

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC062931
Inspector	Elaine Allison
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Ty Warncken / POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	07/01/2014

Inspection date	06/01/2015
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	inadequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people's plans are highly individualised and demonstrate that the staff are aware of, and meet young people's diverse and complex emotional and psychological needs. Equality and diversity are clearly valued and promoted in the home. Difference is enjoyed and celebrated and each young person's individuality is promoted to a very good standard.

Observations of the staff and young people interactions throughout the visit show that there are good positive relationships between them and a genuine emotional connection. These types of relationships are vital to provide a secure base for young people to develop resilience and healthy attachments, which in turn support the children and young people to develop all aspects of their health and well-being.

Staff share information well, promoting a consistent approach to behaviour management in the home. Where incidents do occur, staff act swiftly and put actions in place to mitigate future risk. This helps young people to feel secure.

Staff demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of most risks young people face, and work hard to ensure those risks are minimised and safely managed. They work well together and use the diverse attributes and skills they have to complement each other. This in turn allows them to offer good support to the

children and young people.

The service provides an environment where education is a central component to the personal planning and positive outcomes for the children and young people. Strong links between the education base of the provider and staff ensures continuity to support the young people to realise their own potential and promote their self-esteem.

Areas for the home's development include ensuring that a Registered Manager is in post; young people have access to the internet; visitors to the home are appropriately signed in; all documents that are signed by the author clearly show the designation of the author, and the home implements a proportionate approach to any risk assessment.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private organisation. It provides care for no more than three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/01/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
06/08/2013	Full	good
29/01/2013	Interim	good progress
20/06/2012	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
7 (2001)	appoint an individual to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home. Specifically ensure the person appointed to the role makes an application to become registered with immediate effect. (Regulation 7 (1) (a))	02/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all visitors to the home are signed in (NMS 4.2)
- ensure that the home implements a proportionate approach to any risk assessment (NMS 4.5)
- ensure children take part in appropriate peer activities as agreed by the home's staff in a way similar to how a reasonable parent might reach agreement with their children, taking into account any assessment of risk to the child; in particular children have suitable access to social media and the internet (NMS 7.5)
- ensure that entries in records are legible, clearly expressed, in particular that they clearly show the designation of the person making the entry. (NMS 22.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people build positive self-views and gain self-confidence as a result of staff interaction and care. They have good social skills and demonstrate politeness and hospitality in welcoming visitors to the home. Stable and trusting relationships with key staff enable young people to form attachments. One young person said: 'I can speak to any of the staff here about anything they all would listen and take me seriously.'

Young people engage well with staff and other professionals to work on their emotional and psychological issues, addressing the difficulties they face. Young people build an understanding of their complex needs and start to accept their vulnerabilities. This helps young people facilitate positive changes in their lives.

Young people are supported to spend time with their families. Positive contact helps them identify with extended family members and spend time in their own community. This helps young people build a picture of their family background. Young people said that they were not allowed access to social network sites. The home has a blanket policy for no internet access for every young person placed at the home. This does not ensure that young people are treated as individuals or that they have the skills and knowledge to access them safely. In addition to this, some young people are placed a long distance from home and they say that this hinders them, in being able to stay in touch with family and friends.

Young people have benefited greatly from a full time education. A young person said 'I love school it's amazing'. Their development and achievement is significant in relation to their previous records of non-cooperation with education before coming to the home. A social worker commented '(young person) had not engaged with school for several months before the move and was absconding on a daily basis. I am happy to see that this has completely stopped.' A young person who had significant previous absences from education has recently been awarded 'pupil of the term'.

Young people feel listened to and respected. They enjoy living in a home where their opinions are valued and promoted. Additionally, young people have access to independent visitors and advocates to whom they can speak if they wish. Young people are able to influence choices with regards to outings, activities, menus and décor and are able to meet the home's manager on a regular basis to give their views on their care. This approach also ensures that young people are able to complain about any issues and they have faith that their views will be respected and treated seriously.

Each young person has an individual care plan which identifies what they need to do to develop their life and address any psychological issues they may face. These are

bespoke plans which offer structure and goals for young people to achieve. Young people develop these plans with members of staff and sign them to ensure that they are involved and have ownership of them. As a result of this approach, young people develop their skills and knowledge to a very good degree, especially when bearing in mind their starting points. There are very constructive and positive relationships between the members of staff and young people. This is enabled by the members of staff having clear boundaries, consistent routines as well as ensuring that young people feel genuinely cared for.

Participation in community activities is a strength of this home. Young people take part in sponsored walks where they take a sense of pride in raising money for local charities. Some young people have enjoyed holidays with staff and other young people to a theme park in Paris, horse riding and swimming. This enables the young people to access activities and experiences outside of the home environment.

Young people receive positive care which promotes their independence. They engage in practical skills such as cooking, washing and budgeting to prepare them for later life. Staff make sure young people are well prepared and confident about their future plans. This helps them to make important choices and move successfully on from the home. Young people generally report they are well supported to prepare to live independently.

Quality of care

good

Staff are genuine and caring in providing good parenting parameters. Relationships between young people and staff are very good. Staff actively encourage young people to share their views and have a voice in the home. Young people know how to complain and confidently share their views. This is in the knowledge that staff listen to their ideas and value their feedback. A young person said 'I can speak to any of the staff here about anything they all would listen and take me seriously.'

Staff impressed as highly motivated and enthusiastic about their work. They obtain a great deal of satisfaction from their employment at the home. A parent commented 'the staff are all committed to providing the best care possible and are all very professional whilst still being very friendly.'

Where appropriate to do so parents are fully involved in the care planning for young people. A parent commented 'the communication is great between the staff and myself they work very hard to involve both (young person) and myself in all aspects of the care.' This enables clear, agreed plans to be in place to help young people grow and achieve to their full potential.

There are regular staff meetings. Staff consider these as important both in terms of allowing for better communication and for information sharing ensuring continuity of care for the young people. Staff say there is a supportive culture which results in a

high level of consistency in their delivery of care for young people. A staff member said 'the team meetings are invaluable to the care we provide.'

Young people are encouraged to develop their emotional well-being because they benefit from regular, high quality discussions with their key workers and a high level of psychological support from in-house therapists. As a result, they form strong attachments to the staff team and are able to discuss a range of feelings, worries and concerns. Staff from the home meet regularly with the in-house therapists for 'therapeutic thinking time' discussions. This inclusive approach ensures continuity in the support and care delivery for young people. A staff member said, 'the therapeutic thinking time is very useful it makes me feel valued in my role and I feel that my input is helping meet the needs of the young people.'

Medication, where used, is safely stored and carefully administered. Detailed records of medication are routinely checked for accuracy. This ensures that any errors are quickly identified and promptly resolved. The staff team promote the health of young people at all times. All medical appointments are up to date and the staff team are diligent in ensuring that young people attend. As a result, young people enjoy good health and any concerns are quickly resolved.

The home is risk averse in some areas of risk assessments and care for young people, an example of this is the blanket policy of young people not being allowed to keep make-up within their bedrooms. This may have an impact on young people's self-esteem and could lead to them having a feeling of being different to their peers in the community.

The home is well placed within walking distance of the centre of the town where there are shops and other facilities. The home is spacious, and recent photos of the young people are used to personalise the environment. Outside there is a well-maintained garden for relaxing in and outdoor dining. Bedrooms for young people are spacious comfortable and personalised, There is a relaxed, comfortable atmosphere which helps young people be themselves and contributes to their general sense of well-being.

Keeping children and young people safe good

The service is good at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe. A young person commented 'I feel safe here and I like living here.'

Each young person has a detailed behaviour management plan in place. This contains what strategies needed to encourage positive behaviour. These plans are effective and young people's abilities to manage their own behaviour have improved as a result of their successful implementation. A young person said 'they help me calm down if I am angry.'

Staff are clear that physical intervention is used only as a last resort. When incidents do occur, they are safely managed. Records show young people reflect on significant incidents with staff. No young people have gone missing between inspections. The home has clear protocols with the local police should a young person go missing. Very good links have been established with the police missing co-ordinator, which ensures a speedy co-ordinated response to any missing episode, reducing the risk for young people.

When serious incidents occur, the staff team ensure that prompt and appropriate action is taken to ensure the safety of young people. Furthermore, all required serious incident notifications are made to the appropriate services. As a result, young people's safety is promoted at all times.

Risk assessments outline what measures need to be in place to support the young people in their environment, in the community and in various activities. These ensure that the welfare and safety of the young people is not compromised and is maintained to a good standard. Regular fire drills take place in both day and evening times. This ensures that young people and staff are practised in safe evacuation. All areas of the home are safely maintained and appropriate checks ensure any defects are identified and resolved. This ensures that young people's health and safety is appropriately promoted in the home.

Managers maintain robust recruitment and selection procedures that help prevent unsuitable people from having access to young people. Managers carefully induct and support new staff into their role to ensure they acquire the skills necessary to care safely for young people.

The service failed to ensure that all visitors to the home sign in the visitor's book; this potentially could place young people at risk.

Leadership and management

inadequate

The home is operated in accordance with the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose and children's guide. There has been an interim manager in post since August 2014 and they hold an appropriate qualification. Although the home continues to be effectively managed, there is a need to appoint a permanent manager who requires making application to register with Ofsted.

Practice is assessed and reflected upon in supervisions, team meetings and by the compilation of monitoring reports. This enables shortfalls to be addressed or areas to be improved. For example, by analysing routines for young people and developing strategies when trigger points for distressed behaviour have been identified.

Regular training is provided for all staff to ensure that they are knowledgeable about their role and have the skills and competencies to fulfil it. Additionally, all staff

members receive regular supervision to provide them with day-to-day support in their role and to promote their professional development. Members of staff feel very well supported and that the team work in the home is excellent. A member of staff said; 'we are a very honest and supportive team and we air any niggles in team meetings to make sure that the focus is always on the outcomes for young people.' This support is also underpinned by regular staff meetings which enable everyone to reflect on practice and the effectiveness of the service.

The Statement of Purpose has been updated to reflect staff changes. It provides an accurate and comprehensive picture of the home and of the services it provides. The young people's guide is personalised to individual young people, containing information such as contact numbers for their social workers and reviewing officer. This personalised guide ensures that young people receive a bespoke guide which contains all the required information and is relevant to individual young people's lives.

The manager has a very good understanding of the strengths of the service and the areas for further development. The home's development plan sets out how the manager intends to progress the service.

Overall, the home's written records are completed and audited to a good standard, being stored with due regard for confidentiality. The well-structured files and care plans give a very good oversight of each young person's progress and history of their time at the home. In some young people's written records staff members have entered a signature which is illegible and failed to identify their designation.

The provider and manager regularly monitor the operation of the home, the quality of care and outcomes for young people, in partnership with young people and the professionals who support them. This ensures the ongoing safety of the young people who live in the home.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.