

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	4 July 2016
Unique reference number	SC061837
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Archways Care Limited
Registered provider address	Muras Baker Jones, Regent House, Bath Avenue, Wolverhampton WV1 4EG

Responsible individual	Christopher Aristidou
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Julia Wright

Inspection date	4 July 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	Ofsted issued a compliance notice on 9 May 2016 in relation to Regulation 46 – safe location risk assessment.
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

SC061837

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Since the last inspection, managers and staff have made considerable improvements to the running of the home.
- Young people are safe and feel safe at the home.
- Young people have positive relationships with staff. They feel supported, encouraged and valued.
- Staff support young people to develop independence skills and decision making commensurate with their age and stage of development.
- Staff encourage young people's involvement in their day-to-day care.
- Professionals comment favourably about the positive impact that living at the home has had on young people.
- Managers have improved quality assurance processes.
- Staff feel supported and valued by managers.

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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular reference to the kitchen area and rotting windows, the registered person must— (2)(c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— (i) meet the needs of each child.	30 September 2016
The registered person must ensure that an individual who works in a care home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained— (4)(a) the level 3 diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the level 3 diploma). The relevant date is— (5)(a) in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4)(a) (5)(a))	30 September 2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording, in particular, ensure that young people sign their key working records. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is one of three homes within a privately run organisation. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27 April 2016	Full	Inadequate
14 January 2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
9 June 2015	Full	Requires improvement
15 January 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people continue to make progress as a result of living at the home. They benefit from well-planned care that is closely monitored by managers. They feel positive about their lives. One young person said, 'It is brilliant here. All good. I am very happy.' Young people's experience of day-to-day life is good. One young person recently finished school, attended a school prom and won awards reflecting his positive contribution to school life. Given their ages, young people are adapting to managing increased independence and responsibility. They cooperate with staff about recreational time, agreeing return times and letting staff know where they are for safety reasons. Staff adopt a more flexible approach reflecting young people's cooperation. Young people develop age-appropriate skills, reflecting increased maturity. The quality of individualised care is good. The staff's approach to helping young people move towards independence has improved. Young people complete individual work with staff incorporating many areas, including cooking, budgeting, job hunting, managing routines, keeping themselves safe and positive relationships. They are encouraged to acquire practical life skills and benefit from personalised independent living plans supporting their transition to young adult life. There is a strong culture in the home that education and training is important. Expectations are realistic and staff understand the barriers facing many young people, but are not deterred in their determination to overcome them. When young people finish school, they are proactively supported to find training, apprenticeships, jobs or further education. If a job or apprenticeship is not to a young person's taste, other opportunities are swiftly identified and young people supported to embrace new openings. Young people maximise their life chances through work and educational opportunities. Young people enjoy good health and they have access to routine and more specialist health services. Young people are offered advice and support to stop smoking, and if drug use is an issue, appropriate support is in place to address this. Consequently, drug use has decreased, improving young people's safety and health. Young people eat healthily and contribute to the menu planning and cook healthy meals when they are completing independence tasks. Young people enjoy a wide variety of activities commensurate with their ages, including sport, seeing friends and other recreational activities. Friends are welcome to come to the home, promoting young people's sense of ownership, belonging to the home and having an ordinary fulfilling life.	

Young people play a full part in the life of the home. They attend regular young people's meetings, contribute their ideas and comments, participate in key work sessions with staff and talk to staff about any issues about the home knowing that staff are responsive and interested in their views. One young person assisted the manager with the completion of the home development plan. Young people are confident that adults value their views, increasing self-esteem and self-confidence.

Young people are provided with accommodation that is well furnished and equipped and offers a comfortable homely environment. Young people personalise their rooms to their taste. There are shortfalls relating to decoration in the kitchen and the condition of some windows. These areas need addressing to ensure that the home maintains its high standards.

Young people maintain contact with their families. Staff provide support with transportation and emotional support where necessary. This ensures that young people retain important relationships with family and loved ones.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Managers and staff have made considerable progress in ensuring young people's safety at the home. An independent inspection of the home's fire safety system in February 2016 identified deficiencies in the home's fire safety system. The majority of these have been addressed, improving safety for young people and staff. An outstanding matter is scheduled for completion. Staff have received additional fire safety training, meaning that they are knowledgeable about the fire risks present in the home, fire safety management, using firefighting equipment and improving their understanding of the home's fire evacuation plan. Young people were also involved in part of the fire safety training, enabling them to understand first-hand what fire safety means and their responsibilities as a resident of the home. Safety in the home is enhanced for all. Managers and staff are proactive and responsive to any concerns that they have about young people's safety. They ensure that appropriate steps are taken whenever young people's safety is compromised, including effective liaison with police and local authorities. Swift and considered responses mean that young people's safety is enhanced and risks reduced. Positive and nurturing relationships between young people and staff underpin the home's approach to behaviour management. Staff are motivated and committed and work together as a team, consistently reinforcing boundaries and promoting positive behaviour. There is a warm and friendly atmosphere in the home and few incidents of physical intervention. When young people challenge boundaries, for example in using drugs, staff implement appropriate incentives and actions. Consequently, incidents have significantly reduced, enhancing young people's	

socially acceptable and positive behaviour.

Managers and staff regularly review and update young people's individual risk assessments and review the home's risk assessments in response to new behaviour or actions and in line with the organisation's policy. The safe area risk assessment is updated and reflects known and potential risks for young people, staff and visitors in the rural environment. Staff have taken additional steps to reinforce safety for all young people by reviewing the young people's guide. The induction process for young people includes information about living on a farm site with the attendant risks, hence improving understanding and safety for all.

Since the last inspection, there has been only one incident of young people being absent from the home. Staff have a good understanding of the policy and actions to take if this happens. Good relationships between managers and staff and local police further reinforce young people's safety.

Safe recruitment practice protects young people living at the home from adults who may wish to harm them. Visitors are carefully checked and vetted, further promoting young people's safety in the home.

Managers and staff undertake regular health and safety checks in the home. These ensure that the equipment works well and poses no risks to young people and staff. All staff and young people are conversant with the fire drills and the need for full evacuations from the home from time to time to maintain vigilance and safety for all.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager post is vacant and the responsible individual continues to have overall managerial responsibility for the home until the vacancy is filled. The responsible individual has provided strong and effective leadership since the last inspection. His priority is the safety and well-being of all young people living at the home. He is supported by the home's senior team and staff, all of whom work together for the benefit of each young person. Staff comment favourably about recent changes in the home, 'Things are a lot better. There are real positives for the young people. A better atmosphere in the home has meant that young people look and feel a lot happier. Staff are pulling together and we can see the benefits.' Staff work well together as a team, offering young people a consistent approach contributing to their sense of emotional security. Staff are supported through regular supervision, training and appraisals, meaning that their performance is reviewed and shortfalls and achievements addressed. The home is achieving its aims and objectives as set out in the statement of	

purpose. The ethos of the home is child-focused and child-centred and staff work closely with each young person and involve them, wherever possible, in all aspects of the home's running and their care planning.

Not all staff have gained their level 3 diploma in caring for children and young people within the timescale specified by regulations. Some staff may have gaps in their knowledge and understanding of the needs of young people, necessary to ensure that their needs are comprehensively met. All staff who have not achieved the level 3 diploma will be starting their courses imminently. Additional staff training often relates to young people's specific needs, such as autism spectrum disorder or self-injury, equipping staff with essential information to meet young people's global needs.

Managers have a sound understanding of each young person's progress and areas for development. Staff dialogue with young people, team meetings, supervisions, key work sessions and daily discussions between staff ensure that young people's progress is maximised.

Managers and staff work well with a wide variety of professionals and family. A social worker commented, 'He has done really well at the home, and he acknowledges how much help he has received from the staff there. Staff are professional and efficient and they communicate well with me.'

Managers have improved their scrutiny of young people's records, including incident reports. Managers review these records and challenge staff if a response seems unfair or inappropriate. Young people are reassured that consistent and fair practice is in place. Further attention is necessary, for example in ensuring young people sign their key work documents. This acknowledges and underlines young people's contribution to their one-to-one session.

Managers work with the independent visitor and swiftly address any shortfalls or actions suggested in their reports. The independent visitor reports provide scrutiny of all aspects of the care offered to young people. In addition, managers prepare self-monitoring reports and submit these to Ofsted outlining patterns and trends and proposals to meet any deficits that they see in the running of the home. This ensures that the service continues to evolve and develop and meets the needs of young people living there.

Requirements made at the last full inspection in April 2016 and at the monitoring visit in May 2016 have been met. Independence work is undertaken with young people, team work has improved, staff understanding of the fire safety work is enhanced, the requirements of the fire safety order have been addressed or are scheduled for completion and staff all have regular supervision. This has improved the overall service offered to young people at 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'.

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