

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	27 April 2016
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	Julia Wright

Inspection date	27 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	A compliance notice was issued on 30 March 2016 in relation to the location risk assessment. This inspection found that the compliance notice was not met.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC061837

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is inadequate because:

- The requirements of a compliance notice issued on 30 March 2016 in respect of the home's location risk assessment has not been met. Significant shortfalls remain in the home's location risk assessment, meaning that young people are not adequately protected.
- Young people are not robustly safeguarded at the home, as a fire compliance notice was issued by the Warwickshire fire safety officer on 10 February 2016 yet was not swiftly addressed.
- Not all staff are aware of the fire compliance notice, meaning that they may not have an enhanced understanding of all potential risks posed to young people.
- Staff morale is low. Changes in management structures are not yet embedded or effective in addressing this issue.
- There are shortfalls in staff supervision and training. Staff are not all receiving regular reflective supervision. It is unclear if staff have all received essential training and had relevant training refreshed.
- Leadership and management shortfalls mean that reviewing and monitoring processes are not robust. Not all young people's files contain all the information necessary to ensure that their needs are met.
- Leaders and managers are not ensuring that staff work as a team to progress young people's care plans.
- Not all young people are offered an independent 'return home' interview following a 'missing from care' incident.
- Not all previous requirements have been met.

The children's home strengths

- Positive relationships are seen between young people and staff.
- Positive feedback was received from parents and professionals, and young people about the service provided to young people by staff at the home.
- Young people have varied opportunities to develop personal and social skills, including accessing a range of local community facilities.
- Young people's education and employment opportunities are proactively supported by staff.

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 '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, the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(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.	17 June 2016
12. The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, ensure that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person, in particular while the fire safety system is being upgraded. (d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health	20 May 2016
13: The leadership and management standard	17 June 2016

In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that— (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (b) ensure that staff work as a team where appropriate. (f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child, and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.	
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire safety) Order 2005 applies to the home, the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home (Regulation 25 (a)(b)).	30/06/2016
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child (Regulation 36 (1)(a)).	20/05/2016
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development; and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)).	20/05/2016
The registered manager 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)*	20/05/2016

* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that 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 children ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that the registered person oversees the welfare of the children in their care, in particular to review and sign incident logs, and cross-reference complaint logs with detailed information in young people's files ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23).

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is one of three children's 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
14 January 2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15 January 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17 July 2014	Full	Good
28 January 2014	Interim	Good progress

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
There have been significant changes at the home. Three young people have left and moved to new placements, and new young people have arrived. This followed a significant period of unsettled and challenging behaviour, culminating in a fire in barns near the home. Concerns remain about the safety of young people, particularly in relation to identifying environmental risks associated with the area and strategies to minimise these. In addition, deficits in the home's fire arrangements have not been fully addressed, posing potential risks for young people, particularly when staff are not aware of these risks. Young people are supported by a consistent team, and positive relationships are observed between young people and staff. Young people report feeling safe and well cared for. One said, 'This is the best home I have lived in'. Young people were complimentary about staff support, and felt that staff are approachable and 'there for me'. However, staff are not provided with guidance and direction from managers about maximising young people's progress. For example, while there are independence plans in place for young people, these do not evidence how young people's progress is measured. It is unclear how independence work is assessed by staff, and which staff are allocated to young people to undertake areas of independence work. Young people receive support from all routine health providers. Where they need additional support from specialist services, for example therapeutic services, these are in place. Staff are attuned to young people's emotional needs, and young people say that staff are helpful and listen to them. Where young people smoke, relevant cessation and reduction services have been offered, and declined. Staff revisit these offers regularly in the context of providing advice and assistance to young people about a healthy lifestyle. Young people are well supported with work opportunities and with education. Close and effective liaison between the organisation's education officer, young people and other agencies has resulted in continued improvements in educational outcomes for one young person. Another young person is exploring options for the	

future and is supported by staff in undertaking a part-time job. Young people's academic and work attainment is enriched, leading to improved opportunities in the future.

Young people retain contact with their families and friends, wherever possible. Family members said that they are welcomed to the home and that staff help them to feel comfortable. Young people report leading a 'normal life' and are pleased that staff take them out and about, visiting friends and participating in a variety of activities in the local community. Where families are a long way from the home, staff support young people's contact with transport and supervision, where necessary, ensuring that they keep in touch and retain important relationships with loved ones.

Young people say they are consulted about the day-to-day running of the home and let staff know their views without any hesitation. They feel involved, and feel that their views are listened to and respected.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
Young people are not fully safeguarded at the home. The requirements of a compliance notice in respect of the locality risk assessment dated 30 March 2016 is not met. The location risk assessment does not include all significant issues relating to the location of the home. Young people are not fully protected, as staff have not identified all significant risks in the locality and identified strategies to minimise these risks. A recent fire safety check identified a number of deficiencies in the home's fire safety system, but these have not been fully rectified. In addition, there was a delay in addressing the recommendations in the report, meaning that young people's safety was not prioritised. Not all staff are aware of the fire safety report and the work still needed. Consequently, young people may be at risk of harm, as staff are not fully apprised of additional concerns in relation to fire safety and the additional measures that they need to be aware of to enhance their understanding. There are occasions where young people go missing from care or have unauthorised absences. Risks associated with this are adequately assessed. However, young people do not always have the opportunity to talk to an independent person about the reasons for their absence. They may miss the	

chance to confide in an independent adult and receive appropriate support.

Young people know how to make complaints, but the information stored relating to these is not always accessible. Information is missing or cannot be found, and this does not give a comprehensive picture of the process of the investigation and outcome. Young people may not have confidence in how their complaint was addressed and the steps taken to resolve it.

Staff work well with young people to promote positive behaviour. The number of occasions where physical intervention is used has been reduced considerably, partly due to changes in the young people living at the home, and consequent changed dynamics. Staff work hard to build relationships with young people, and the home has a welcoming and calm atmosphere.

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

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the management structure at the home. The responsible individual is in day-to-day charge of the running of the home, in place of the registered manager. He is appropriately qualified and experienced. These changes have not yet resulted in significant and sustained improvements in the management of the home. A recent serious incident near the home resulted in significant changes, both in young people living at the home and in the way it is run. Staff report feeling demoralised by recent events. Staff supervisions are not conducted in line with organisational policy, meaning that staff do not have the opportunity to reflect on their practice or have development opportunities identified. Opportunities to support individual staff are missed. Leaders and managers have not prioritised young people's safety following a fire safety audit. Managers have not ensured that all staff are aware of the report and the need for staff vigilance regarding fire safety. This results in young people's safety being compromised, as staff are not fully appraised of all significant issues and the actions to take in response. The home is not meeting the aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose.	

Leaders and managers do not lead the staff team effectively and facilitate teamwork. For example, independence work with young people is ongoing, but staff are not assigned individual responsibilities for undertaking this work. Young people's progress with independence work is not measured or reviewed, meaning that opportunities for progress may be missed.

Most staff have a diploma level 3 in caring for children and young people. Where staff have not gained this qualification, they are undertaking the course. This ensures that young people are cared for by staff who have basic knowledge and insight into the needs of young people living in care. However, ongoing training for staff is not up to date. Staff training records indicate that not all staff have received refresher training to ensure that their skills and abilities are fully up to date. For example, safeguarding training for five members of staff expired in February 2016, and their updating training has not been identified. Consequently, this limits staff knowledge in meeting the needs of young people.

Leaders and managers do not always rigorously scrutinise and review young people's records, including incident reports. This lack of oversight means that managers are not overseeing how incidents are addressed by staff, including the fairness and appropriateness of staff actions. Young people may not have confidence that adults are responding to incidents fairly.

Information about young people is not always cross-referenced with information that is stored elsewhere. For example, information about complaints is stored in different places and not always linked together. Consequently, significant information about young people may be missed, and patterns and trends overlooked.

Not all essential information is in young people's files, such as pathway plans. Young people's plans may not be progressed effectively, as staff do not have all the information that they need to promote young people's needs. Staff may not be aware of the most up-to-date targets and recommendations made by the local authority to enable young people's plans to be effectively progressed. Managers have liaised with other agencies to gain missing information, but robust challenge is absent.

Not all previous requirements and recommendations have been met. The location risk assessment remains inadequate and does not fully address all issues necessary to ensure young people's safety. Other requirements are met. Staff work hard to develop positive relationships with young people and ensure their emotional well-being at the home. Notifications are sent to Ofsted in a timely manner, allowing the regulator to gain an overview about the responses of the home to any

significant incidents, promoting young people's safety.

Feedback from young people, families and professionals is positive. Professionals comment favourably about professional working relationships with staff at the home. They are complimentary about the quality and frequency of communication, and say that they are kept fully informed about young people's progress. Staff are able to challenge other professionals on behalf of the young people if needed.

Leaders and managers are aware of the shortfalls of the service and have plans in place to address these, with the aim of improving the service for all young people.

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 'Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards'.

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