

SC063318

Registered provider: Good Foundations Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 October 2017

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: 15 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people make good progress as they learn to manage their emotions and to develop positive and trusting relationships with others.
- Staff are attuned to the impact of young people's previous life experiences, and

provide individualised, nurturing and holistic care. This helps young people to build on their strengths, talents and interests.

- Consultation with young people is a strength of the service. Young people's input is sought in all aspects of the work undertaken, and they say that they value this and feel listened to.
- There are a wide variety of activities for young people, both in the home and in the community. Staff support young people well in maintaining their hobbies and interests.
- The young people continue to make progress in this home, educationally, socially and emotionally. They have aspirations for their futures and value the role of education in their lives.
- The staff team and managers work very collaboratively with placing authorities, parents and other agencies. All feedback gained during this inspection was very positive. The positive multi-agency working has led to improvements in the emotional well-being, social skills and educational achievements of young people.
- The staff team is highly motivated, and is committed to improving outcomes for young people. Staff and managers are flexible in their approach, and provide care that reflects young people's assessed needs.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Risk assessments should be reviewed and updated after significant incidents.
- The manager and staff should ensure that all visitors to the home are duly identified, and that their full names are recorded in the visitors book.
- All staff, including bank staff, should complete an induction to the home that includes the relevant mandatory training.
- Staff should plan for and encourage better outcomes for young people who smoke tobacco.
- The registered manager should ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/06/2016	Full	Good
17/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

01/12/2015

Full

Requires improvement

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
12: The protection of children standard The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; 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)(a)(i)(b)) In particular, ensure that all visitors to the home are duly identified and full names obtained in visitor books, and that risk assessments are reviewed and updated after significant incidents.	27/11/2017
33: Employment of staff The Registered Person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. (Regulation 33(1)(a)) In particular, ensure that all bank staff members complete induction training.	27/11/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that the staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual young people in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about young people must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to them now or in the future. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and where necessary work to change negative behaviour in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to smoking. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are very happy living at this home, and they form close and trusting relationships with staff. Staff consistently prioritise the welfare of young people and, over time, build trusting relationships with them. There is a genuine sense of community in the home. Interactions observed during the inspection were relaxed, jovial and respectful. One young person said, 'This is one big family. Sometimes we argue, sometimes we don't get on, but we sort it and it's the best place that I've lived in.'

Young people have clear health plans, and they are registered with the relevant primary healthcare services. All young people participate in routine health appointments. When they need more specialised services, such as child and adolescent mental health services, these are arranged. Liaison between managers, staff and health professionals is good and means that young people's health improves. However, the majority of young people currently smoke cigarettes, and there are no planned strategies for staff to follow to discourage them. A structured plan regarding smoking cessation would enable staff to work with young people towards achieving a healthier lifestyle.

All young people have an identified educational provision to attend. From their starting points, young people make very good progress in terms of their academic abilities, willingness to attend and understanding of the role that education plays in their future lives. Staff are good advocates for young people, and work tirelessly to eliminate any barriers they may face in accessing education. For example, a young person whose college placement was situated a distance from the home had to travel on three trains and a tram to get to his college. A staff member liaised with education professionals and negotiated a placement closer to home. This ensured that the young person was still able to enrol on his course of choice, while benefiting from having his travel time and distance to college cut significantly.

Young people's care plans are highly personalised. They clearly set out the targets that young people are working towards and the ways in which these will be achieved. Young

people's progress is closely monitored and recorded, so that they recognise when they are achieving well and when they need to develop further. Many of the targets that the young people work towards are aimed at improving their independence and life skills. Therefore, young people have plans to budget for the week, cook their own meals, manage their own day-to-day needs and use public transport independently.

Care plans are reviewed regularly. This ensures that the plans remain relevant, and are focused on the changing needs of young people as they mature.

Staff understand that transitions towards independence for the young people are very difficult, and if young people are struggling with, for example, cooking and budgeting, staff amend their plans accordingly. This means that young people can move towards independence at a pace which alleviates any anxieties they may have. A young person commented, 'I'm way ahead in my independence work sheets and I feel confident that I am ready to leave and live in my own flat in January.'

Young people's inclusion in community life is very good. Some young people are active members of local football teams. The sports clubs provide opportunities for socialising outside of the residential group. All young people take part in a variety of activities, including swimming and boxing. This improves their health and well-being, both physically and emotionally.

The home presents as a lived-in family home. It is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The quality of furniture and decoration is very good. Young people described their house as: 'lovely,' 'it feels like home,' and 'dead tidy'. Young people are involved in making decisions on all aspects of the home's décor.

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

Young people report feeling safe and secure living at the home. One young person commented, 'I'm safe here. The staff make sure we all are.' Another said, 'I feel very safe living here.' Robust arrangements are in place to protect young people. Staff are diligent, and demonstrate a full understanding of their role and responsibilities to promote young people's welfare.

Staff have a calming influence when young people become anxious, or struggle to manage their behaviour. Behaviour management plans have useful de-escalation strategies that support young people. Young people agree to the sanctions that are occasionally given, which are usually in relation to minor issues. The sanctions given are proportionate, with one young person commenting that, 'It's fair, I suppose, because sometimes I am not that well behaved.' The home operates an incentive scheme for good behaviour. This works very well, and young people have fully engaged in the scheme. It was pleasing to see that young people could reverse or reduce their sanction by displaying good behaviour. This allows young people to focus on the positive aspects of their behaviour, and has led to a reduction in the number of incidents in the home.

Some young people, for whom going missing from home was a regular feature of their lives, experience a drop in the frequency of these episodes. When young people do go missing, staff are prompt to follow protocols and to liaise with other agencies. Staff go looking for the young people, checking with friends and family and searching the local area. A police officer said, 'The staff are really good at working with us if any of the boys go missing. They follow the correct procedures very well. The good thing is they go looking for them.'

The physical environment is safe, and protects young people from accidental injury. Each young person has a detailed individual risk assessment that staff understand. As a result, the home is able to take all necessary steps to reduce the likelihood of young people being at risk of harm. However, generic risk assessments do not always accurately reflect identified risks and potential hazards. For example, after incidents of young people smoking in their bedrooms, fire risk assessments have not been reviewed or updated. This could potentially place young people, staff and others at risk.

All medication is stored and recorded appropriately. Consent for medical treatment and first aid is in place for each young person. The registered manager has a robust auditing system in place for overseeing the safe administration of medication.

Records show that young people have not made any complaints. However, young people said that they know that staff listen to them and that they are confident that staff would take action if they felt the need to complain. This reassures young people that their safety is of the highest priority.

Admissions to the home continue to be well organised. Very careful consideration is given to the compatibility of new young people with the existing residents so that any potential disruption is planned for, and a smooth transition is achieved.

Visitors to the home are not routinely asked to sign in when they arrive. In addition, visitors' full names, designation and the purpose of their visit are not always recorded. Potentially, this could place young people at risk of harm and does not allow the manager to have an overview of who is visiting the home, and when.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A motivated and committed registered manager, who has high expectations and aspirations for young people, leads the home effectively. She is suitably experienced and qualified to undertake her responsibilities. She leads by example, and is actively involved in all of the home's operations. This enables her to monitor everyday practice at the home as she works alongside colleagues and young people. Young people and staff speak highly of their manager. A young person said, 'She is great, always there for us and is a laugh.'

There is a strong, shared ethos in the team about the importance of gaining and considering the views and wishes of young people. Discussions with young people take place daily to inform staff of young people's emotional well-being. Weekly house

meetings allow young people to express their preferred choices about a range of matters, such as activities and menus, as well as providing the opportunity to reflect on what has gone well and what young people may want to do differently.

Staff feel very well supported, and report that they receive regular supervision. Staff supervision is well recorded to show appropriate challenge and scrutiny. Team meetings are well attended, and discussions are focused on the needs and behaviours of the young people. Staff share and celebrate young people's achievements, as well as reviewing patterns and trends in behaviours. When staff have attended training they discuss the training in supervision sessions, and use this opportunity to reflect on how the learning gained will help them in their work with young people. A staff member commented, 'Discussions in supervision brings the training alive.' This ensures that the training is meaningful, and is focused on better outcomes for the young people who live at the home.

Full-time staff have individual development plans within which their training needs are identified and met. All of the staff are trained to the minimum professional level, or are in the process of working towards this. However, the provider also utilises bank staff, who cover various shifts throughout the organisation. There is no clear development plan for bank staff. Records showed that the bank staff member working at this home had not received safeguarding training as part of their induction.

Care planning documents held in the home are of a generally good quality. However, some records use emotive and derogatory terminology when describing young people's behaviour. This detracts from the good practice carried out by staff on a day-to-day basis, and may affect young people's views about their care while at the home, should they decide to read their individual case records in the future.

Monitoring is effective. Issues arising from the manager's and the external person's monitoring mean that the manager has a good understanding about the home's strengths and areas for development. She is quick to address issues that arise. Furthermore, the home has appropriate systems in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant bodies of significant events that occur at the home, or with young people. This ensures that those with an interest in young people's welfare are kept appropriately informed.

Although some requirements and recommendations have been set at this inspection, these do not significantly undermine the good-quality, individualised care that the young people receive.

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: SC063318

Provision sub-type: 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, social care inspector

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