

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC064182
Inspector	Jackie Graves
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Lodge Group Care UK Limited
Registered person address	87 High Street HEATHFIELD East Sussex TN21 8JA
Responsible individual	Jeffrey Alexander Darnell
Registered manager	Alina Daniela Opris
Date of last inspection	06/10/2014

Inspection date	19/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The home continues to be effective in helping young people feel calmer. Staff help young people feel secure by maintaining established routines. They ensure they are well prepared for any changes, for example, helping them understand a planned move to adult provision. Staff monitor any changes in behaviour and look for possible causes, so they can help young people. For example, they alert health professionals when changes of medication have had a detrimental effect on young people's behaviour. Some young people make considerable progress in reducing self-harming behaviour as a result of feeling more settled in the home.

The use of restraint in the home is low. Staff use positive behavioural techniques to manage challenging behaviour, such as distracting young people or asking them to calm down in the sensory room for a few minutes. Records are kept of all restraints, but in one case, the record does not detail sufficiently what the hold involved so it would be difficult to review the incident or any issues emerging from it.

Young people benefit from improved general health and personal appearance. They are encouraged to eat nutritious meals and snacks. Mealtimes are well managed to reduce young people's anxiety, and dietary habits improve as a result. Some young people have lost excess weight as a result of better eating habits and changes to their diet, improving their general health.

Some young people display improved social skills. For example, some are better able to tolerate others, spend more time in communal areas and have better eye contact with staff and young people. Some engage more with staff when doing activities on the premises such as building models or using the trampoline. They are supported to enjoy regular contact with their families in the home so they keep in touch with those who are important to them.

There are some suitable activities going on. For example, some young people like going out for drives in the home's minibus or attending the cinema to participate in autism-friendly screenings. Special seasonal activities are enjoyed by some young people, for example trips to the seaside in the summer or into London to visit Winter Wonderland at Christmas. However, a minority of young people are not going out of the home frequently enough to enjoy suitable activities and get fresh air and exercise.

Checks are made of what goes on in the home and the findings are shared with Ofsted as required. Those checks conducted by the Registered Manager appear to be thorough. Monitoring reports by an independent visitor sometimes repeat information from one month to the next. This does not convince that a robust approach is taken on each visit to make sure young people are safeguarded and their well-being is promoted.

The environment shows some improvement. Action has been taken to improve some aspects of the premises to meet a requirement made at the last inspection. Due to the relatively short time since the last inspection, not all aspects have been improved yet. A refurbished bathroom now provides a much higher standard of facilities for young people's use. However, a hanging cord on a light in this room may present risk. The sensory room is now painted white, providing a calm atmosphere where young people can focus on their sensory experience without distraction. The boiler has been replaced and radiators now function properly in the front rooms. There are plans to improve other aspects of the building shortly. For example, the interior corridor is not well lit, some carpets have not been replaced and the grassed area in the garden requires improvement. Therefore, the requirement relating to improving the premises is re-stated.

The home's staff recruitment process shows improvement. At the last inspection, the manager was asked to improve some aspects of staff recruitment. Although no new staff are appointed, those recently appointed completed health questionnaires to ascertain their physical and mental fitness for the work. The home's recruitment process now ensures that references include, where possible, a statement from each referee as to their opinion of the person's suitability to work with children. These additional measures help ensure staff are suitable to work with young people.

Information about this children's home

This privately run home provides accommodation and care for up to six young people with learning disabilities. The service provides both long term and short break placements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/10/2014	Full	good
04/03/2014	Interim	good progress
23/10/2013	Full	good
08/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

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
17A (2001)	ensure that records of restraint include a description of the measure used (Regulation 17B (3) (c))	31/12/2014
23 (2001)	make sure that all parts of the home to which young people have access are so far as reasonably practicable free from hazards to their health and safety, with specific reference to risk assessing a long cord in the bathroom which may present risk (Regulation 23 (a))	19/12/2014
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are kept reasonably decorated and maintained, with specific reference to improving part of the garden area, some flooring, some decoration and some lighting in line with guidance regarding autism-friendly environments (Regulation	31/01/2015

	31 (2) (e))	
33 (2001)	ensure the appointed independent person visits and reports on the children's home in accordance with this regulation. (Regulation 33 (1))	31/01/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all young people are encouraged to participate in a range of positive activities that contribute to their physical and emotional health. (NMS 6.3)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.