

SC063380

Registered provider: Family Care Associates Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 February 2018

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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: 23 June 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people are looked after by a caring and enthusiastic staff team.
- Young people's health is consistently promoted. A good therapeutic ethos is used by the staff team to support young people's emotional well-being.
- Staff support young people's learning and the manager works hard to ensure that young people attend the best school to help them to reach their potential.

- Staff respond to safeguarding concerns promptly and they work well with partner agencies to protect young people from harm.
- Young people respond well to the praise and rewards that staff give them when they behave well. This promotes positive behaviour.
- Staff are able to de-escalate potentially challenging behaviours well.
- Staff are well supported by the manager and receive regular and effective supervision and an annual appraisal.
- Social workers are consistently positive about the young people's development and communication from the staff.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Improve the systems for recording and monitoring behaviour management.
- Insufficient privacy settings on the home's computer system do not support staff with recording some safeguarding concerns.
- Some carpeting around the home needs replacing.
- Training records do not clearly show which courses staff have completed and those needing to be updated.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/06/2016	Full	Good
10/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/11/2015	Full	Good
16/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect which must, in particular, provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response. (Regulation 34(2)(d))	31/03/2018
The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of the measure of control, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so has spoken to the user about the measure and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35(3)(b)(i)(ii))	31/03/2018

Recommendations

- Ensure that children's homes are nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of children. For them to be so, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home, and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are consistently well supported by staff. Staff care and show a genuine interest in young people's development. Young people build positive relationships with staff and make good progress.

Young people enjoy positive recreational and social experiences. Staff make every effort to source activities based on each young person's interests. One of the young people has

a part-time job at a local shop and this has bolstered his self-esteem and confidence within the community.

Staff work exceptionally well to enable young people to stay in touch with their families and people who are important to them. During the inspection, young people were experiencing some difficulties with their families. Inspectors observed considerate staff who put the young people's emotional needs at the forefront of their work. One social worker said, 'Staff have always promoted positive relationships with the family, while at the same time being there to pick the pieces up when there have been difficulties.'

Staff monitor young people's health and provide them with the necessary support to keep up to date with routine checks. When necessary, staff make referrals to specialist healthcare agencies so that young people receive the therapeutic support that they need. As a result, staff promote young people's physical and emotional health needs well. Medication administration processes are strong. This includes clear procedures for a young person to be able to self-administer his medication. Consequently, staff enable young people to manage their own health in line with their age and abilities.

Young people make good progress at school. Attendance improves and this supports young people's learning. One young person's school attendance was 39%. However, a recent school report described this young person's attendance now as 'fabulous and very much supported by the staff team'. Staff attend school meetings and make sure that young people receive the best possible support and encouragement to be fully involved with school life.

The home is a pleasant and comfortable environment. Building work is under way to extend the property. When this is completed, the manager has planned a schedule of redecoration. The new extension will provide additional space for family visits and young people are looking forward to increased bedroom sizes. Bedrooms are personalised and show that young people take care of their own space. Some carpets need replacing because they are a potential trip hazard in their current state.

During house meetings, key-work sessions and everyday discussions, young people have many opportunities to have their say. Staff consult with young people and they influence day-to-day decisions about their care. Young people know how to make a complaint. When a complaint is raised, staff respond swiftly. As a result, young people feel listened to.

Transitions into and from the home are handled well. Young people are helped with developing independence skills, including budgeting, cooking and increasing their awareness of the support agencies that they may have to use in the future. This will help young people to manage successfully when they move on from the home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff are trained in child protection and understand their role in keeping young people safe. One social worker said about a young person, 'He has done things he shouldn't have, but the staff have always kept him safe and made sure that he is OK.'

Staff respond to emerging concerns appropriately and this helps to protect young people from harm. For example, when young people raised a concern about staff conduct it was responded to appropriately. However, records relating to this event are not sufficiently thorough. This is because the staff have concerns about how to keep information confidential on the home's computer systems. The staff's lack of confidence in the electronic system's privacy settings has undermined the quality of some safeguarding records. This makes it difficult to determine whether managers and staff have followed due process.

Staff undertake health and safety checks regularly. As a result, young people live in a safe environment. Managers and staff review risk assessments and take account of new information. For example, they have updated the local area risk assessment in response to information received.

Young people's plans clearly set out known risks and vulnerabilities and provide good guidance to staff. Staff know what to do when young people go missing from home. Following missing from home procedures ensures that the correct action is taken to locate young people and return them safely to the home. Staff support young people well on their return to the home and this helps young people to feel valued and cared for. Furthermore, staff work with young people to try to reduce missing from home incidents.

Staff respond calmly and effectively to risky behaviour such as self-harm. Therapeutic support and behaviour management plans enable the staff to give a consistent approach to such concerning behaviour. Incidents of self-harm have reduced because young people learn to regulate their emotions and behaviour, with good support from staff.

Staff are vigilant when young people display erratic behaviour or there are concerns that they are concealing items that may cause them harm. Staff undertake room searches when necessary and with the knowledge of young people. This shows young people that the staff take their safety and well-being seriously.

Staff use a range of rewards and consequences to encourage young people's positive behaviour. Consequences are restorative and linked to the behaviour, which helps young people to understand the effect that their behaviour has on themselves and other people. The registered manager was not aware of all consequences that were on the computerised recording system and so had reviewed these. This undermines her ability to monitor all consequences effectively.

Recruitment procedures are robust and include a range of checks to make sure that new

staff are safe to work with young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. A development plan supports the advancement of the home and the staff team. The manager involves young people in this plan to show how they would like improvements to be made. This enables young people to invest in their home and contribute to improvements.

Monthly monitoring by an independent person includes discussions with the young people and professionals. This helps the independent visitor to make an informed view about the quality of care provided in the home. When the visitor highlights areas for development, the manager responds to these quickly. This shows a commitment to ongoing development.

The registered manager consistently strives to improve the lives of the young people. She will challenge other professionals to support this. For example, when social workers have failed to respond to concerns, she escalates this to their managers. Consequently, she gets the response from the placing authority and is able to progress young people's plans.

Feedback from professionals regarding the home is positive. One social worker said, 'I think that communication is really good. They are always available on the phone and share information with me when I need it.' Staff work collaboratively with police officers, health professionals and education staff. This provides a good supportive structure to both the staff and the young people.

The home is well staffed with enthusiastic and caring individuals who work well together as a team. Staff are well supported through regular supervision meetings and annual appraisals. Both of these forums include discussions about how well they are able to meet the needs of the young people and how their skills could be further improved. This has enabled the manager to have a good awareness of the strengths and needs of the staff team.

Staff undertake a good range of training to develop their skills and knowledge. Not all records of courses undertaken have been updated on the home's training matrix. As a result, the registered manager is unclear about when staff need to update their mandatory training courses. Although some information is contained within individual staff files, the manager does not retain a good enough strategic overview.

The majority of staff have completed the required level 3 qualification. Other staff are in the process of finishing this within timescales. Staff have undertaken courses pertinent to the specific needs of the young people. Consequently, they are able to respond effectively to the risks and behaviours that young people present.

The manager is aware of the need to send information regarding significant events to the appropriate authorities. This ensures that all professionals involved with the young people are aware of concerning incidents and know what action is being taken in

response.

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: SC063380

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Family Care Associates Limited

Registered provider address: Families@Familycare Ltd, Old Mill House, 60 School Lane, Bamber Bridge, Preston PR5 6QE

Responsible individual: Andrew O'Reilly

Registered manager: Andrea Turner

Inspector

Andrew Hewston, social care inspector

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