

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC063813
Inspector	Jo Stephenson
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	DMR Services Limited
Registered person address	102 Queslett Road East SUTTON COLDFIELD West Midlands B74 2EZ
Responsible individual	Sally Louise Neville
Registered manager	Samantha Elizabeth Turley
Date of last inspection	07/03/2014

Inspection date	18/11/2014
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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	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people make good progress in the home because they received effective and personalised care that reflects their individual needs. Staff ensure that internal support plans are detailed, regularly reviewed and mirror the aims and objectives of the placing authorities. This means that young people thrive in the home because they benefit from comprehensive and integrated care packages.

Staff complete regular one-to-one sessions with young people and this is a considerable strength of the home. Young people are consulted with regarding the contents of their care plans, challenging behaviours and the development of the home. Subsequently, their views and opinions are central to decisions about their care. This promotes young people's well-being and self-esteem.

Young people are safe and say they feel safe in the home. This is attributed, in part, to the positive relationships they have with staff. Staff work in partnership with young people, their families and placing authorities to identify young people's vulnerabilities. Robust risk assessments are in place to identify strategies to promote young people's safety. For example, when young people present risk taking behaviours, staff ensure that they regularly access bespoke support services to educate young people on how to keep themselves safe.

The Registered Manager regularly and effectively monitors the quality of care provide by the home and positive outcomes for young people. Monitoring systems in place are dynamic and evaluate both qualitative and quantitative data. This means that the Registered Manager is able to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the service. As a result, the home continues to evolve to meet the changing needs of young people. However, when young people have been excluded from education, actions taken by staff to enable them to resume education promptly are slow to take effect. The negative impact of this is reduced, in part, because staff tutor young people in the home. Nevertheless, a recommendation has been made to address this shortfall.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is owned and operated by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2014	Interim	good progress
06/11/2013	Full	good
19/03/2013	Interim	good progress
11/07/2012	Full	good

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure children who have been excluded from school have access to appropriate education and training , so they are supported and enabled to resume full time education (NMS 8.8)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people engage well with staff and say that they enjoy the one-to-one sessions they participate in. One young person said, 'I like the keywork sessions they help me to get things straight in my mind.' These sessions encourage young people to reflect on their behaviours and take responsibility for their action. In addition, young people recognise the effect that their behaviours have had, and can have, on others. As a result, young people develop coping strategies to better manage their own behaviours and frustrations. This has a positive impact on young people's self-esteem and confidence because they gain a rounded understanding of their backgrounds and personal circumstances. Subsequently, they acquire the emotional resilience and social skills necessary to move forward with their lives.

The health needs of young people are supported in the home. They have easy access to local doctors and other primary health professionals. Where necessary, young people work with specialist health agencies, such as drug abuse counsellors. This ensures that young people are provided with up-to-date and factual information regarding the negative impact drug use may have on their development. Furthermore, they participate in bespoke one-to-one sessions regarding their emotional health and well-being. This holistic approach to meeting young people's health needs has a positive impact on their self-worth and self-esteem.

Young people's educational attendance and achievement is central to daily routines in the home. For example, the home employs a dedicated education worker who advocates for young people. As a result, young people receive the support they need to make progress with their education. For some, this means that they have been able to re-engage with formal learning and are making significant progress in education, taking account of their starting points. Subsequently, young people recognise the positive impact regular school attendance has on their development. This further promotes young people's welfare and self-confidence.

Young people participate in regular meetings to discuss the development of the home. These meetings include discussions with young people regarding the impact that anti-social behaviour can have on others. They are encouraged to recognise how their negative behaviours may affect others; and consider the wider implication of these on the local community. As a result, young people develop an understanding and awareness of how to make a positive contribution to their community. This supports their engagement in the home and with their local community.

Contact between young people and their families is continually encouraged and supported. They are enabled to take responsibility for arranging family visits and social events with their friends. When relationships between young people and their families have become strained, they are able to discuss the reasons for this with staff.

This allows young people to reflect on their own behaviours and the potentially negative impact this may have on their relationships with those who are important to them. As a result, young people are not isolated from their families and this promotes their self-esteem and emotional well-being.

The home operates an 'independent living' programme to support young people through their transition to adulthood. These programmes are tailored to reflect young people's individual skills and abilities and are continually reviewed and monitored. As a result, they learn the practical and emotional skills they need to equip them for adult life.

Quality of care

good

Young people have positive and constructive relationships with staff. This is because staff ensure that young people have personalised internal care plans in place that reflect their individual needs and vulnerabilities. These plans are supported by up-to-date statutory care plans and internal risk assessments that are regularly reviewed and updated. As a result, young people say they feel involved in decisions about their care. One young person said, 'Staff go through my plans with me and talk to me about my future. They really care what happens to us.' In addition, young people participate in regular one-to-one sessions with staff. These identify their needs, challenge their unacceptable behaviours, monitor their progress and celebrate their achievements. This empowers young people to take responsibility for their welfare, well-being and behaviour.

Staff work in partnership with education providers to support young people to continue with their learning. The dedicated education worker regularly liaises with allocated teaching staff. This ensures that barriers to education that some young people face are effectively discussed and resolved. As a result, they benefit from bespoke educational support that enables them to make significant progress in this aspect of their life. However, when young people have been excluded from school, plans for their re-introduction into formal education are slow to take effect. This potentially means that young people lose motivation to continue with their learning. A recommendation has been raised to address this shortfall.

Partnership working between staff and local specialist health services means that young people receive the help and support they require to address their health needs. For example when young people are, or have been, involved in drug misuse, staff ensure that they are provided with up-to-date information regarding the detrimental impact this behaviour has in their development. This means that young people are encouraged to make positive decisions about their life-style choices. As a result, young people are able to recognise the physical and emotional consequences of drug abuse. Furthermore, when required, staff work with local mental health teams to meet young people's needs. This effective partnership working with local agencies means that young people do not experience a delay in accessing these

services. This promotes emotional and psychological health.

Young people understand how to make a complaint and feel confident that their concerns will be addressed. One young person said, 'Anything we raise will be sorted out because the manager takes what we say really seriously.' Staff ensure that all concerns raised by young people are recorded in detail and responded to within appropriate time-scales. There have been no complaints made since the last inspection, although staff regularly discuss with young people how to make a complaint should they wish to. This transparent complaints procedure promotes the welfare and safety of young people.

Young people participate in a varied range of activities and leisure interests. Staff support them to join local clubs and socialise with their friends in the community. Subsequently, young people are able to form and sustain suitable relationships with their peers and expand their social circles. This encourages young people's self-esteem and self-confidence. This is because they are able to learn new skills and develop necessary social interaction skills to support their development.

The home is appropriately located in a residential community and is well maintained and decorated. Young people say they are involved in decisions regarding the decoration of the home and the purchase of furniture and fixtures for the home. The environment is welcoming and homely and provides young people with a suitable and comfortable home.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are safe in the home and say they feel safe. They do not identify bullying to be an issue in the home. Although there have been no incidents of bullying since the last inspection, staff remain alert to signs and indications of this behaviour. For example, when relationships between young people falter, staff complete 'anti-bullying sessions' with young people. This ensure that young people understand how their interactions with others can be interpreted. As a result, young people take responsibility for their actions and this promotes their safety and the safety of others.

Staff ensure that detailed risk assessments are in place to protect young people from harm and promote their welfare and safety. The Registered Manager has established effective partnership arrangements with local police and safeguarding teams regarding missing from home episodes. The frequency of these events has decreased since the last inspection because young people have personalised plans in place that identify their individual risks and detail the actions required of others. Furthermore, young people participate in one-to-one sessions with staff to discuss their risk taking behaviours, such as failing to return to the home at an agreed time. These sessions are embedded in the regular review of risk assessments. As a result, young people recognise the aspects of their behaviours that impact negatively on their welfare; and

work in partnership with staff to reduce these risks.

Young people have comprehensive behaviour management plans in place. For example, young people benefit from individual reward programmes that celebrate their positive behaviours. They receive continual verbal praise from staff. Subsequently, the use of sanctions in the home has reduced since the last inspection. This is because young people participate in effective one-to-one sessions with staff and learn to take responsibility for their own actions. Physical restraint is rare and only ever used as a last resort; associated records are appropriately completed. This further promotes their safety and development.

Staff receive regular and effective training in safeguarding and child protection. This means that staff understand the wide ranging issues that potentially jeopardise young people's safety, such as sexual exploitation. Furthermore, the Registered Manager ensures that any allegations against staff are promptly reported and recorded in line with safeguarding protocols. There have been no allegations raised since the last inspection.

The Registered Manager adheres to organisational recruitment policies and procedures. Staff files are maintained to an exceptionally high standard and include all necessary vetting checks and information. This means that young people work with suitably selected staff and this promotes their safety.

Staff maintain health and safety records to a high standard. Robust systems are in place to immediately highlight and action any shortfalls. Young people regularly participate in fire tests and drills and understand the fire procedures in place. This means that in the event of a fire, young people understand the actions expected in them and are able to safely exit the home. This ensures the safety of young people in these circumstances.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The home has a permanent manager in post who was registered with Ofsted in December 2010. The Registered Manager holds suitable qualifications for this position and has a number of years' experience of working in and managing children's residential care.

Young people, their families and the placing authorities are clear about the support the home provides. There is a Statement of Purpose in place that details the aims and objectives of the service. This document is supported by a young people's guide that includes information on independent advocacy services that young people can contact should they have any concerns. As a result, young people, their families and placing authorities understand the services the home provides. This supports young people's development.

The Registered Manager works in effective partnership with other professionals,

young people's families and the placing authority and this is a considerable strength of the service. Social workers speak highly of the commitment of the staff and especially the Registered Manager. One social worker said, 'The manager never gives up on young people. This is why they are able to turn their lives around.'

Staff contribute to statutory reviews by completing regular reports that emphasise young people's achievements and progress. Furthermore, the views and wishes of young people are integral to these reports. This means that young people recognise the positive progress they make and this promotes their self-esteem and confidence. As a result, they benefit from an integrated approach to meeting their care needs.

Staff have an extensive range of skills and are extremely proficient in identifying the welfare and care needs of young people. Staff receive regular and effective supervision that compliments their role and considers their personal development. As a result, young people work with experienced and skilled staff who are able to support their development. The Registered Manager ensures all mandatory training is regularly refreshed and updated and that staff are able to access specific training that reflects the individual needs of young people. This means that young people work with suitably qualified staff who are able to meet their needs; and whose practice is effectively monitored.

The Registered Manager identifies patterns and trends within the home through the systematic evaluation of positive outcomes for young people. The home is well resourced and structured to endorse stability and consistency for young people. The Registered Manager ensures robust and effective internal and external monitoring systems are in place to review the quality of care provided by the home. There is a development plan in place that considers the strengths and weaknesses of the home. This demonstrates the home's capacity for continued improvement. Monitoring reports establish the positive impact living in the home has on young people. Subsequently, the individual progress young people make is central to the on-going evolution of the service. The service has a positive impact on young people and their families; and improves their life chances through personalised care and dedication. All records are clear and securely stored. Case file records are fluid, detailed and regularly reviewed and this means that they contribute to an understanding of young people's backgrounds, experiences and progress.

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.