

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	19/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC064472
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Willows (Devon) Limited
Registered provider address	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	19/12/2016
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:

- It is a nurturing and homely place to live. The home is warm and welcoming, and the girls appear comfortable and settled in their surroundings. There is a lot of open space and the opportunity to help to care for the animals.
- The girls are making good progress in all aspects of their lives. They go to school or college and some have part-time jobs. The team builds excellent relationships with them, guiding positive choices. There are very good opportunities available to the girls, including going on holidays. The team helps them to explore their interests and ambitions.
- The team gets to know the girls well and builds relationships that support their emotional needs. The registered manager commissions a clinical psychologist whom the girls can access at any time. The girls' self-esteem and confidence grow the longer they live here.
- The team has exceptional knowledge about risk and how to keep the girls safe. If the girls go missing, the team follows their missing protocols with rigour and collaborates effectively with other agencies. The team helps the girls to understand the risks that they take and to come up with strategies to help to minimise these. The girls are safer as a result of living here.
- The registered manager has a strong presence in the home and she knows the girls well. The level of detail that she puts into her monitoring and analysis of the quality of care is exemplary.

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) meet(s) 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
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered persons must ensure that they 6(2)(a)(iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. In particular, the young people's placement and care management plans should detail the amount of support that staff provide young people with and evidence their progress and achievements more clearly.	31/01/2017

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 who have emotional and/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
02/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/12/2015	Full	Good
26/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/09/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The home provides a homely environment. There are photos on the walls of those who live here, comfortable sofas, a well-stocked kitchen and extensive grounds. The girls benefit from its rural location; they learn new skills by caring for the animals if they wish to. The home has two cats that are also part of the family. The girls experience nurture and love. The team shows appropriate affection to the girls and that they care for them. The girls have formed positive attachments to the team, and there is a feeling of fun in the home. The girls have specified one-to-one time with a significant member of the team that they choose each week. As a result, the girls are able to talk to the team about anything that is important to them. The open relationships provide the girls with safety and security. All of the girls are achieving well in education. They attend the school linked to the company and then move on to a college of their choice. The team encourages the girls to source jobs and voluntary work in the local community. The girls also take part in local charity events. The team respects everyone as an individual and helps the girls to find their interests and aspirations. There are various options of clubs and activities to take part in. Each year, the girls go on holiday. The registered manager collects a wealth of information about the girls needs prior to their moving in, and this contributes to the care plans that she implements. Care plans are detailed documents and clearly state the reason why the girls are living here and what they aim to achieve from their time and experiences. One care plan did not exactly capture the amount of high-level support that the team is providing for one of the girls; nor did it evidence the progress that she has made recently. The team meets the girls' health needs exceptionally well. The team does not hesitate to call for specialist medical attention when the girls require this. Team members support them with hospital visits and stay with them until they are ready to come home. The registered manager works closely with placing authorities, to make plans for when the girls move on. The girls understand and contribute to these plans. One of the girls did not agree with her plan, and the registered manager actively supported her to challenge the decision, which has resulted in her staying and attending the college that is her preferred choice.	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The team has a good understanding of each of the girls and their individual risks. Prior to anyone new moving into the home, the registered manager considers the impact that this may have on the group, including anything relating to risk. The girls talk with the team to identify the risks that they feel they need protecting from. The team then uses this to write behaviour strategies. The registered manager reviews these plans regularly. The team members have a very good understanding of risk in relation to child sexual exploitation and missing. They frequently talk to the girls about this and offer more formal workshops and online tools to help them to understand how to keep safe. The team identifies creative ways of helping the girls to comprehend exploitation and focuses on what positive relationships look like. At times, the girls go missing from the home, which has put them at risk. Individual missing profiles provide a good description of the girls and their needs, known areas to them and key information that is important to professionals searching for them. The team follows missing protocols exceptionally well. They undertake extensive searches of the grounds and continue looking for the girls until they are back home safely. When they return, they are welcomed home with a hug, and a member of the team said, 'We make sure they are OK, safe, warm, fed and watered. The chats about where they have been come after that.' The girls talk to staff about where they have been. They also have the opportunity to talk to an independent professional about why they went missing and what happened. The registered manager monitors records of missing incidents and identifies patterns and trends. This information is then shared with the local authorities and local police whom she works collaboratively with. Safeguarding training is part of the mandatory training programme, which all the team members have completed. The team has a good understanding about the child protection policy and whom to report to when the girls are at risk. Records about safeguarding concerns are comprehensive. They provide clear information about the concern and the outcome. The girls have good access to services that can support them with their emotional well-being. The company commissions a clinical psychologist whom the girls can access. Alternatively, the registered manager seeks other agencies to provide specialist services, such as the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) as required. The registered manager ensures that the girls receive the services that they need to support their needs. The team recognises the girls' achievements and positive behaviour. There are a number of reward systems that help to motivate the girls and promote positive behaviour. Sanctions are rarely used and, when they are put in place, it is to keep	

the girls safe. There have been two restraints used since the last inspection. Both of these were used to protect the girls from one another during an altercation. The registered manager has good evaluative oversight over all records relating to behaviour management.

The registered manager ensures that new members of the team follow a robust recruitment process, in accordance with safer recruitment guidelines. The home's location has been assessed well, and any known areas of concern are identified. Tests on safety equipment in the home and vehicle checks are conducted regularly. A fire drill was recently completed to include one of the girls who has recently moved in.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has an extensive background in caring for vulnerable young people. She is suitably qualified for the role and has been in this post for a number of years. One of the girls said, '[Name of registered manager] is the best,' and they all have a clearly positive regard for her. The responsible individual and the other registered managers in the company support the registered manager in her role. The girls have established strong relationships with the registered manager. The team values the girls' views and opinions and prioritises their needs above anything else. More formal routes for consultation include house meetings, one-to-one time with key workers and debrief discussions following incidents. The home's development plan has a clear focus on areas that will enhance the experiences for the girls. This includes some material improvements, such as replacing the kitchen. The registered manager liaises effectively with the girls to obtain their ideas for developing the home. One of their recent ideas is to change the way that activities are planned in order to accommodate a trip to Disneyland. Another one of the registered manager's goals is to embed more research-informed practice into the care plans. The team receives good support and supervision in their work. Supervision is regular and effective with a focus on the girls and their current needs. The team members feel that they can access support at any time from leaders and managers. The girls have input into the appraisals that staff receive and their views are also included in the team's personal development plans.	

The team members meet regularly to talk about the girls and to share any information or strategies. This approach contributes to the girls receiving consistency of care from the whole team. The team is fully staffed. The registered manager also implements a system of bank staff employed by the company and whom the girls know well. This means that the girls always know the person who is coming in to look after them.

The team members all commit to their own learning and development. They successfully achieve the qualification required for their roles. There is an extensive training package available to the team, which is adapted to meet the needs of the girls. The registered manager sources additional training when needs arise.

The team is respectful of the girls' families and strives to build positive relationships with them all. As a result, relationships are becoming more positive enabling the girls to have increased visits with families and friends. An external professional was very positive about the teams approach with families.

The registered manager is dedicated to providing the girls with good care. The monitoring that she implements to inform her of the girls' experiences in the home is exceptional. Learning is taken from the analysis and discussed with the girls and the team. This learning is used to develop care plans and risk assessments, which are then shared with families and relevant professionals.

The team has good links with services in the local community. The local police officer visits the home to build relationships with the girls. The registered manager is a strong advocate for the girls who live here. She helps them to communicate any concerns that they have about decisions made by professionals, which impact on their lives.

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 children looked after 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 that 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 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 whom 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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