

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	28/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC061795
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Southern Adolescent Care Services Ltd
Registered provider address	Room 8, Worth Corner, Turners Hill Road, Pound Hill, Crawley, West Sussex RH10 7SL

Responsible individual	Sharon Webster
Registered manager	Sharon Jenner
Inspector	Ruth Coler

Inspection date	28/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Young people like living here and say that it is a good home where staff care for them well. They have good relationships with staff, which provide them with a secure base from which they can make progress. The group of young people living here is carefully matched. This is evident in the robust and comprehensive assessment of the compatibility of any young person to whom they are considering offering a placement. Consideration is given to how the placement of the young person would affect the young people already living here, as well as any potential reciprocal effect. One social worker considered that the home had really helped to settle a young person, his aggression had decreased and the number of times that he had been missing had reduced substantially. Young people's individual needs are carefully considered, monitored effectively and recorded in detail. The records provide a good picture of what has occurred and the action taken by staff. There are plenty of examples of how staff take every opportunity to support young people to understand their emotions and behaviours, develop knowledge of how past abuse continues to affect them and reflect on the life choices that they are making. This enables young people to understand themselves better, develop self-esteem and develop skills to build and maintain appropriate relationships with others. Managers ensure that staff pay sufficient attention to giving praise to young people for what they are doing well. Managers remind staff of the need to balance praise with sanctions, especially when a young person is not yet engaging with the work. This has resulted in some young people managing some difficult aspects of their behaviour better. Young people have a voice in the home and in their care and support. They have regular house meetings to discuss issues that arise as a result of group living, about their care and support and how the home should be run. Staff also support young people to raise concerns about other services that they receive through the right avenues.	

Planned improvements to the home will increase the space for young people and provide a separate room from the main areas of the premises. This is an important development as the current layout of the home provides limited space for private conversation or for young people to spend time away from the group.

Safeguarding is well managed and understood. Concerns are acted on very quickly and effectively. Young people are protected while living here by a team who put safeguarding as central to their practice. This helps young people to learn how to keep themselves safe and develop relationships based on trust. Staff's communication about concerns regarding young people's safety is well written and followed up with the relevant parties assiduously.

Staff have had to prioritise safeguarding in the last few months when some young people have increasingly put themselves at risk and tested boundaries that the staff set. Any safeguarding concerns are followed up and recorded comprehensively in chronological order, so that the story of the events and actions taken in response can be followed easily.

Behaviour management is consistent and kept under careful review. Where necessary, relevant documents are kept and updated. For example, risk assessments provide a clear view of when behaviours change and whether the risks have increased or decreased. The reasons for these changes and any additional actions required to mitigate a risk are well documented. This provides staff with clear and helpful guidance that reflects a young person's needs at any given point in time.

The number of times that young people have gone missing has increased significantly in the last two months. Immediate action has been taken to reduce these occurrences. The managers have reviewed the incidents to understand the causes for the change and taken action to minimise the likelihood of young people going missing. Instances when young people do go missing are managed effectively. Staff relationships with young people have allowed them to find out where young people go when they go missing, and who they might be with, so that they can quickly be found and returned.

Strong leadership and management mean that staff feel informed and supported in their roles. The recent changes to young people's behaviour have tested staff's abilities to work consistently with young people, but staff have continued to respond capably to the challenges that their behaviours have presented.

Managers have substantially improved the monitoring and evaluation systems so that these support the development of the services provided and ensure that young people's individual and collective needs are met effectively.

Relationships with other agencies are attended to with care. Managers deal with any issues that present barriers to these relationships to prevent them affecting young people's progress and safety. Both a social worker and missing person's

coordinator spoke very positively about their relations with the managers and staff at the home.

Information about this children's home

The home is one of three children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties on a planned or emergency basis.

The home is supported by an education team and qualified therapists. The therapists provide a range of services to young people as a group and, when needed, to individuals.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/10/2016	Full	Good
26/01/2016	Full	Good
14/07/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/01/2015	Full	Good

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 whom 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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