

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	20/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC064027
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Delam Care Limited
Registered provider address	Metropolitan House, 5th Floor, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual	Mark O'Donnell
Registered manager	Vacant post
Inspector	Jo Stephenson

Inspection date	20/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
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 requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. At the last inspection in November 2016, Ofsted made five requirements and one recommendation. The acting manager has successfully addressed the recommendation and four of the five requirements. The acting manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the home. She has been in post since August 2016. Ofsted raised a requirement at the last inspection for the acting manager to apply for registration. She has subsequently submitted the required documentation and information. Ofsted is currently processing this application. Since the last inspection, the acting manager has reviewed and revised young people's risk assessments. These amended documents now better identify and record the known behavioural traits, symptomatic of their diagnosed disability, which young people may display. For some young people, this behaviour includes 'head banging' and other forms of self-injurious behaviour. The acting manager links risk assessments to intervention plans. These documents prescribe when staff need to act to prevent or reduce self-injurious behaviours. These revised plans include, when appropriate, feedback and assessment from allocated occupational therapy specialists. This multi-disciplinary approach recognises that some young people use self-injurious behaviour as a method of non-verbal communication. This practice improvement means that staff are consistent in their actions. This promotes young people's welfare and well-being. The acting manager continues to monitor the development of the service. Improvements to internal care planning processes mean that she is now able to link young people's progress to the quality of care provided by the home. Staff make sure that monthly progress reports demonstrate young people's achievements in relation to their self-care skills, communication skills and independence skills. For example, all young people have communication passports that detail personal targets for achievement. These documents include an 'outcomes' section to allow the acting manager to measure and quantify young people's individual progress. These positive improvements mean that the service continues to evolve to reflect and meet young people's needs. There has been a spike in the use of physical restraint since the last inspection. The acting manager links this increase to the admission of a new young person	

who has struggled to settle into her new environment. The acting manager has introduced alternative behaviour management approaches for this young person, such as a positive comments book and a 'planned ignoring' tactic. These approaches, along with consistent staff practice and the introduction of clear boundaries for the young person, means that the number of physical restraints for this young person has reduced from over 50 incidents in January 2017 to under 10 in March 2017. In addition, staff now record all necessary details and information in physical restraint documents, including an evaluation of the effectiveness of the use of this measure of control. This enables the acting manager to monitor the use of this intervention.

At the last inspection, some young people were subject to the use of a walking harness when accessing the local community or travelling to and from school. Although the use of this restrictive physical intervention was included in internal care plans and placement plans, the potential need for this measure of control was not sufficiently risk assessed. For example, staff did not consider alternative measures to keep young people safe, such as increased staff supervision. The acting manager recognises that current risk assessments are ineffectual, weak and generalised. She has taken steps, in partnership with the placing authorities and other professionals, to revise and review these risk assessments. This is to ensure that, when young people are subject to any form of physical restraint, this measure of control is both necessary and proportionate. Nevertheless, the review of these risk assessments remains in its infancy. The acting manager continues to address this regulatory shortfall.

Staff work in partnership with allocated schools and other agencies to encourage young people's verbal and non-verbal communication skills. Since the last inspection, the acting manager has improved internal consultation meetings to include more use of pictures, signs and symbols. Young people have free access to these communication aids around the home and staff continually prompt them to make informed choices relating to activity and food options.

Young people continue to make good progress in all areas of their development. This is because staff are exceptionally skilled in recognising and responding to young people's individual needs. Staff receive regular and effective formal supervision and this supports them in their role. Internal training and development plans reflect young people's individual needs. Subsequently, staff have the necessary competency, knowledge and experience to help young people gain the skills they need as they move towards adulthood.

Information about this children's home

This service provides care and accommodation for up to six young people who have a learning disability. A private company owns and operates the home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement
15/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/06/2015	Full	Good
12/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20(2))	26/05/2017

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 that 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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