

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	03/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC063895
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Castle Homes Care Ltd
Registered provider address	80 Hammersmith Road, London, W14 8UD

Responsible individual	Julie Wallhead
Registered manager	Kelly Watson
Inspector	Tracy Murty

Inspection date	03/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. At the full inspection in June 2016, this home was judged to be good. At the interim inspection in October 2016, it was judged to have declined in effectiveness. This interim inspection has been carried out to consider the actions taken by senior managers since October 2016. Some improvements were noted at this inspection, but several of the requirements set at the last inspection have not been met. A key concern relates to the continuing failure of managers to ensure that detailed and clear records are maintained following an allegation of abuse or neglect. A number of staff were suspended following an allegation made by young people in August 2016. At the time of the inspection in October 2016, records did not reflect the actions taken by managers to support relevant staff or to protect young people. At the time of this inspection, records still do not reflect the actions taken by managers or the support provided to young people or relevant staff. This does not enable safeguarding agencies to gain a clear sense of how managers respond to allegations and could potentially place young people at risk. It also does not provide staff with the support and information they require. Two requirements have been re-set as a result of this shortfall. At the last inspection, a requirement was set relating to how complaints made by young people are recorded and responded to. At this inspection, records still do not clearly reflect the concerns raised by young people, or the actions taken by managers to address them. One young person had requested to make a complaint following an incident in October 2016. Despite the independent visitor raising this with managers in November 2016, a complaint has not been recorded or responded to relating to this incident. This does not provide young people with a clear sense that any concerns they may raise will be taken seriously or responded to in a timely manner. This requirement has also been re-set following this inspection. Formal meetings take place with young people to discuss the care and support they receive and provide them with an opportunity to express their wishes, views and feelings. New systems have been introduced since the last inspection for recording	

any requests made by young people during such meetings or at other times. However, staff and managers have not consistently ensured that any requests are responded to. The new systems present as confusing. Young people express their views and make requests, but have not always received clear feedback as to what actions staff or managers have taken in response. This does not provide young people with confidence that their wishes, views and feelings will be taken seriously.

An independent visitor comes to the home every month and produces detailed and comprehensive reports for managers to consider. These include very specific and clear recommendations for actions that would improve the care and support provided to young people. It is of concern that managers have not fully considered or acted on those reports since the last inspection. An example of this relates to the independent visitor clearly stating the need for records of complaints and allegations to be addressed in their November 2016 report. Managers have failed to fully utilise the monitoring systems in place to ensure continual improvement.

The use of agency staff has reduced since the last inspection, as those permanent members of staff who were suspended have returned to work. There is also a new protocol in place for the use of agency and temporary staff. This provides more clarity and consistency of care for young people.

Since the last inspection, staff have received training in relation to ligatures. A range of other training opportunities has also been put in place by the interim manager. This equips staff with the knowledge that they require to meet the complex needs of those young people living in this home.

Daily records include information as to what independence skills young people have achieved. Staff also have access to a range of comprehensive independence skills workbooks and materials. This enables staff to prepare young people for their eventual move on from this home to other provisions.

Placement plans have been updated and amended since the last inspection. Records considered during this inspection provided a clearer sense of the current plans and needs of young people. They have been recently reviewed and updated with the placing authority to reflect the current and changing needs of young people. Looked after review documentation is also recorded on young people's files, to reflect how plans and needs have been considered on a regular basis.

A full-time interim manager came into post in November 2016 to provide management cover for the registered manager, who is on maternity leave. Ofsted is awaiting an application for the registration of this new manager. Staff spoken with during this inspection reported that morale has improved since the last inspection with the arrival of the new interim manager, who is providing consistency of management support to them and young people. This is positive and necessary, given the recent unsettled period for staff and young people in this home.

Information about this children's home

This privately operated home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/10/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
01/06/2016	Full	Good
27/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/06/2015	Full	Outstanding

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children and ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(1)(3))	28/02/2017
ensure the procedure is followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and 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))	28/02/2017
ensure that the procedure followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect describes the measures which may be necessary to protect children following an allegation of abuse or neglect. (Regulation 34(2)(e))	28/02/2017
7. The children's views, wishes and feelings standard (2) In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard, the registered person should (a) ensure that staff (iii) help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child.	28/02/2017
13. The leadership and management standard (2) In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must: (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. This is with specific reference to independent person reports.	28/02/2017

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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