young people's care plans and information kept about them is detailed and provides good evidence of their day-to-day experiences and progress made. Young	

people contribute to the information written about them and have access to their case files.

Young people are involved in many different community groups as they travel around. They are respected and feel part of the boating community. Young people engage in local youth groups, businesses and faith groups. This provides them with a sense of belonging and removes any stigmatising feelings they have about being in care.

The service is meeting its aims and objectives as described in the statement of purpose document. This has been updated since the last inspection. 'However', the document has not been forwarded to Ofsted as required by regulation. As a result, a requirement is made. This is to ensure the regulator has an overview of any changes to the services provided.

Collectively staff members say the training provided for them enables them to meet the needs of the young people and describe this as being well delivered and useful. Any risk activities young people and staff members undertake are done so only if professional qualified co-ordinators are present and leading the activity. Such activities can include canoeing, kayaking, climbing, and caving. Young people are supervised by staff when engaging in recreational activities.

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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