

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	14/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC064472
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Willows (Devon) Limited
Registered person address	Stephen Quay Accountancy, The Granary Hinton Business Park, Tarrant Hinton, BLANDFORD FORUM, Dorset, DT11 8JF

Responsible individual	Jennifer Gould
Registered manager	Jayne Hammett
Inspector	Nicola Lownds

Inspection date	14/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC064472

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home presents as a lived in family home with photographs of the girls dotted around it. Young people personalise their bedrooms to their taste and embrace the family ethos.
- A small regular staff team provide young people with consistency and firm boundaries. Young people develop close relationships with staff and form positive attachments to them. Staff keep in touch with young people when they move on.
- Young people dramatically reduce or stop putting themselves at risk as a result of living in this home. Staff support young people to understand dangers around drug misuse and sexual exploitation. Young people say they feel safe living here.
- Young people achieve good attendance at school when this has previously been a challenge for them. Staff explore their interests and support them to attend local colleges. Young people start to develop aspirations for their future.
- Staff encourage young people to participate in daily chores to increase their independence such as cooking and washing. Young people can choose to take part in a more focused independence programme if they wish.
- The registered manager includes young people's views when decisions are made about the home. House meetings for young people are used to good effect.
- Young people feel supported to challenge decisions about their lives. The registered manager engages legal and advocacy services for young people when necessary.
- The registered manager has good systems in place to monitor the quality of care provided. These systems serve to improve the experiences young people have.

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

Recommendations

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

- 'Improve the quality of monitoring in regulation 45 reports to include analysis of practice and impact to children and young people (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 65 paragraph 15.4)'

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a small private organisation and is registered to provide care for up to four girls with emotional or behavioural difficulties. The company also runs its own school located nearby which young people attend until they start college.

The home operates a smallholding with vegetable and fruit gardens. A number of animals are kept, including horses, chickens, ducks, pigs, sheep, and various small companion animals, including house cats.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
10/09/2014	CH - Full	Good
15/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
31/10/2013	CH - Full	Good
20/02/2013	CH - Interim	Good Progress
25/10/2012	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Good
Young people start to settle here and make progress; many of whom have experienced several placement breakdowns prior to moving in. Staff collate comprehensive information about young people which evolves into their care plan. Young people help to write their care plans and choose a member of staff to become their keyworker. The plans clearly identify the progress young people make. One parent said 'there are no words to explain what they have done for her, they are absolutely amazing'. Staff are established and committed, one member of staff said 'I love working with the young people'. Positive relationships form between young people and staff act as good parents. Young people choose places to go on holiday with the staff. For some young people this is their first experience of a holiday. Activities are varied and dependant on young people's wishes. They range from board games, caring for the animals, music, mobile phones, television to rugby, horse riding and swimming. Young people are encouraged to explore their interests which develop into aspirations. One young person said 'I want to be a vet'. As a result the registered manager engages with local vets and farmers to facilitate work experience. Other young people do voluntary work in the local community which develops social relationships. Attendance in education is good and this is an achievement for these young people. Staff use structured and reduced timetables to assist young people to integrate into education at their own pace. All young people attend the school linked to the company. Some young people also attend a local college. Young people help staff to complete daily chores such as feeding the animals, washing up and cooking. Staff encourage independence skills at young people's own pace. Keyworkers talk to young people about what they want to achieve. Two young people said 'we went on independence programmes for budgeting, but we didn't like it so came off it'. Staff incorporate the views of young people into the daily running of the home. Choice is a common feature in conversations and staff do their best to facilitate young people's wishes within reason. Young people get support from staff to keep in contact with their family. Staff talk to the girls about their family frequently and their family photos are displayed in	

their bedrooms. Families are welcome to visit the home.

The registered manager has created a homely environment for the girls to live in. Young people help to decorate their rooms and choose items to personalise it. Young people make themselves at home, their belongings are apparent throughout the home and not confined to their bedroom. This gives a sense they feel comfortable and relaxed in their surroundings.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
A young person said 'we are very safe here'. Young people participate in child sexual exploitation workshops facilitated by the staff. Young people talk to their carers and engage well in one to one sessions about risk and keeping themselves safe. Staff form a plan with young people about their free time to establish where they are going, who they are meeting and times to return. Staff support young people to take control of their behaviour and reduce the risk they have put themselves in in the past. Young people's previous experiences such as drug and alcohol misuse, criminal behaviour and going missing diminish rapidly. Staff follow the girls if they leave the home unauthorised and walk with them until they decide to return. All young people have missing protocols in place; staff are clear on how to follow these if required. The registered manager engages local agencies available to support young people and staff about sexual exploitation, drug misuse and criminal behaviour. Links to the police and youth intervention workers give young people access to professionals with specialist knowledge. Young people sit with staff and write their risk and behaviour management plans. This empowers young people to stipulate the strategies that work best for them to manage risk or de-escalate their behaviour when it becomes challenging. Risk assessments indicate the vulnerabilities of young people in relation to child sexual exploitation well. Trusting relationships between staff and young people acts as a safeguard. Young people talk to staff about the use of their mobile phones in particular internet access and social media. As a result staff identify concerns and talk to young people about safety and communicating with strangers online. Physical intervention is rare in this home and used as a method to protect others from harm. Records provide detail about the circumstances and include the views of young people. The registered manager monitors incident records sufficiently and	

identifies areas of learning.

Staff support young people with their behaviour using positive reinforcement. Reward systems are clear and set with young people who understand expectations of them. Achievements are celebrated and young people work towards a reward they stipulate such as a beauty treatment. A parent said 'they have done amazing job, if she wasn't here I don't know where she would have been in her life'.

Relationships between young people can be fractious at times and staff manage this well. Clear boundaries, rules and expectations on how to treat others enable staff to challenge unkind behaviour. Due to this method bullying is not a concern.

The registered manager is clear about her responsibilities to safeguard young people. Strong links form with professionals whose role it is to keep young people safe. Staff follow the safeguarding procedure well when it is necessary to report a concern about a young person.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager provides a home which embeds its ethos as described in the statement of purpose. Staff understand the concept of 'environment therapy' and how it relates to the care they provide young people. The home is calm and relaxed which is what they aim to achieve. Staff receive regular supervision that is focused to reflect on the care given to young people. The registered manager has a strong presence in the home. A member of staff said 'if I have any worries or anything I need answers for then she is there'. The training programme reflects the skills staff require to meet the needs of young people. A clinical psychologist provides specialist training on attachment. Young people have a good relationship with the registered manager who understands their needs. This enables to registered manager to consider all young people when significant changes occur in the home such as a new resident. Young people use the registered manager to help them with significant challenges in their life. The registered manager listens to young people and finds the right professionals who can advocate for their rights. The registered manager work closely with other professionals to achieve the best outcomes for young people. A social worker said 'she is very communicative and we make joint decisions'. Young people benefit from a staff team who will challenge decisions made about their future if they don't think it is right. Effective monitoring systems provide the registered manager with good oversight	

of the day to day experiences young people have. Support provided to young people during incidents is scrutinised by the registered manager who identifies how to improve care. The registered manager monitors the home according to regulation 45. These reports do not identify analyses the impact on young people and this is a recommendation from this inspection.

The registered manager is well established in her role and suitably skilled to fulfil her responsibilities. This small company provides close peer support with her colleagues who deputise in her absence.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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