

Inspection report for children's home

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|--------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC061439        |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Nicholas Murphy |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full            |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home |

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|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Registered person</b>         | Young Foundations Limited                                                          |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | Alexander House, Highfield Park Llandrynog<br>Denbigh Denbighshire, Wales LL16 4LU |
| <b>Responsible individual</b>    | Niall Stephen Kelly                                                                |
| <b>Registered manager</b>        | Darren Wheatley                                                                    |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b>   | 03/10/2013                                                                         |

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b> | 04/06/2014 |
|------------------------|------------|

|                                          |                                                                 |
|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------|
| Previous inspection                      | satisfactory progress                                           |
| Enforcement action since last inspection | there has been no enforcement action since the last inspection. |

|                                        |                 |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>This inspection</b>                 |                 |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>           | <b>adequate</b> |
| Outcomes for children and young people | adequate        |
| Quality of care                        | adequate        |
| Keeping children and young people safe | adequate        |
| Leadership and management              | adequate        |

## Overall effectiveness

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Judgement outcome | <b>adequate</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------|

The home provides a welcoming and supportive environment where young people enjoy good relationships with staff. One young person said, 'It's fab here.' Most young people make progress during their time here, although some outcomes, such as education, are no better than adequate. Staff are committed to promote the welfare and development of young people. However, liaison with other agencies is sometimes poor, resulting in the needs and rights of young people being insufficiently championed.

The home attaches importance to the views of young people and involves them as far as possible in everyday decisions. When a young person makes a complaint, it is handled with respect and sensitivity, almost always to the satisfaction of the young person.

Since the last inspection the home has accommodated some particularly challenging young people. As a result, relationships between young people have at times been volatile, with some bullying taking place. There has been a relatively high number of restraints, not always used in accordance with regulations. Nevertheless, the staff manage the safety of young people effectively, and as a result young people say that, in general, they feel safe.

There are a number of shortfalls in practice which have resulted in the making of six statutory requirements and two recommendations.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private company and provides care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties, or learning disabilities, or mental disorders. It is also registered as a school.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement  |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|
| 03/10/2013      | Interim         | satisfactory progress |
| 20/06/2013      | Full            | adequate              |
| 24/01/2013      | Interim         | good progress         |
| 10/10/2012      | Full            | good                  |

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

### 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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

| Reg.       | Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Due date   |
|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 17A (2001) | ensure that a measure of restraint may only be used on a child accommodated in a children's home for the purpose of preventing injury to any person (including the child who is being restrained) or preventing serious damage to the property of any person (Regulation 17A (a) and (b)) | 30/06/2014 |
| 17B (2001) | ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, discipline or restraint in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose, specifically that all required information is included (Regulation 17B(3)(a) to (i))                           | 30/06/2014 |

|              |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |            |
|--------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 23<br>(2001) | ensure that any activities in which children participate are so far as reasonably practical free from avoidable risk, specifically that risk assessments of activities outside the home are in place and readily accessible by staff (Regulation 23(b))                                                                                                                   | 30/06/2014 |
| 4 (2001)     | compile in relation to the children's home a written statement (referred to as 'the statement of purpose') which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1, specifically to include details of the qualifications and clinical supervision of the staff involved in providing therapy, and related information (Regulation 4(1) Schedule 1(19)) | 30/06/2014 |
| 33<br>(2001) | ensure that visits by the independent person shall take place at least once a month (Regulation 33(7))                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | 30/06/2014 |
| 34<br>(2001) | establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home, specifically to provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities. (Regulation 34(3))                                                                                                                             | 30/06/2014 |

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff engage and work with schools, colleges, other organisations and the placing local authority to support children's education including advocating to help overcome any problems the child may be experiencing in the educational setting. Staff have up-to-date information about each child's educational progress and school attendance record (NMS 8.7)
- ensure that written records kept by the home when a child goes missing detail action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away from the home, and any action taken in the light of those reasons. This information is shared with the responsible authority and where appropriate, their parents. (NMS 5.10)

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **adequate**

Young people are in good health. Those receiving specialist services, such as hydrotherapy, derive great benefit from them. Some young people have done well to overcome their fear of the dentist and other practitioners. This shows that young people have a good awareness of what they need to do to keep themselves healthy.

The majority of young people are not currently receiving full time education. All young people struggle with maintaining full or punctual attendance on their programmes. Although some have made limited progress in their behaviour within school, it is difficult to evidence overall whether young people's attainments have improved.

Young people generally take responsibility for keeping their own rooms tidy. It is evident that they have developed pride in their personal space. All young people contribute in some way to general household tasks. For example, one young person worked very hard recently in tidying up the garden. Young people are able to maintain contact with family members and friends. Some have developed the confidence to travel independently to visit relatives. They also feel comfortable with confiding with staff or people outside the home if they need to. One young person said, 'If I've got any problems I can talk to staff, or my social worker, or my advocate.' This is important in contributing to the safety of young people.

Young people enjoy some activities, such as baking and cooking meals, which will be useful as they make the transition to adulthood. Some are also developing important life skills, such as understanding money.

### Quality of care **adequate**

It is evident that young people get on well with staff. They enjoy their company and like to spend time in shared activity. At times, young people's behaviour can be boisterous and become negative when challenged. However, staff are patient and calm in using negotiation skills to de-escalate volatile behaviour.

Staff give young people every opportunity to express their views and take part in decision-making. This includes not only their own programmes of care but also the day-to-day routines within the home. Young people are encouraged to make choices about the home's décor and the furnishings they would like in their rooms. This gives young people a sense of ownership and strengthens their emotional investment in the home. One young person said, 'I've chosen some of the colours for the home, and I've been researching furniture and decorations for my room.' The complaints

procedure is transparent and young people are well aware of how to make a complaint. There have been a number of complaints, many in relation to the behaviour of other young people. Each complaint is thoroughly evaluated by the Registered Manager who gives a full written response to the young person. This gives young people confidence that their concerns will be listened to, even if the outcome is not what they desire.

Staff draw up care plans for each young person which take account of their individual needs and circumstances. They are kept up to date and shared with each young person. In addition, staff maintain a health care plan for each young person. This addresses all aspects of a young person's well-being. The registered provider has its own child psychologist. She offers direct work to young people as well as giving support to staff so that they can better understand the emotional basis of young people's behaviour. She also has strong links with local child and adolescent mental health services and other professionals such as occupational therapists. This kind of liaison is very helpful in improving the physical and emotional health of young people.

The home is also registered as a school, for young people unable to access mainstream education. At the time of the inspection the sole teacher had been absent for several weeks, so one young person was being educated by care staff. Staff encourage young people to attend school and promote the value of education. However, staff do not have up-to-date knowledge of young people's attendance levels or attainments. Although there is evidence of some good liaison with schools, in one example the home failed to challenge an education provider about the service offered to one young person. These shortcomings mean that young people do not always receive an appropriate quality of education, and staff cannot effectively support improvement.

The home provides a range of activities and, wherever possible, responds to young people's suggestions for new experiences. One young person has developed a strong interest in horse riding, and is demonstrating skill and confidence in this activity.

### **Keeping children and young people safe      adequate**

The home has developed good links with local agencies including police. The Registered Manager has regular meetings with community police officers, who also talk directly to young people about how to keep themselves safe. One young person has reported that this work has been very helpful in raising her awareness of risk and how to reduce it. As a result, young people in general say that they feel safe living here.

Most of the time, young people live together harmoniously. One young person said, 'I get on great with the other kids.' However, young people sometimes have volatile relationships with each other which can result in incidents which staff class as

bullying. However, any intimidation or threatening behaviour by young people towards others is promptly challenged by staff and usually resolved effectively. Young people themselves do not feel that bullying is an issue, rather, that sometimes the other young people 'get on their nerves'.

There have been a number of episodes since the last inspection where young people have gone missing. However, these have reduced lately. Unfortunately, staff have not recorded such incidents consistently and do not include all necessary details. Important information, such as the reasons given by the young person for running away, is sometimes absent. This means that it is more difficult to evaluate incidents and reduce their occurrence in the future.

Each young person has a behaviour management plan. This is individual to each young person, and identifies what might trigger challenging or risky behaviour and how best to manage it. Staff use very few sanctions, preferring instead to reward and encourage good behaviour. Nevertheless, the record of sanctions is not complete. It fails in all cases to include an evaluation of the effectiveness of the sanction and the person giving it does not always sign the record. Physical restraint has been used on a number of occasions. Some young people have been restrained to prevent them leaving the home. For one young person who has now been discharged, this was a strategy requested by the placing authority. The young person had run away from a number of prior placements and was placing herself at great risk. Their placement here was the longest they had maintained, which is to the home's credit. Nevertheless, the use of restraint in this way is an unlawful restriction of liberty. Moreover, the record of restraint does not meet requirements. Important information, such as the duration of the restraint, or confirmation that the staff involved have been debriefed, is not always recorded. This reduces the accountability of the record.

Staff prepare risk assessments on each young person, enabling staff to put strategies in place to keep young people safe. There are also good risk assessments in relation to the building, and any hazards are identified and controlled. However, at the time of the inspection the Registered Manager could not locate any risk assessments in relation to activities outside the home, such as horse riding. This means that staff may not be competent in applying safe practice when taking young people on activities, or be able to update information in the light of changing circumstances.

## **Leadership and management**

**adequate**

The Registered Manager has been registered since 2007. He is suitably qualified and experienced to carry out his role. At the last inspection five recommendations were made. Three of these have been addressed in full. The restraint record shows that young people are now routinely offered medical attention following an incident. Individual young people's risk assessments have been improved. And, the independent visitor now makes contact with young people's parents, ensuring that

their views can be taken into account. However, the Registered Manager has not addressed two of the recommendations in relation to internal monitoring and aspects of restraint recording. These have therefore been repeated as statutory requirements.

Despite these shortcomings in leadership and management, there is evidence of the home's capacity to improve. The registered provider is under new ownership, and a robust improvement action plan is in place. Identified tasks have already been carried out within planned timescales. For example, a new kitchen has been installed, and architects have been engaged to plan structural changes to the building. Young people have been consulted about these changes and are looking forward to the improvements.

The home's Statement of Purpose describes the aims and objectives of the home and the resources it provides. However, it has not been revised to take account of new regulations which came into force in April 2014. Specifically, it does not contain required information about the therapy provided by the provider's psychologist or that professional's qualifications and experience. These important details are therefore not available to parents or placing social workers when they are making decisions about placements.

Both external and internal monitoring of the home has weaknesses. The Registered Manager's own monitoring does not take account of the views of young people, parents or social workers. This is a failing identified at the last inspection, and means that the home loses the opportunity to make improvements in the light of feedback from users. Since the last inspection, there have been three months where the independent person has failed to visit. This lack of impartial scrutiny is a significant shortfall, also meaning that Ofsted has been unable to maintain consistent oversight of the home's performance.

Staffing levels are adequate to promote the welfare of young people and keep them safe. In addition, the Registered Manager has made adjustments to the rota in order to provide more intensive support to young people with particularly demanding needs.

Both the Registered Manager and registered provider are aware of their responsibilities in responding to child protection issues. A recent allegation against a member of staff was notified promptly in accordance with safeguarding protocols. The incident was managed very effectively in full liaison with the appropriate agencies. This gives confidence that the home acts immediately to protect children in the light of any concerns.

## What inspection judgements mean

| Judgement   | Description                                                                       |
|-------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outstanding | A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements. |
| Good        | A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.                      |
| Adequate    | A service that only meets minimum requirements.                                   |
| Inadequate  | A service that does not meet minimum requirements.                                |

## Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.