

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	27/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC061878
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Headway Adolescent Resources Limited
Registered provider address	Top Floor, Greyhound Building, 17 Moor Street, Chepstow, Gwent NP16 5DB

Responsible individual	Andrew Plummer
Registered manager	Frances Forbes
Inspector	Linda Bond

Inspection date	27/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
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	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC061878

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The registered manager is highly qualified, skilled and experienced and leads a staff team that has worked together for a significant number of years. This results in staff delivering consistent and effective care to young people.
- The registered manager has been instrumental in producing a number of monitoring and reviewing tools. Her attendance at external conferences and forums means that her practice remains up to date and underpinned by current research. As a result, the home is competently and professionally managed.
- The staff team is passionate about achieving positive outcomes for each young person living in the home. Staff are strong advocates and lead by example. For example, one member of staff is now trained to support young people to engage in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.
- The registered manager ensures that everyone has a say in the running of the home, including young people; for example, they are involved in choosing play equipment for the garden and in the interior design of rooms. This supports young people to share their views. They feel listened to and valued.
- Individual young people make good progress, given their individual starting points, in all aspects of their lives, including health, education, emotional well-being and social opportunities. Consequently, incidents of physical restraint, challenging behaviours and young people going missing have reduced significantly.
- Supporting the young people's independence is a key strength of the home. Good clear plans, coupled with joined-up working with local authorities, results in young people moving on from the home smoothly and safely.
- The young people spoken to during the course of the inspection confirmed that they feel safe. In particular, they said, 'It's sociable', and 'There's lots to do'.
- There are some areas for improvement. These include involving young people further in the recruitment of staff, training staff to support young people to understand their life histories and ensuring that those young people who are not in full-time education receive increased levels of home tuition and learning opportunities.

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) meet(s) 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
8: The education standard The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(viii))	30/11/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. In particular, ensure that staff have opportunities to further their knowledge and understanding in relation to life story work. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and one of a number of children's services operated by the provider. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
04/06/2015	Full	Good
03/12/2014	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/07/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Most of the young people have lived in the home for more than one year. This contributes to their feeling settled and stable in their living environment. One young person has recently moved on from the home to live more independently. Given their individual starting point, and due to the continued outreach support that staff are providing, this young person's move has been very positive and successful. Young people benefit from highly individualised care, provided by a stable, qualified staff team. Staff spend considerable amounts of time talking and interacting with the young people. Undertaking tasks, such as dropping off and picking up young people from visits with their families, with their friends and to their colleges, provides staff and young people with one-to-one time during which relationships grow and develop. As a result, young people feel trusted and valued. In the main, young people make good educational progress. Some young people who have finished their formal education have progressed to training and practical placements in nearby colleges. Consequently, these young people are beginning to develop trades and skills to equip them as they move to adulthood. Staff recognise that some young people struggle to maintain regular attendance in school, and therefore they receive bespoke educational packages delivered at the home. Professionals spoken with said that the staff have been consistently proactive in supporting young people to access new educational opportunities promptly. For one young person, this package fell short of the expected requirements for home tuition. A requirement is, therefore, made to ensure that all young people receive enough education opportunities to enable them to reach their individual potentials. Young people are encouraged to develop independence skills at a level and pace that suit their individual needs, such as making drinks, shopping for meals and helping with their laundry, thereby promoting independence and choice. While some young people prepare their own meals, the ethos of the home is that meals are all taken together, which stimulates opportunities for conversation and reflection on the day. Healthy, home-cooked meals provide young people with a balanced and nutritious diet. Attendance at healthcare appointments takes place routinely, as do visits to the doctor and specialist mental health services when necessary. As a result, records indicate that young people are in good health and taking responsibility for managing their own health needs.	

The home's professional therapeutic team, with the support of local child and adolescent mental health services, works well to support young people to form relationships and to develop a sense of self. While staff are skilled and experienced in working with young people separated from their families, further training in respect of life story work is recommended.

A key strength of the home is its engagement with families and local authorities. Regular communication, including sharing photographs of young people engaging in activities and regular visits to family homes and relatives, means that young people maintain relationships. This enables young people to maintain a strong sense of identity.

The home is extremely homely and welcoming. Personalised bedrooms and communal areas give the home a real sense of who lives there. Staff recognise the importance of young people being able to enjoy the outdoors. A good range of play equipment is available, dependant on the weather. A tree house has been specifically built and painted by the young people, providing them with a safe and fun place to play.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The registered manager and staff team have an excellent understanding of the individual risks relating to the young people living in the home. They use extremely effective risk management plans to identify risk and strategies to support each young person. The staff team as a whole benefits from regular and detailed consultations with the service's own clinical team. The regular attendance of clinicians at the team meetings offers insight, strategies and group supervision. The impact of this is that risk-taking behaviours of the young people have reduced significantly. Staff give the young people's physical safety and physiological and emotional well-being the highest priority. As a team, they are particularly strong in recognising the vulnerabilities of young people as they become increasingly independent. Bespoke outreach packages are provided to young people as they move towards life with less support. For example, sometimes taking them to college and meeting for meals and drinks enable staff to have opportunities to monitor the young people's health and welfare. Young people benefit from being supported by staff that are trained in child	

protection and safeguarding. A robust and extensive training schedule is provided to all staff. Internal systems alert them to when training is due, and thus staff remain up to date with all mandatory training courses, for example first aid, physical intervention and safeguarding. Staff appreciate the learning that they receive, and some of the training courses have been extended to the young people. This enables young people to begin to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, for example in the use of the internet, fire safety and food hygiene.

Staff are extremely skilled in supporting young people to reduce the anxieties and stresses that may lead to challenging behaviours. They are quick to identify young people becoming upset and use relationships and distraction methods to intervene. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in the use of physical intervention, and sanctions are rarely used. In addition, young people rarely go missing. In the event of a young person going missing, staff understand very well the procedures to follow to ensure the safe return of the young person. A social worker reported that the staff have shown that they are very committed, especially in terms of keeping the young person safe and working on their future care.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The registered manager has a wealth of experience working and supporting young people. She is suitably qualified and continues to improve her own understanding and knowledge through the regular attendance at conferences and forums. She recognises the importance of continuous professional development and ensures that senior staff members' management skills are improved through regular management training. Thus, the home is competently managed 24 hours a day. The registered manager is supported by an extremely dedicated and enthusiastic staff team. Staff said that they receive 'excellent support' from the manager, and this includes regular high-quality supervision. The commitment of the staff team is noteworthy. Members of staff have been together as a team for a number of years, and it is this consistency and stability that enable young people to develop trusting and reliable relationships. The experience of the staff team members and the professional relationships that they have with one another ensure that the young people receive good and	

consistent care. For example, the manager avoids using agency or bank staff to cover absences or leave.

Excellent staffing ratios mean that there are always sufficient staff to support young people. Consequently, young people are supported to access a wide range of activities in the wider community. This also enables them have regular visits with friends and family, attendance at internal council meetings and regular house meetings. Thus, young people's presence, views and opinions in the running and development of the home are very highly valued and appreciated.

A quality assurance tool and approach produced by the registered manager ensure that there is a consistent and professional approach to improving the running of the home and young people's outcomes. The senior management team recognises the value of this tool and has disseminated it across all other homes for which they are responsible.

The manager rigorously monitors and evaluates the home. She analyses patterns and trends to identify areas for development. The home's development plan is very well written, incorporating the views of young people and staff. This document sits alongside, and informs the regular review of, the statement of purpose and children's guide. All are exceptionally well produced. In particular, the children's guide is provided electronically to enable young people who have different abilities to access information that they need.

Impressive record-keeping, reporting and safe storage of information facilitate the scrutiny of data for the purpose of the inspection and independent visitor checks. All incidents are correctly reported in a timely manner to the respective authorities.

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 children looked after 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 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 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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