

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC063380
Inspector	Julia Wright
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Family Care Associates Limited
Registered person address	60 School Lane Bamber Bridge PRESTON PR5 6QE
Responsible individual	Andrew O'Reilly
Registered manager	Andrea Ivy Maria Turner
Date of last inspection	07/03/2014

Inspection date	22/01/2015
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people make good progress and have positive outcomes in all aspects of their lives. They receive high quality care delivered by a committed staff team who are responsive to their needs. Staff offer highly individualised care to young people and this results in improvements to health, behaviour, learning and development.

Feedback from young people and professionals is positive. Confidence is expressed about the safety and well-being of young people at the home, and the abilities and strengths of staff. Young people value the support of staff. Young people grow in self-esteem because they are treated with respect and sensitivity.

The staff team is led by an experienced Registered Manager who sets high standards. Staff feel supported and valued. Staff training is promoted. As a result staff are equipped with the skills and knowledge to meet the needs of young people.

There were no recommendations or requirements at the last inspection. This inspection has identified a shortfall in relation to the absence of a location risk assessment. There are also some minor shortfalls in relation to the overall decoration of the home. These matters do not have a direct impact on the young people's overall safety or well-being.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The home accommodates up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2014	Interim	good progress
06/08/2013	Full	good
04/02/2013	Interim	good progress
24/07/2012	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
31 (2001)	ensure that premises used for the purposes of a children's home are appropriately and suitably located, so that children cared for by the children's home are effectively safeguarded and are able to access services to meet needs identified in their care plan or placement plan (Regulation 31(1A)(a)).	08/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. (NMS 10.3)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Taking into account their starting points, young people make good progress. They grow in confidence and develop a positive self-view. They develop an understanding of their backgrounds and the progress of their lives. Young people value the day to day support of staff and say 'I like it here. Staff are easy to talk to'. As a result, young people continue to thrive.

Most young people engage in their educational placements. They have excellent punctuality and attendance. Reports from schools confirm the progress that young people make and the positive outlook for them for the future. This means that young people maximise their opportunities to learn and develop and their future opportunities are enhanced.

Young people benefit from access to primary and specialist health services and they utilise the support of staff to ensure that their health needs are met. Where young people smoke, strategies are in place to support reduction. Where occasional drug misuse takes place, this is reducing. Consequently, young people learn to take responsibility and their health improves.

Young people are positive about opportunities to participate in decisions about their lives. These include planning activities and menus, general discussions, and being informed about and contributing to their care planning. Their views are recorded and young people feel that they are listened to and taken seriously. Young people say 'If I am not sure I can always talk to staff or ring the social worker'. This results in young people feeling secure at the home and increases their emotional well-being.

Young people's contribution to the community is positive. Their behaviour in the community is good. Young people say they see friends and choose activities related to their interests. Consequently, their lives are enhanced and they enjoy their free time. Where appropriate, young people keep in contact with their families. They value the practical and emotional support of staff in making these arrangements. This ensures that young people maintain bonds with people who are important to them. They also develop an understanding about their history and the progress of their lives.

Independence skills improve in line with the needs of individual young people. Practical life skills are developed and enhanced. Young people learn skills in managing their diet, their health and their environment. As a result, young people's confidence in managing their lives increases.

Quality of care

outstanding

Staff are consistently concerned with the welfare of young people. They say that it is their priority to meet young people's needs. Some young people have strong attachments to staff, others new to the home are developing their relationships. Social workers say, 'staff develop excellent relationships with young people, nothing is too much trouble'. Another said, 'staff look after my young person really well. (He) is happy there'.

Young people live in an environment which promotes safety, positive social interaction and respectful behaviours. Staff model positive behaviour with each other and with young people. Consequently, young people make significant progress with developing socially acceptable behaviour. They learn how to respect each other and themselves. As a result, young people develop positive relationships with others and their self-esteem is enhanced.

Staff work extremely well as a team to promote young people's individual needs. They know the young people very well. Communication with each other is a top priority for staff ensuring consistency of approach. Staff provide clear boundaries to young people in terms of expected behaviour. Staff support for individual young people is high, leaving little opportunity for poor behaviour. This means that the safety of young people is enhanced and behaviour improves.

Placement planning for each young person is comprehensive and individualised. This ensures that the care they receive is tailored to their individual needs and that achievable and realistic outcomes are identified. The placement plan reflects the placing authority's care plan for the young person. An Independent Reviewing Officer commented 'The staff provide excellent and thorough reports for reviews, they are always prepared'.

The Registered Manager is meticulous in promoting young people's safety. Risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changing needs. Where additional staff are needed to support young people, these are in place. Medication management is good with staff following clear procedures and protocols. As a result, young people's needs are rigorously addressed and young people are kept safe.

Staff are dedicated to promoting young people's education. Liaison with educational placements is thorough and effective. Home and school inform each other of young people's overall progress, ensuring important information is not overlooked. Young people know that they are afforded seamless care. They have proactive and consistent support throughout the day. This ensures that young people's global needs are met.

Staff are creative and highly effective in supporting young people's understanding of their background. Information is gathered and kept in 'memory books' recording important events, activities and achievements. This contributes towards young

people's understanding of the progress of their lives. As a result, self-knowledge improves.

Staff enthusiastically promote young people's participation. They frequently encourage young people to share their views and wishes. Staff listen to young people's views and where they cannot always act on these, they are clear about the reasons why. Consequently, young people feel involved and consulted and this increases their sense of involvement in the life of the home. Young people know that their voices are heard.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people report feeling safe in the home. Staff and young people create a calm and welcoming atmosphere. Professionals commented positively about young people's safety. A social worker said, 'staff promote a safe environment and I have no concerns about the safety of my young person as it is a priority for staff'.

There are good arrangements in place to safeguard young people. Professionals working with the home say that staff understand how to protect young people and promote their welfare. Staff are trained to help protect young people from abuse and they follow agreed safeguarding procedures and processes. Clear risk assessments and behaviour management plans are in place for each young person. Staff are skilled and successful in balancing protecting young people with the recognition that young people need to experiment and challenge boundaries. This means that young people can develop skills without compromising their safety. As a result, young people's safety is enhanced and their confidence grows.

Where young people have gone missing from the home, staff follow the required procedures to report them missing and support them on their return. Links are well established with the local police and missing persons team who offer support and advice to young people about the risks involved in going missing. Records of incidents of young people going missing are well kept and clear. The home has seen a significant reduction in incidents of young people going missing in recent months.

Staff are proportionate in managing young people's behaviour. Records of positive rewards and sanctions are maintained. These illustrate the effectiveness of the staff approach of positive reinforcement and encouragement with young people. While staff are trained in the use of physical restraint to keep young people safe, incidents of the use of physical restraint are minimal. The positive and supportive relationships between staff and young people have promoted a harmonious environment overall. Young people are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour as a way of learning self-regulation. Consequently, behaviour improves, and young people's self-esteem increases.

Staff regularly conduct health and safety checks to minimise any risks to the young

people. All staff work diligently to ensure that the home provides a safe and comfortable environment for the young people. Fire drills are regularly practised ensuring safety is enhanced for all.

Recruitment practice at the home is thorough ensuring that all staff are vetted before they start work with young people. All records required by regulation are completed. As a result, young people are kept safe from adults who may wish to harm them. Visitors are checked and monitored, again to ensure young people's safety. The home provides an on call system for staff so that young people and the staff team are fully supported 24 hours each day.

Leadership and management

good

The arrangements in place to lead, manage and monitor the service provided by the home are of very good quality. The home is very well managed by an experienced Registered Manager who has been in post for seven years and gained the Registered Manager's Award in 2009. She is supported by a dedicated team of senior residential care workers and residential care workers.

The Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the work undertaken at the home. Young people receive their own guide to the home. These documents are informative and clear and provide accurate information about life at the home and external sources of support.

The Registered Manager continuously monitors staff practice and the operation of the home through established systems and having a presence in the home. She occasionally covers shifts working alongside staff and young people. This ensures that the quality of care is of a consistently high standard. Quality assurance systems including consultation with external professionals and feedback from young people and their families inform the operation of the home. The Registered Manager is highly effective in addressing issues and making changes. For example where a young person may need additional staff support, extra staff are put on shift. This results in a service that continually evolves and responds to young people's needs.

External monthly audit reports and internal monitoring of the home ensure that the management and staff team have a strong awareness and understanding of the strengths of the home and areas for development. This is reflected in the home's development plan which includes a broad range of areas for development with realistic timescales.

The Registered Manager and staff team have built strong links with other agencies and these have contributed to improving the care provided to young people in the home. Social workers say, 'Staff always keep me informed. I have no doubts that my young person is very well cared for'.

The Registered Manager is successfully managing a period of change for the home with young people leaving and new young people moving in. In addition, there have been changes in the staff team. The Registered Manager has ensured consistency of staff without the use of agency staff. This means that young people have the opportunity to develop relationships with a small and consistent group of staff during a challenging time in their lives, and that they feel safe in their new environment.

Staff receive regular supervision allowing them to reflect on the level of care they provide to young people and areas to develop. Annual appraisals assist staff in their professional development. Managers identify training needs and forward planning ensures that this training takes place. All staff have undertaken induction training and core mandatory training. Other more specialised training is also offered often reflecting young people's needs, for example supporting young people who self-harm. The high importance placed on staff development and support ensures that staff are valued and able to improve the care they offer to young people.

Young people's files are very well maintained and audited. All information required by regulations is incorporated in the files and is easily accessible. This means that staff have all the information they need to comprehensively meet the needs of young people.

The manager has not prepared a location assessment addressing safeguarding and accessibility of local services for young people. While there is evidence of collaborative working with police, health, education and children's services colleagues, a location assessment is required to ensure that all areas relating to young people's safety are fully explored.

The home has a comfortable environment but there are some shortfalls with the standard of decoration which needs improvement.

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.