

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	09/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC061837
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Archways Care Ltd
Registered person address	Muras Baker Jones, Regent House, Bath Avenue, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV1 4EG

Responsible individual	Christopher Aristidou
Registered manager	Ainsphia Butler
Inspector	Andrew Hewston

Inspection date	09/06/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC061837

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is requires improvement because:

- Risk assessments for new admissions to the home do not examine the impact a new young person can have on the home and others.
- There is an absence of a safe area assessment regarding the home's locality.
- Behaviour management records are not monitored in a timely way, with records not being signed off until after work has been completed with the young people, rather than to examine the instances and safety of the young people.
- Young people do not have information available regarding how to make complaints.
- As young people reach a time to leave the home independence programmes lack structure and do not systematically support young people or link to additional courses being completed by young people.
- Records relating to training and staff appraisals are poor and do not support staff development.

The children's home strengths

- Staff have a high awareness of the differing needs of the young people and are responsive to these. Relationships between young people and staff are positive in the majority of cases.
- Care planning and review documentation is consistently child centred which promotes their awareness of their histories, their current care arrangements and the probable future moves following being at the home.
- Staff consistently listen to the views of the young people and respond to their views and wishes, and explanations are given when these are not able to be met

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
46: Review of premises The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard).(Regulation 46(1))	31/08/2015
32: Fitness of workers The registered person must ensure that where a person has previously worked in a position involving work with children or vulnerable adults, verification so far as reasonably practicable of the reason why the employment or position ended (Regulation 32(3)(d)(Schedule 2)(4))	31/07/2015
16: Statement of purpose The Registered person must compile in relation to the children's home statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in schedule 1 – 14. (a) details of the qualifications and professional supervision of the staff involved in providing any healthcare or therapy; and (b) information about how the effectiveness of any healthcare or therapy provided is measured, the evidence demonstrating its effectiveness and details of how the information or the evidence can be accessed (Regulation 16 (1)(Schedule 1)(14)(b))	31/07/2015

6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the care management standard the registered person must ensure that: children receive care from staff who— (b) (vi) help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult.	31/07/2015
35: Behaviour management policies and records Within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so, has signed the record to confirm it is accurate (Regulation 35(3)(b)(ii))	31/07/2015
7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard In order to meet the children's views wishes and feelings standard ensure that children receive care from staff who – (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to – (a) ensure that each child - (ii) has access to the home's children's guide, and the home's complaints procedure, when the child's placement in the home is agreed and throughout the child's stay in the home.	31/07/2015
33: Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that all employees- (a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development; (c) have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year (Regulation 33(4)(2)(a)(c))	31/07/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 35 paragraph 9.30)
- ensure the registered person only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 56 paragraph 11.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is one of four children's home 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
15/01/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/07/2014	CH - Full	Good
28/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	requires improvement
The home has experienced a recent change in paperwork along with a significant increase in situations where a young person is going missing, challenging staff and needing physical interventions. This situation has highlighted a number of errors with the recording of incidents and the need for staff to be aware of consistency with their response to incidents of young people. Young people are admitted on both a planned and emergency basis. In all cases there is an expectation that appropriate documentation is in place with the move. This helps to support both the young people and the staff during the admission process. A matching tool examines the presenting needs of both the current and proposed young people. This does not clearly show the possible effect that the new admission would have on the running of the home and the impact on the current residents. This hinders consideration prior to their admission to support a successful transition. Staff enable young people to develop a range of independence skills as they prepare to live on their own. Some excellent pieces of work are completed with young people, including fire safety awareness courses and the writing of CV's. The independence programme lacks structure in which young people's developmental skills can be formally captured. Relationships between young people and their families are supported through regular contact arrangements. These are well known by staff who ensure that young people maintain links with family members. Young people enjoy a range of activities both within the home and externally, helping them to learn new skills. School trips are also fully supported with one young person going skiing since the last inspection stating it was 'great fun.' Activities are used to promote a healthy lifestyle alongside a varied diet and initiatives that have helped to decrease young people smoking or drinking alcohol. Young people's health is supported through detailed planning, and an expectation that they attend regular appointments. Good links are in place with health professionals and their mental health is further supported through the availability of the organisations counsellor who also offers advice and development to the staff team.	

Staff are enthusiastic about young people achieving through education. Good links are in place with education providers locally, including schools, alternative provisions and work experiences. This has resulted in young people being proud of their development, both in their attendance and their achievements. One recent school report showed an attendance rate of 99% and consistent positive comments about their involvement in classes. This is a substantial improvement on when the young person came to the home. Those young people not able to attend external provisions are supported at the home with a dedicated education room. Young people have achieved Asdan awards in practical areas since the last inspection through the internal support given by staff.

The home is set within a rural environment, which has an impact on young people being able to travel to and from the home independently. Communal areas are well looked after by staff and the young people, with photos of activities and events. Young people discuss these and the memories that they raise, developing a link to positive aspects of their time at the home. There is an expectation that bedrooms are looked after and regular checks are completed to promote self-care skills. Due to the age of the building its' upkeep is ongoing, but staff ensure that it is a comfortable and homely.

Weekly young people's meetings, regular link worker meetings and daily discussions all help to ensure young people's views are listened to and acted up. During staff meetings the queries and views of the young people are discussed and responded to, either individually or on the home's notice board. Care planning and reports for reviews are child centred, showing an expectation that they are involved with their own future plans. This has led to young people attending reviews and having an increased role in the planning of their time at the home. Young people have developed an awareness of their backgrounds and identity through the writing of the planning documentation as well as increasing their awareness of their own behaviours and how to respond appropriately.

Young people enjoy being at the home and the majority are positive about the way that they are looked after. Relationships with young people are both professional and caring. Staff have a high awareness of the differing needs, likes and dislikes of the young people and work well together to respond to these. Subsequently, a young person stated that they feel that 'they try to make sure that we do well and develop while we are here, which is, I suppose, what it's all about.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Management plans are in place that help to promote good behaviours and decrease challenging or risk taking behaviours, such as going missing, damaging property or displaying poor behaviours in school. Some good restorative justice work has been carried out with young people following poor behaviours. Records of sanctions and restraints do not clearly show that they have been monitored by the management team shortly after the event, awaiting the completion of sanctions or discussions with young people prior to these being signed off. It is therefore difficult to gauge the management teams' awareness of current issues within the home. Health and safety checks are completed on a regular basis, including fire drills and alarm testing. Risk assessments relating to young people are completed on a regular basis and updated when incidents occur effecting their safety. A risk assessment of the home is in place but a locality risk assessment relating to issues within the local community is not available. Incidents of young people going missing from the home have until recently been very low. Good links are in place with the missing from care co-ordinator and meetings are held when incidents increase. This ensures effective responses are made where young people are assessed as being vulnerable and are frequently absent. No clear arrangements are in place to ensure that young people are able to be met with an independent person following each absence. This responsibility falls on the placing authority but is to be supported by the home and decreases the ability of young people to talk about issues relating to their absence. Recruitment processes are detailed and a range of checks are completed prior to staff working at the home to support the safety of young people. Where staff have previously worked with children or vulnerable adults, there is a lack of verification of why they left the position in all cases, this means that there is a gap in the rigour of checks and does not ensure that only suitable people work in the home. Young people state that they feel safe in the home and there are effective systems in place to support their safety. Staff are trained in child protection and aware of the necessary responses if they have any concerns about the welfare of young people including the contact details of the local safeguarding boards and the Designated Officer for the local area. No safeguarding incidents have occurred since the last inspection.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
The staff team is led by a Registered Manager that has been in post since November 2012. They have a range of experience within children's services and is currently completing her level five qualification in care management. The appraisal monitoring system is not up to date, giving an incorrect picture of the level of developmental support that staff have received. A good range of training courses are made available to staff and the majority of the staff team appear well trained in a differing areas of their role. However, records relating to training are confusing, with five staff not included within the main training monitoring matrix and information within individual staff files not up to date. The home's Statement of Purpose is in the process of being rewritten due to the changes in regulations and staff movement. The current Statement of Purpose gives a clear awareness of the role of the home and the way that young people are to be cared for. Additional information regarding the role of the therapist is not available. Young people have a guide to the home, with basic information regarding rules and how the staff will care for them. There is a lack of information about how to complain, with young people being directed within the guide, towards a notice board that has no information about complaints. This does not ensure that young people have, at all times, an awareness of how to raise concerns both internal and external to the home. The home is staffed to meet the needs of the young people. Where increases in staff are needed to respond to the young people these are put in place. The changes in staffing due to maternity leave have been well organised and young people have a consistent staff team to support them. The Registered Manager has a strong awareness of the young people, their needs, and which staff's skills are best able to meet them. Monitoring systems are in place and external visits help with the evaluation of the home, helping to meet the needs of the young people. Recommendations raised as part of these visits are responded to swiftly. A home's development plan is in place to support the further improvement of the home. The home has a good range of links with external parties that support young people and the staff team. The police, health services, education providers, social workers and counsellors all have an input into the care of the young people within meetings, reviews and sharing information with the staff team. The police stated	

that there was a good level of communication from the home and that it 'always starts with discussing the issues, possible actions and most effective way of dealing with that young person.'

The Registered Manager is aware of the notification process and these have been sent to necessary parties when needed. This ensures that all those working with young people have an awareness of significant issues that have occurred.

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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