

Children's home – Interim inspection

Inspection date	15/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC063318
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Good Foundations Limited
Registered provider address	6 Tower Quays, Tower Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside CH41 1BP

Responsible individual	Andrew Mannix
Registered manager	Helen Beaumont
Inspector	Elaine Allison

Inspection date	15/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Young people feel safe and are of the view that staff genuinely care about them. Comments from young people include, 'I like all of them and they make sure we are safe.' Also, young people confirm that they receive support and guidance from staff. One young person commented, 'They help me with everything that I need. If I need to be in care, I'm glad it's here.' A parent of a young person commented, 'My son is very safe living there, the staff are genuinely caring and I have no doubt they keep him safe.' Opportunities to engage in community activities are promoted, with young people enjoying pursuits such as fishing, being members of local football teams and one young person now taking piano lessons. This engagement distracts them from involvement in negative behaviour and provides fun and new experiences. The manager and the staff team recognise safeguarding concerns promptly. Emerging concerns are shared with parents and social workers. Missing from care incidents are responded to promptly and are reported in line with individual risk assessments. This means that external agencies are able to respond appropriately when young people go missing. For some young people, this has led to a significant reduction in missing incidents. The staff ensure that young people are as safe as they can be at this home. Although no young people are currently deemed as being at risk of sexual exploitation, staff are fully aware of the indicators and know how to respond to support and protect young people. Similarly, they are aware of the risks posed by extremism and radicalisation. Staff have had relevant training to assist them in identifying these issues so they can take the necessary action and provide the necessary support and advice to young people. The team work openly with other professionals and seek guidance and support from external agencies to improve outcomes for each young person. For example, an external professional from a drugs and alcohol provision came to the home to talk with the staff and young people about the dangers of cannabis misuse. In another example, an officer from the local fire brigade visited to talk to young people about the dangers of fire raising.	

Some young people continue to make steady progress in education and maintain good attendance. Not all young people are in full-time education, but staff support and encourage young people who lack confidence or motivation. Staff work effectively with partner agencies to identify the right educational provision for young people. A manager at the virtual school commented, 'The manager and staff are all very proactive in calling meetings for individual young people. They want the best education provision for the young people and don't give up on them.'

Since the last inspection, two young people have left the home. Both were planned moves, with one young person moving on to a semi-independent living provision and the other to a residential provision, which could meet his educational needs. Two new young people have come to live at the home. Both of these moves were well planned, with the young people having the opportunity to visit the home prior to living there.

Staff are competent, qualified and passionate about providing a good service for young people. They genuinely care about them and want them to succeed. A member of staff said, 'The young people all have the potential to grow in all areas of their lives and it's our job to help them.' The staff are supported well by the registered manager. They have good access to training. This means that they have the skills and knowledge to be able to effectively look after the young people in their care.

The registered manager is qualified and provides good support and guidance to her staff team. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has good plans to address any shortfalls to further develop the home. The manager ensures that the home does not stand still. She learns lessons from Ofsted inspections and responds positively to the home's independent visitor when potential improvements are identified. She is proactive and looks for further improvement. The two requirements and three recommendations from the previous inspection have all been addressed. Impact risk assessments are now more robust, ensuring that all risks and impact of new young people coming to live in the home have been thoroughly assessed and considered. Recording in the home has significantly improved and there are robust management audits. The environment in the home has improved, with new carpets in the hall, stairs and landing being laid and young people are now helped and encouraged in keeping their own bedrooms clean and tidy.

One recommendation has been made at this inspection. This relates to staff ensuring that the front door of the home is secured to ensure that no unauthorised access to the home can be made, and also to ensure that egress for young people is easily possible.

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is owned and operated by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/06/2016	Full	Good
17/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/12/2015	Full	Requires improvement
28/01/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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

Recommendation

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

- Staff should provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, supportive, and which provides appropriate boundaries in relation to the children's behaviour. The home must also meet children's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities. Staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in the way that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met – doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)

In particular, staff should ensure that the front door to the home is secure from the outside so as to avoid unauthorised access.

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 who 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.

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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