

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	23/02/17
Unique reference number	SC056259
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Pebbles Care Limited
Registered provider address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS5 3BT

Responsible individual	Amanda Quinn
Registered manager	Andrea McKeown
Inspector	Fiona Parker

Inspection date	23/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. Young people report that they feel safe and are settled in the home. They have good relationships with the staff team. A visiting social worker reported: 'X's relationships with the manager and staff team are good.' Young people continue to make steady and positive progress. For example, one young person has successfully returned to mainstream education, and another has secured an apprenticeship and is learning to drive. A social worker reports that the staff team: 'Do everything they can to support consistent school attendance.' Where young people take a step back with their individual progress, staff help them to reflect on their choices and to understand the risks they may be taking as a result of poor behaviour. In this respect, young people benefit from well-established key working sessions. These arrangements effectively help young people work through challenges and understand consequences. For example, an excellent and well-planned key work session for one young person clearly outlined the risks, dangers and the strategies unsafe adults may use on the internet to exploit young people. This key work session was well researched and was pitched at the right level for the young person, and measured their responses with regard to its impact. One young person has moved on from the home since the last inspection. The young person was prepared and supported in line with an individual plan that was agreed by all the professionals involved. The manager has maintained contact with the young person's new home to support a smooth transition. A member of staff is visiting the young person next week. This supports the young person in continuing to feel valued and cared for, even though they have now moved on to independence. One young person has moved into the home in an emergency since the last inspection. The home received sufficient information to fully consider how well they could care for the young person. An effective and timely planning meeting was held which fully consulted with the young person. Good partnership working enabled the young person to maintain their existing school place, affording them some continuity, structure and routine at this time. The home has responded quickly to safeguarding concerns and taken prompt and	

robust action where necessary. This includes liaising with other professionals and appropriately forwarding notifications as part of external scrutiny arrangements. Young people's individual risk assessments and care plans are promptly reviewed, agreed and updated to make sure risks are minimised and young people are protected.

Young people respond to boundaries and they do not go missing from the home. The number of physical interventions has significantly reduced since the last inspection. Staff fully explore the potential indicators of child sexual exploitation when young people are experiencing difficulties. Currently, young people are not considered at risk of exploitation. The staff team communicates effectively with other professionals, including children's individual reviewing officers. This ensures that there are agreed multi-agency strategies for keeping young people safe.

Staff members are positive about their role when working in the home and value the relationships they build with all young people. However, some minor terms used in day-to-day conversation in the home are not consistent with a family environment.

The proactive and dedicated manager maintains effective and consistent oversight of all aspects of children's care, progress and how well they are safeguarded. This is supported by strong external monitoring, which provides clear focus and scrutiny to safeguarding children and the effectiveness of the arrangements in the home.

The manager has further strengthened the arrangements for internal monitoring each month to support the six-monthly reviews, in addition to improving the review report. The most recent report includes further context and evaluation and is more explicit about the evidence for recording children's progress and the quality of the home.

Where necessary, the manager challenges local authorities. For example, a delay in allocating a social worker for one young person was resolved at the point a formal complaint was discussed. The manager, supported by the staff team, continues to review the progress of all young people, how well they provide care and how they can further improve the running of the home.

The manager has recently refreshed the home's development plan for 2017 and has plans for a number of improvements going forward. As an example, the manager has recently sought to improve the quality of staff handover arrangements with more written detail for each individual child. This is at an early stage, but demonstrates the persistent and focussed ongoing commitment to find creative ways to improve further.

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and managed by a private company. It offers care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/10/2015	Full	Good
05/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the home maintains, as far as possible, a domestic environment. In particular, the verbal terms used to reflect going out and returning to the home are consistent with a family environment and are not 'institutional'. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection, we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 that 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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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