

# SC062248

Registered provider: Quality Protects Children Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2017. Three young people talked to the inspector on this inspection.

**Inspection dates:** 26 to 27 June 2019

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account** **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 25 July 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 25/07/2018      | Full            | Good                    |
| 23/11/2017      | Full            | Good                    |
| 23/03/2017      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 04/10/2016      | Full            | Good                    |

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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   |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))</p> <p>This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the safer area report is used in conjunction with a young person's impact risk assessment to ensure that the area is safe for them.</p>           | 28/08/2019 |
| <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the young people's information in their risk assessments is in a clear order and that staff have clear guidance on the action to take in the event of an incident.</p>   | 28/08/2019 |
| <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform.</p> <p>For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by</p> | 28/08/2019 |

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |  |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| <p>the relevant date, the individual has attained—</p> <p>the level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) (“the Level 3 Diploma”) or</p> <p>a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>The relevant date is—</p> <p>in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014, the date which falls two years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in the home. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(3)(b)(4)(a)(b)(5)(a))</p> |  |
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## Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20) (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8)
  - The registered person should actively seek independent scrutiny of the home and make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 55, paragraph 10.24)
  - As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- This is specifically in relation to ensuring that, when verifying references, further questions are asked and noted when a basic reference is given from past employers.
- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- In particular, support the staff’s training needs so that they can effectively respond to issues that affect young people, such as bereavement and loss.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Generally, young people come to live at this home in a planned way. This includes members of staff visiting young people beforehand, as well as young people coming to visit to look around, meet people and to stay for tea. The manager uses the referral information to make an informed decision on whether the home can meet a young

person's individual needs and includes the staff team's input before a final decision is made. Although there is a good locality risk assessment in place that identifies immediate risks, the manager has not always linked this information with the impact risk assessment undertaken for new young people. For example, the manager has identified that there is a busy road in front of the home and a motorway nearby, but not necessarily whether these factors may be a risk for any new young person who may come to live at the home.

Young people say that this is a good home where they are happy, safe and enjoy life. One young person wrote a glowing testimonial about the home. She said, 'Amazing home and the best I have been in and I have been in a lot, trust me.' Another young person said, 'It is great. The staff are fantastic, and they really care about us.'

Young people say that they are fully involved in all aspects of their care, and their views, wishes and feelings are taken into account. Young people often comment on their records and feel that they can influence outcomes. Young people say that staff listen to them well and try to make things happen. When they are unhappy about things, they can raise issues informally and formally through the complaints system in the home. In addition to this, the young people were able to identify several independent people whom they could contact if they were unhappy or had a concern.

Young people are well supported to maintain their overall physical and emotional health. They have weekly therapy with clinicians, and strategies of support are discussed and agreed. The clinicians then attend the staff meeting to discuss the support required from staff and the young people's progress. The clinicians provide additional reading material for staff to read, such as articles on the therapy that they use. In addition to this, clinicians offer training on the emotional aspects of some behaviours, such as self-harm or risk-taking behaviour. This approach means that all staff give an informed response, and young people receive consistency of care. As a result, young people say that they are building up their emotional resilience and can handle situations a lot better.

Additionally, young people's medication is regularly reviewed and is administered appropriately. All staff hold a first aid qualification and have undertaken medication training. Young people have experienced bereavement and suffered loss in their lives. However, not all staff have undertaken bereavement and loss training to help them understand the impact that this may have on the young people's emotional health.

Staff have high aspirations for young people and instil the value of a good education, further education and employment. This is evident in young people's attendance and achievement. For example, one young person has recently sat her exams and has a place on a college course in September 2019 to follow equine studies. Other young people aspire to work with animals or to train to be a beautician.

Young people enjoy a range of activities. They go to the cinema, the gym and have days out. Young people like horse riding and attend several times a week. The home has introduced a memory book in which staff members make witty comments, messages of praise and say 'thank you' to young people for shared memorable moments. In later life, young people will be able to reflect on these positive experiences.

Young people have different arrangements for keeping in touch with their family

members. These arrangements have been specified by the local authority and include some restrictions that are clearly recorded in young people's plans. Some young people live a good distance away from their family home so staff ensure that journeys are planned well. Young people say that this helps them to remain in touch with people who are important to them.

Young people have made good progress in their independence skills. They are shopping, preparing and cooking meals and taking responsibility for their personal needs. Pathway plans are in place, and one young person is at a point of considering where they would like to live in the future. Discussions are taking place in placement meetings, and there are reviews of the suitability and action required from all parties. As a result, young people say that they are confident that they have the skills needed to be self-sufficient and that they are fully involved in the decisions about their future.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Young people said that they were safe at this home. They said that staff are very clear with them about keeping themselves safe and that the staff always give good advice on how risks may affect them. One young person has become a good mentor to the other young people. She explains the therapy cycle to them and supports them when needed. Although some young people have a restriction on the use of the internet and social media, the staff complete reflective sessions with young people to make sure that they understand the reasons for this. This, in turn, is helpful as they prepare for independence as young people learn how to keep themselves safe while having the same opportunities as their peers.

Young people said that the best thing about this home is the relationships that they have with staff. They say that staff are open and honest, listen to them, and have their best interests at heart. One young person said, 'They show they care in everything they do. They still support you when you have a bad day.' Staff take pride in their strong relationships that have brought about positive outcomes for young people.

Some of the young people had a high level of being reported missing from their last placements before coming to live at this home. This level of missing has significantly reduced because young people are learning about the importance of keeping themselves safe, coupled with being engaged in a wide range of activities and having a good structure in the home. When young people do go missing, the staff follow the local authority's missing from home protocol and actively search and try to contact the young people to ascertain their whereabouts. Previously, return interviews were not being completed. However, the manager escalated his concerns to the individual local authorities, and these are now being completed timely. This means that any concern about the home, staff or pertinent information is picked up quickly and addressed.

Staff work closely with a range of safeguarding professionals to ensure that young people are safe. Professionals say that when a concern arises swift action is taken, everybody is informed, extra safeguarding measures are put in place, and strategy meetings are arranged. Any allegation about a member of staff is quickly addressed and reported to the relevant professionals. Meticulous records are kept showing the action taken, the involvement of all agencies and the outcome. This ensures that all procedures

are strictly followed. All staff are trained in safeguarding procedures, which include recognising behaviour and patterns of child sexual exploitation and accessing the internet safely. The staff demonstrate a good understanding of this and act quickly on any concerns. This helps to ensure that young people are safeguarded.

Young people generally behave very well. However, there have been occasions when they have been held for their or others' safety. All members of staff are fully trained in holding techniques and pride themselves on using good de-escalation strategies to divert negative behaviour to avoid having to hold someone. However, risk assessments are generic and do not give staff clear information on what action to take, if an incident was to occur. For example, all young people have been risk assessed for smoking when actually none of them smoke. This does not ensure that the assessments are individual to young people.

Behaviour management plans are effective. The home's approach focuses on restorative approaches when responding to negative behaviour. Young people are given a chance to turn negative behaviour around through the use of incentive charts, rewards and celebrating achievements. As part of this, young people have earned extra money, activities and trips out for meals. Young people get the chance to apologise, make good and reflect on their behaviour through purposeful reflective sessions. Thus, they are able to empathise and learn from their actions.

Generally, the recruitment and employment records of new staff are good. However, several records show that past employers have only given a basic reference that contains the staff's employment history rather than information on their character and integrity. The manager has verified these references, but there is no further information on the additional questions asked or the response given.

Young people live in a safe, homely and well-maintained home. This is because the manager and staff ensure that all health and safety requirements are fully met. Renewals of safety equipment and fire evacuations are completed regularly.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2017. He has a suitable management and leadership qualification. He has extensive experience in working with young people in a care setting. Recently, further support has been introduced to assist the manager with the appointment of two well-qualified and experienced deputies.

The home's statement of purpose reflects the service provided and is updated regularly. There is a good connection between this and the home's development plan.

There have been several new staff to the home since the last inspection. New staff undertake an induction to the home, which includes them completing a range of mandatory training. They are supervised regularly and have to complete a six-month probationary period successfully. This means that all members of staff are continually appraised. However, the manager's workforce plan does not contain the information required, as identified in the quality standards. For example, there is no distinction between the different timescales for the supervision of new staff, full-time staff and bank

staff.

Young people benefit from being cared for by a stable staff team that is effectively managed and well supported. Half of the staff team hold a recognised qualification in childcare and the new staff are registered on a similar course. However, one member of staff has been working at the home for over two years and has only recently been registered on a childcare qualification. Therefore, the member of staff has not attained the appropriate qualification by the relevant date.

Staff meetings are regular and allow staff to discuss any changes in policies, practice or legislation. Clinicians attend the staff meetings and give an overview of each young person. Any changes to the young people's therapy or schedule are discussed. This means that the staff are aware of any potential difficulties and can plan for the forthcoming week.

Young people are central to the care that they receive at this home. They are given the opportunity and are encouraged to discuss and comment on all aspects of their care in their records and meetings. As a result, young people said that they can influence the care that they receive and know that this is important because it is about them. The manager has forged strong links with partner agencies and professionals, such as teachers, health professionals and social workers. This means that effective joint working ensures that young people receive the care that they need.

The regulation 44 reports do not adequately evaluate the effectiveness of the quality of care and outcomes for young people. For example, in the last report in May 2019, it is reported that training was requested in report writing in August 2018. This training was completed, but the independent visitor has not identified this or the impact of the training. Similarly, when the frequency of incidents has reduced, the independent visitor has not evaluated the reason behind this. The report also says that there have been no complaints in the last reporting month. However, it is not apparent if the independent visitor has checked whether the new young person understands the complaints system or whether staff know how to support them in accessing this. Overall, the current level of scrutiny does not provide a sufficiently thorough independent view about the quality of care in the home. In contrast to this, the manager's six-monthly monitoring review is of a good standard. He has consulted with young people and other professionals well, and their feedback continues to influence the development of the home.

## **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.

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:** SC062248

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Quality Protects Children Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Hill House, Archway Road, Huyton, Liverpool L36 9XB

**Responsible individual:** Anthony Nolan

**Registered manager:** Raymond Holt

## Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care regulatory inspector

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