

SC063813

Registered provider: DMR Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned. It provides accommodation for up to six young people who have experienced childhood instability leading to trauma and associated complex behaviours. The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2010

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 August 2019

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

requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected

requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers

requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2019	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
26/06/2018	Full	Good
01/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
07/02/2017	Interim	Improved 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(vii)(c)(i)(ii)) In particular ensure that the home is well maintained throughout and that internal doors are not locked without good reason.	30/09/2019
The health and well-being standard is that— the health and well-being needs of children are met; children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being; and children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff help each child to understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding; take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10(1)(a)(b)(c)(2)(a)(ii)(iii))	30/09/2019
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.	30/09/2019

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. (Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))	
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children’s home that promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(b)(2)(a)(c)(d)(h))	30/09/2019
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b))	30/09/2019
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children’s safety. The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(3)(d))	30/09/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))	30/09/2019

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The home is not well maintained or homely throughout. Although most young people's bedrooms are personalised and comfortable and meet their needs, other areas of the home are not. Some damage needs to be repaired, and aspects of the home require redecoration. Internal doors have locks, and the inspector found that on occasion staff lock these doors without good reason. Business certificates are on display in the entrance to the home and do not create a homely first impression. The games room also requires redecoration and does not provide a welcoming and pleasant environment for young people to relax in.

Staff do not always promote some young people's health needs well. For example, staff have not acted on recommendations made in a young person's healthcare plan regarding his dietary requirements and physical well-being. Young people are not provided with enough nutritional meals. When young people refuse to attend health appointments, it is not clear what action staff take to help young people to understand and overcome the barriers that they face to attending these.

Young people have access to some specialist emotional support. However, communication between the organisation's counsellor and staff is not well documented. As a result, it is not clear what work the counsellor undertakes or how this support is monitored and reviewed. This is a missed opportunity to review and understand the impact that this lack of clarity has on young people's well-being.

Young people are offered a range of activities that meet their personal and social interests. One young person continues to attend the army cadets and he has completed his motorbike proficiency test. Another young person is taking driving lessons, which have been funded by staff, and he will be completing his driving test shortly. These excellent opportunities help young people to learn new skills, increase their confidence and provide them with wider social networks and positive experiences. However, a shortage of staff means that one young person has not been able to continue his regular activity, which is disappointing for him.

Staff show some good commitment to caring for young people. Overall, young people feel valued and supported by staff. Young people make some good progress from their individual starting points. One young person told the inspector, '[Name of staff] has stepped up to the mark and helped me get to where I am. I can't take all the credit.'

Staff support young people's education well. They act quickly and support young people to enrol in education and engage in their learning. Most young people have made good progress in their education. Staff support young people by attending meetings at school and encourage them to complete their homework. Staff have positive working relationships with school staff and communicate with professionals about young people's education progress.

Young people learn some good independence skills. Good staff support prepares young people well for their next steps. As a result, one young person was able to move onto semi-independent living, and another young person was able to secure his own accommodation and live independently. When young people leave education, they undertake employment, and this further promotes their independence and skills.

The registered manager and staff encourage young people to express their views about the care they receive through weekly meetings and informal chats with staff. This clearly shows that staff are listening to and giving young people the opportunity to express their views. When young people first arrive, staff engage well with young people to get to know them and to help them to settle in. This also helps young people to have input into the ways in which their day-to-day needs will be met.

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

The quality of risk assessments and behaviour management plans is variable. Some of these records contain good detail and clear guidance for staff. However, others are generic, and information contained in them is contradictory. These shortfalls have the potential to confuse staff and do not help them to focus on the current and most serious risks.

Staff provide some good support to young people to help them learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they work with young people to help them understand why bullying behaviour is unacceptable and how to use the internet safely. However, this support is not consistently good. Staff do not work with young people on all areas of concern as outlined in young people's individual plans. For example, staff do not always follow up issues relating to self-harming behaviour, the use of racist language and cannabis use. This does not fully promote young people's health, welfare and safety.

The registered manager has taken some steps to ensure that young people live in a safe environment. For example, she has ensured that the fire risk assessment has been reviewed and she has implemented most of the recommendations raised in this assessment. However, she has not reviewed the need for restrictors on young people's bedroom windows following an incident. This has the potential to place young people at risk of harm.

Young people said that they feel safe. They know who they can talk to if they have any worries and that staff will listen.

The number of missing from home incidents has reduced, with only three incidents having taken place since the last inspection. Staff follow young people and act quickly to reduce the potential risk of harm.

Trained staff only use physical intervention as a last resort to keep young people safe. Staff use de-escalation techniques effectively, and this has helped to reduce the number

of incidents when physical intervention is required. The registered manager completes debriefs with young people and staff after incidents have occurred. This provides opportunities for everyone involved in the incident to reflect on and learn from these situations. It also gives young people the opportunity to express their views about what has happened.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Staff vacancies require the registered manager to use agency staff. Although five new members of staff have joined the team since the last inspection, recruitment is ongoing. Young people told the inspector that they would like more staff, so that they can take part in certain activities. This is because, on occasions, young people have not been able to do activities because there have not been enough staff to support them to do so.

Staff have a positive relationship with the registered manager and they feel supported by her. However, not all staff receive good-quality, regular, practice-related supervision. As a result, staff do not have the opportunity to review their practice or discuss their performance and learning needs.

The registered manager does not ensure that staff are safely recruited. For example, she does not oversee records to ensure that employment references are verified. This increases the potential for unsuitable people to work at the home.

The home's statement of purpose requires updating so that it accurately reflects the staff who work at the home and the qualifications that they have. An out-of-date statement of purpose has the potential to mislead those who read it.

The registered manager and responsible individual do not always act on the recommendations raised by the independent visitor. This means that opportunities to further improve young people's experiences are overlooked. In addition, the registered manager does not always evaluate the effectiveness of records such as young people's individual risk assessments. Consequently, managers do not use monitoring as effectively as possible to drive forward improvement.

Some staff hold appropriate qualifications for their roles, and those that do not are working towards the level 3 qualification in caring for children and young people. Staff undertake some good training to improve their knowledge and skills. For example, staff have recently received training to help them to better understand a model of intervention used by the organisation to help young people to keep themselves safe. This model of intervention is designed to safeguard young people against the risks of drug misuse, knife crime and gang crime and culture. However, the inspector identified some gaps in staff training records. This means that staff do not have all the necessary skills that they need to fully support young people.

The registered manager has developed positive working relationships with professionals. She and staff work in partnership with other agencies such as placing local authorities, the police and health professionals. Collaborative working helps young people to receive coordinated care.

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: SC063813

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: DMR Services Ltd

Registered provider address: DMR Services, 102 Queslett Road East, Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham B74 2EZ

Responsible individual: Sally Neville

Registered manager: Samantha Turley

Inspectors

Patrick McIntosh, social care inspector

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