

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	21/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC062248
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Quality Protects Children
Registered person address	Hill House Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB
Responsible individual	Anthony Nolan
Registered manager	Joanne Byron
Inspector	Maria McGranaghan

Inspection date	21/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires Improvement

Summary of findings SC062248

This children's home provision good because:

- Young people make significant progress from their starting points in the home. All young people are engaged in fulltime education and make consistent progress.
- Risk taking behaviours are effectively reduced with young people having a better understanding of how risks impact upon their lives.
- Effective partnerships are formed with external agencies that provide additional support for young people.
- Care planning processes enable young people to set realistic targets that they achieve on a consistent basis.
- Keywork sessions are consistently undertaken and work hand-in-hand with placement plans and the targets for the placement.
- There is a core group of stable, experienced and qualified staff who build trusting positive relationships with young people and their families.
- Staff training is further developed to ensure all staff have the skills and knowledge required to work with young people and their specific individual needs.
- Consultation is prioritised in the home. Young people are central to how the home is run and developed.
- Staff are proactive in addressing young people's changing needs and seek out additional support where necessary.
- There is good leadership and strengths and weaknesses are known. This contributes the development of the home.
- Relationships between young people are very good. Young people show mutual respect and empathy for each other.
- There are a few areas that require further development and these pertain to; further developing young people's understanding of their heritage; ensuring full and detailed information is recorded in records such as room search and notifications; ensuring consistency and timeliness in reporting concerns to the police and local authority, recruitment processes and providing private access to a telephone.

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

Requirements

- ensure effective action is taken whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare and staff are familiar with, and act in accordance, with the homes child protection policies (Regulation 12 (2) (vi) (vii))
- The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only, employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home (Regulation 32 (1) (2) (a) (b))

Recommendations

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

- ensure a system is in place so that all serious events are notified within 24 hours to the appropriate people and records include clear and specific detail (Guide to the Quality Standard paragraph 14.13 page 63)
- ensure young people are supported to develop their cultural beliefs including celebrating their heritage (Guide to the Quality Standard paragraph 3.22 page 17)
- ensure where a room search is conducted and items are removed for the safety and welfare of young people, these items are recorded and stored safely (Guide to Quality Standard paragraph 3.20 page 16)
- ensure young people have access to a private telephone (Guide to Quality Standard paragraph 11.18 page 58)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home accommodating up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and learning disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/10/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/02/2014	CH- Interim	Good progress
19/07/2013	CH-Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people	Good
Young people make consistent progress particularly in the areas of school attendance and attainment, a reduction in risk taking behaviours and their ability to form trusting relationships with their peers and staff. Education is viewed with high regard. Young people with a history of educational disruption and non-attendance attend the organisations in-house school full-time. Progress is very good with securing mainstream educational placements having completed taster days and induction. Young people say, 'I am happy to be at school. I will make new friends and make something of my life. I want to have a good future.' Relationships between parents and family members are firmly established. Young people confirm that they are happy with the level of contact they have with their families and that this is consistently supported and encouraged by staff. A parent said, 'The staff are very kind and look after my child well. They always keep me informed. When I visit they make me feel very welcome.' However, due to a change in the living room location, young people do not have access to the private telephone in order to make calls to family and friends. Although an office phone is made available, this needs to be requested by young people. As a result, a recommendation is made to ensure young people have access (where appropriate) to a private telephone facility. Consultation is at the core of the care practice within the home. Young people confirm they regularly attend and enjoy weekly meetings to discuss plans and developments. One young person said, 'We take turns to chair the meeting because it is our meeting. If we think something should change we put it to staff and they will sort it out.' Complaints and suggestion information is readily accessible for all young people. There has been one complaint since the last inspection and records show that this was suitably addressed. Young people say, 'I don't have anything to complain about I love it here. Staff listen and you can talk to them about anything. If you are not happy they will always help to sort things out.' Placement planning is good. Young people's needs are clearly defined and suitable action is taken to address them. For example, staff are proactive in seeking out external resources such as specialist teams to provide additional support and information to young people. Keywork sessions work hand-in-hand with identified needs and targets. Young people engage well within these sessions and consistently review and comment upon the progress they make. However, although some work is	

undertaken addressing young people's individual identity, this is not consistent. Consequently, a recommendation is made to ensure young people are routinely supported to learn and understand about their unique selves.

Young people are encouraged to take part in community activities and develop individual hobbies. Some young people attend dance classes while other take part in judo and horse riding. This enables young people to develop self-confidence while also developing skills in making new friendships outside of the home. Young people say, 'If I want to try something staff will always sort it out for me. They will come with me and support me.'

Health and well-being is prioritised within the home. All young people are appropriately registered with local practitioners and are further supported by weekly visits by the local authority children's nurse. Specific work is undertaken with regard to sexual relationships and harmful relationships. Observations of one such session demonstrated young people's high level of engagement and confidence in asking pertinent questions relating to this topic.

Personal hygiene and self-image is also consistently promoted resulting in young people taking a pride in their appearance. A young person said, 'I have had my hair braided and I love it.' While another said, 'I have had my eyelashes done, new make-up and clothes. It makes me feel good.'

Young people are helped by staff to begin to develop skills to equip them in their adult life. Activities such as shopping, cooking, menu planning and washing and ironing are a sample of the work undertaken. Furthermore, young people learn in an exceptionally positive environment. They demonstrate skill such as compromise, empathy and respect for each other's differences. Young people therefore learn how to express their emotions in a controlled and suitable way.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people come to the home with a history of risk taking behaviours. Staff work with them to develop clear and consistently updated risk assessments. This ensures that staff take appropriate action to reduce any potential risks including direct work and support from external services. Where risks are identified immediate action is taken to safeguard the young person in the home. However, on occasions delays in reporting concerns to the placing social worker and police mean that additional support, guidance or instruction is not received in a timely manner. Consequently, one recommendation is made to ensure that all relevant authorities are contacted without delay. Socially acceptable behaviour is encouraged in the home. Behaviour management plans are in place to identify strategies to manage and reduce unacceptable	

behaviour, including the use of sanctions and keywork sessions. Likewise, staff focus on de-escalation and re-direction techniques in order to defuse situations between young people. This has proven successful as there is minimal use of physical intervention in the home. Consequently, young people develop strategies to manage their own behaviour and this results in a reduction of challenging and inappropriate behaviours.

Privacy and dignity is highly respected in the home. Young people are respect each other and the staff team. Where concerns arise warranting a search of a young person's bedroom, young people are informed of the reason for the search and can be present during the process. Although this measure is minimal, records do not reflect where items would be stored for safe keeping if they were removed from the bedroom. A recommendation is made to ensure that any item belonging to the young person must be logged and a record maintained of where it is stored.

Historically and prior to this placement, levels of being missing or absent from home have been high. Since living at this home there are no episodes where young people are missing overnight and only two episodes of a young person being absent for a matter of hours since the last inspection. This is considerable progress. Records demonstrate that appropriate measures are taken to secure young people's safe return including a search of the areas known to the young people, reports to the police and the local authority. Young people confirm that they are welcomed back to the home and reason's for their absence is discussed in a supportive manner.

Young people are supported to live together and respect each other as individuals with different life experiences, needs and opinions. Likewise, young people are enabled to learn about behaviours such as bullying both from a victim and perpetrator prospective. Keywork sessions, young people's meetings and seminars from guest speakers take place regularly and this empowers young people to recognise the impact of bullying and take the appropriate action to make it stop. Young people say, 'It's good here, I feel safe.'

The committed staff team who receive appropriate training in order to work effectively in the home. The physical environment provides a safe and secure home for young people. There is ample space both internally and externally and on the whole is well presented. However, the home is due to commence refurbishment in August 2015 which will address the broken seals on some double glazed windows causing them to appear misty.

	Judgement grade
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The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires Improvement
The home is currently managed by an acting manager who is suitably qualified and experience. An application has been received by Ofsted for the position of interim Registered Manager during the planned period of absence of the Registered Manager. Young people live in a home that is managed in their best interests. The home meets the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose, and young people, social workers and families are clear about the service and support the home provides. Internal and external monitoring systems provide the home with a good approach to the overall monitoring of care. Detailed information highlights areas for development and the interim manager's action plan details the methods used to enhance the service. Staff state they receive support from the interim manager. Records of supervision demonstrate that staff meet with the interim manager regularly and training and personal development targets are addressed. An annual training package ensures staff receive up-to-date training specific to meeting the needs of the young people accommodated in the home. The interim manager and staff demonstrate good overall child centred practice tailored to the individual and personal needs of young people. The effectiveness of this approach is measurable in the progress young people make, particularly in education, a reduction in risk taking behaviours and social integration. Placement plans are clear and realistic and work together with keywork sessions and seminars on specific areas for development. They are reviewed regularly by staff and young people and updated accordingly. The home employs a committed staff team with the majority qualified at NVQ level 3 and 4. Young people's records are appropriately stored and regularly updated in order to capture to essence of young people at a given time. Within the registered provider organisation there has been shortfalls in undertaking the required background checks when recruiting staff and senior managers. This shows a failing on the part of the registered provider to oversee this aspect of management. A requirement is made to ensure that recruitment is robust and only staff safe to work with vulnerable young people are employed. The registered provider implemented an action plan immediately to address this. The manager is aware of the procedure for notifying Ofsted of incidents under Regulation 40. However, information received to Ofsted is not always clear resulting in further information being requested. A recommendation is made to ensure that all	

information contained within a notification are thorough and robust and include the action taken to address any concerns

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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