

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC063895
Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Castle Homes Care Limited
Registered person address	Castle Homes Care Ltd, The Manor House High Street, Rothwell KETTERING Northamptonshire NN14 6BQ
Responsible individual	Lee Aaron Jones
Registered manager	Julie Lorraine Wallhead
Date of last inspection	20/02/2014

Inspection date	03/12/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	None

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	adequate
-------------------	-----------------

A judgement of adequate has been made due to shortfalls in following up promptly some recent behavioural incidents. In these incidents staff had not taken prompt action in dealing with some behaviours including self-harm. Although young people did not suffer significant harm, delay in updating risk assessments, delay in contacting the police when young people go missing and failure to carry out room searches in a timely manner have the potential to place young people at significant risk of harm.

Despite these shortfalls, young people have made very good progress at the home given their starting points. They are happy at the home and have exceptionally positive relationships with staff who they can trust.

The Registered Manager and her team are committed to improving the lives of young people. This is evident in the progress made by young people and the number of positive developments since the last inspection. Feedback from young people and placing authorities confirms this progress and the commitment displayed by the whole team.

Three requirements have been made regarding: contacting the police promptly when young people go missing; promoting the welfare of young people by ensuring

their care records are up to date and that staff take prompt action to support young people's emotional wellbeing; and ensuring all records are kept up to date and signed by the author. Two recommendations have been made regarding room searches and ensuring young people have prompt access to specialist health services.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately operated home offers accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2014	Interim	good progress
09/05/2013	Full	good
04/09/2012	Interim	inadequate progress
12/07/2012	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
11 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there; and make proper provision for the care, supervision, support and treatment of children (Regulation 11 (1) (a) (b))	12/01/2015
16 (2001)	implement the missing child policy effectively which takes into account young people's individualised needs and their emotional wellbeing at the time of the incident (Regulation 16 (4) (b))	12/01/2015
28 (2001)	ensure young people's care records are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each written entry. (Regulation 28 (1) (b) (c))	12/01/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure room searches are carried out promptly after incidents of self-harming behaviours (NMS 3.20)
- ensure young people have prompt access to specialist health professionals when they need these services. (NMS 6.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people really do benefit from living at the home. They make exceptional progress in a wide range of areas given their individual needs and starting points. Young people are very proud of the progress they have made during their time at the home which has boosted their self-confidence tremendously.

Young people's health improves significantly because they are supported to learn about, and live healthy lifestyles. Young people learn to take responsibility for their health. Some young people have made exceptional progress in self-managing their particular medical needs, some of which are quite complex. A young person told the inspector how pleased they are with themselves as they are now able to manage their conditions independently; and have the confidence to contact health professionals themselves if they have a concern about their health.

Young people make significant progress in achieving their academic potential given their starting points. This is because education and training is based on individual needs, interest and talents. Young people's attendance at school and college is very good. Some young people have achieved their GCSE's with some taking them a year early. Young people spoke enthusiastically to the inspector about their education provision and the training and apprenticeships they have embarked on. Young people's achievements have been recognised and rewarded by their schools and by their placing authorities. One young person has recently won two awards for outstanding achievements. Young people are very proud of this. Young people's progress in education and training is significantly improving their life opportunities. It also increases their self-belief and helps them look forward to a positive future.

Young people's independence skills also increase greatly, really preparing them for the next stage of their lives. Some young people who attend college and are on an apprenticeship have demonstrated their commitment to improving their future life chances. For example, some young people have to get up early each morning and use public transport to go to their college or place of work. This also reflects their increased level of maturity, responsibility and increased emotional resilience in facing life's challenges.

Young people have become safer given their starting points. For young people who historically went missing regularly, the incidents have reduced significantly. As a result, they are not as much at risk of harm, including sexual exploitation.

Young people's confidence grows because they are empowered to express their views and opinions. They are able to influence the day to day running of the home as well as their future lives. They feel listened to by staff and their views are acted upon where appropriate. Young people also learn to negotiate their wishes in a mature

manner, presenting valid arguments. For example, a young person successfully negotiated to keep their mobile phone with them during the night. This not only makes young people feel valued but also demonstrates that they can take responsibility for their actions.

Young people become better equipped to become accepted members of the wider community. Since the last inspection young people's meetings include discussions of current affairs which helps young people learn about wider societal issues and helps them to understand people's differences. These discussions also help young people explore their own values and help to improve their debating skills.

Quality of care

adequate

Young people receive individualised care which takes into account their starting points, previous histories, experiences and identified risks. However, in some instances their placement plans and risk assessments do not adequately explain how to meet young people's needs. Additionally, young people's placement plans do not always contain all the identified needs, although this information is in other documents. Staff know the young people well, and there is no evidence that these shortfalls have impacted on the provision of care for young people. However, a lack of clear details has the potential to affect the delivery of consistent care.

Young people generally receive good support to ensure their physical and emotional needs are being met. They attend routine and specialist health appointments. Staff work closely with health professionals to ensure young people's needs are appropriately assessed and are met. However, in recent incidents where some young people have struggled with their emotional and mental health, staff have not acted swiftly enough in updating individual risk assessments or seeking specialist support. Although young people did not experience significant harm, these delays have the potential to place young people at risk of significant harm and injury.

Young people receive a varied and nutritional diet based on their individual needs including cultural and specific dietary needs. Young people are consulted about the menus at the weekly young people's meetings and the cook works very closely with young people. Young people are very pleased with the meals provided and are very appreciative of the cook.

Care provided promotes young people's identity and cultural needs. Young people are actively encouraged to learn about and understand their backgrounds and retain their identity. This gives them a sense of self-worth. Young people also learn about people's differences and this helps them to be more tolerant. They also learn to become active members in society by giving something back. For example, a young person and staff participated in a charity walk for 'Help the Heroes'.

Young people are very happy with the care and support they receive. They have

really positive relationships with staff which helps them grow and develop their confidence and skills.

Empowerment and enablement of young people is embedded in the day to day practice at the home. Regular key work sessions take place as do young people's meetings. Young people's suggestions and views are listened to and acted upon where appropriate. For example, as a result of young people's suggestions, the menus include Caribbean and South African cuisine, and trips have been arranged to Alton Towers and the seaside.

The home is a detached house situated in a village although it is near enough to larger towns and cities to enable young people to easily access a range of community resources. The home is decorated, furnished and maintained to a good standard. Young people are involved in choosing the décor in the home and communal areas reflect young people's identities and personalities. Their successes are celebrated through lots of photographs of activities they have engaged in on display throughout the home. Young people's bedrooms reflect their individuality and their personalities.

Keeping children and young people safe adequate

Young people are supported to take risks based on their individual needs in a nurturing and supportive environment. This helps to prepare them for adulthood. However, young people's risk assessments are not always updated as a matter of priority when there has been an incident which has placed young people at significant risk of harm. Furthermore, room searches are not always carried out promptly after incidents of self-harming behaviours.

There are clear procedures to follow in the event of young people going missing. Staff work closely with the police and are proactive in arranging multi-agency meetings if a young person goes missing regularly or is at serious risk when going missing. This helps to review the effectiveness of existing strategies and decide how to improve safeguards for young people. However, during a recent incident staff followed some of the missing from home protocol but did not contact the police as a matter of priority given the concerns they had about a young person's emotional wellbeing. Delays in reporting to the police in such instances have the potential to place young people at risk of significant harm and injury.

Staff are clear about their responsibilities in reporting any child protection concerns. Staffing levels, and the existence of open and trusting relationships between staff and young people, further protect and promote young people's well-being. Young people reported that they feel safe in the home. It is made clear to young people on admission that bullying is not tolerated. Bullying is regularly discussed in young people's meetings. Young people reported that bullying is not an issue and that they all mostly get on together other than 'normal teenage arguments'.

Complaints are taken seriously and acted upon promptly. This makes young people trust the staff and feel safe.

The management of young people's behaviour is good. Sanctions are not used often and when they are, they are appropriate. Records evidence that young people are consulted in the process. Restraint is rarely used and only ever in the last resort. Records of restraint are kept and give clear details of the incident. Management monitoring systems are effective in identifying any trends or patterns in behaviour which helps to inform young people's needs.

The management of health and safety is good which helps to protect young people from the risk of harm. This is because equipment and installations are serviced as required and a range of weekly and monthly checks are undertaken. Regular fire safety tests, including fire drills are carried out and young people are clear about the fire evacuation procedure.

Safe and robust recruitment practices help to protect young people from the risk of harm and abuse. Finding the right person for the job is more important than filling a vacancy and this is evidenced by the recruitment practices. Young people participate in the recruitment of new staff which helps them to feel valued.

Leadership and management

adequate

The Registered Manager has worked at the home since 2009 and has many years' experience of working with young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. She has a Level 4 qualification in management.

The home has a detailed Statement of Purpose which meets the requirements of the regulation. It provides clear information about services provided to young people, parent, carers and placing authorities. Practice in the home is in line with the Statement of Purpose.

The management team provide clear leadership and direction and staff feel well supported in their roles. They feel listened to and play an active part in the development of the service. Staff receive regular supervision and a range of training which helps to ensure they have the right support and the necessary skills to meet the needs of the young people.

Young people's care records are not always updated in a timely manner. This has the potential to affect the delivery of care based on current needs. Additionally, some care records are not dated and signed by the author, which does not enable staff to accurately assess progress made.

A detailed development plan is reviewed regularly. This reflects the Registered Manager and her team's commitment to improving the quality of care for young

people. This is evident in the number of new developments introduced since the last inspection. These include the introduction of: current affairs discussions in young people's meetings; memory boxes and photograph albums for young people; a monitoring tool for analysing triggers and patterns of behaviours and an improved induction programme.

There is a range of quality assurance systems within the home. The Registered Manager carries out monthly checks of records. Consultation forms are given to young people, parents or carers and placing authorities which are used to inform future practice and developments. Monthly visits are carried out by an independent visitor and reports sent to Ofsted as required.

There is a clear system in place to notify appropriate authorities of all significant events relating to the protection of young people living at the home. This helps to promote young people's well-being and protect them from harm.

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.