

SC062013

Registered provider: After Care (NW) Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private organisation operates this children's home. It is registered to care for up to three young people. The home cares for young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection date: 12 March 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 27 June 2017

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 last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, the same group of young people have remained in the home and have all continued to make progress in their health, education and emotional well-being. Young people all reported that they have adults whom they can talk to if they are worried or upset, and they are fully aware of the complaints procedure should they want to raise a concern. A young person described the home as 'fabulous, fantastic and fun'.

Staff work in partnership with fellow professionals very well. They work cohesively with occupational therapists and educational professionals who provide guidance regarding young people's care and behaviour management planning. For example, staff share

young people's behaviour management plans with their education colleagues to ensure that a consistent approach is taken in response to negative behaviour at both the young person's home and school. This has resulted in a significant reduction in incidents at home and school. Furthermore, by following guidance from a young person's occupational therapist the staff have helped to significantly improve the young person's health outcomes.

Staff receive training about nurturing and attachment, which means that young people are receiving support from staff who are growing in their understanding of the impact of trauma and the effect this has on behaviour. This increases staff's skills and abilities to defuse situations that could otherwise escalate, because they are now more able to identify and meet young people's underlying needs. Staff use a therapeutic approach when delivering care to young people. They demonstrate a good understanding of sensory impairment, which has resulted in the staff finding fun and exciting ways for one young person to undertake his agreed exercise routine. This has resulted in a decrease in the young person's anxiety level and has led to improvement in his health outcomes.

The staff have an incentive scheme whereby young people are rewarded for positive behaviour. This works well and young people are able to earn extra treats and activities. The staff do use some sanctions, but these are mostly restorative in nature. It was pleasing to see that the use of rewards significantly outnumbered the sanctions used. The interim manager monitors the effectiveness of these and evidence suggests that this approach works well at discouraging further negative behaviour.

The young people are kept safe by staff. Staff understand the risks to young people very well and work hard to minimise these. Only three missing from home incidents have been recorded, when one young person left the home for very short periods of time. Staff managed these incidents well.

The interim manager has set very high standards for her staff and the work continues to be of a high standard. The interim manager monitors the standards of care well and oversees all practice, providing strong leadership. The interim manager understands the strengths of the home and has provided staff with good supervision and a wide variety of training opportunities. However, staff would benefit from receiving training in identifying, understanding and responding to concerns about radicalisation to further enhance their high standards.

The home presents as a lived-in family home. It is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The quality of furniture and decoration is very good. However, the presence of cigarette butts discarded in the garden detracts from the very good interior.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/06/2017	Full	Good
28/03/2017	Full	Requires improvement
06/09/2016	Interim	Not judged
08/02/2016	Interim	Not judged

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Ensure that the home is a homely, domestic environment. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the garden area is maintained to ensure that it is free from cigarette stubs.
- Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12) In particular, ensure that staff receive training in understanding and responding to concerns about radicalisation.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it

meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC062013

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: After Care (NW) Limited

Registered provider address: 45 Kensington Road, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0RT

Responsible individual: Timothy Blundell

Registered manager: Ian Wilson

Inspector

Elaine Allison, social care inspector

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