

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	05/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC065189
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Meadows Care Ltd
Registered provider address	Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale, OL12 9EN

Responsible individual	Niel Shelmerdine
Registered manager	Stuart Roberts
Inspector	Rebecca Quested

Inspection date	05/01/2017
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 judge that it has improved effectiveness. The registered manager has made considerable progress in addressing the shortfalls identified at the last inspection. In particular, he ensures that young people benefit from a more stable staff team who work together effectively. The registered manager listens to young people's views about staffing. He seeks out young people's views both in terms of gaining feedback for appraisals, but importantly in understanding which staff young people prefer to work in the home. As a result, he recruits two temporary staff to work permanently as part of the staff team. One young person said: 'I love this place. Now I have a mint team and I'm thinking I want to stay until I'm 18! I told the manager I liked the agency staff and now they have joined the team – I can't fault anyone on my team.' The registered manager usually ensures that he has sufficient information about temporary staff working in the home. On occasions there are shortfalls, including the registered manager's recording of accurate rotas. The registered manager recognises this as an area of continuing development. A young person said: 'It's sorted now and there are hardly any different staff.' This enables young people to develop positive relationships with staff and therefore, a sense of security and permanence. One young person said: 'I have a mint relationship with the deputy manager – that's why I stayed! I think he is on the level – he's honest, he helps me understand when things go wrong. He always has time for me. He is genuine and really cares.' As young people's positive relationships develop with staff their self-esteem improves and they address their risk-taking behaviour, including substance misuse and going missing. A young person said: 'Before I didn't care about anything, I just wanted my life on drugs. I realised that I can be better, I don't need drugs now, I have a good life.' Staff support young people to become increasingly safe. They respond appropriately when young people are missing by looking for them in familiar places and this minimises the time they are at risk. Staff offer young people a return interview by an independent person to inform their understanding of why they are missing. However, young people's positive relationships with staff mean they are able to talk to them openly about their missing behaviour. Staff are alert to issues of child sexual exploitation and review any potential incidents with	

placing authorities and the police. Consequently, young people become increasingly safe.

Staff support young people to make progress in all areas of their life. A social worker said: 'My young person has made significant progress. She has settled well and is a lot more relaxed.' Staff persevere in promoting young people's education. They work in partnership with colleges to ensure young people are attending the most appropriate course and they have the right support in place. Staff support young people to develop independence skills which prepare them practically and emotionally for adult life. They encourage young people to take age-appropriate risks. Staff make good use of their delegated authority to allow young people to spend time with their friends and family including overnight. Staff work effectively in partnership with families so that young people benefit from consistent care. A parent said: 'I am happy with the care provided – I have every trust in staff.'

Staff are responsive to the needs of those young people who are new to the home. The registered manager ensures that staff are well-equipped to meet their needs and understand their behaviour. He arranges additional training with the in-house therapist so that the team is well-prepared and can work effectively together to provide a consistent approach to their care. One young person said: 'I like the staff, it is so much better than I thought it would be!'

The registered manager ensures he regularly reviews and monitors the quality of care provided to young people. This means he can identify the difference staff make to young people. For example, the use of physical intervention has reduced to only once since the last inspection as staff have detailed understanding of young people's behaviour and needs and are skilled in de-escalation techniques. The registered manager advocates on behalf of young people with placing authorities and college so that their views and wishes are central to their care and plans. He considers the impact of new young people joining the home on those already in placement and staff. The registered manager ensures that he notifies Ofsted of significant events in the home; on occasion this has not included the outcome of actions taken which prevents the regulator from having oversight of how matters are concluded.

The registered manager has improved the physical environment within the home and, along with the improved relationships between staff and young people, the home now feels welcoming and homely. He, and the young people, have developed positive relationships with the neighbours. This improves young people's self-esteem.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for two children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home forms part of a large social care company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2016	Full	Requires improvement
22/02/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
08/09/2015	Full	Good
06/02/2015	Interim	Declined in 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4 and ensure that the records are kept up to date. In particular, that all necessary information about temporary staff who work in the home is obtained and that accurate rotas are maintained.(Regulation 37 (2)(a)-(b))	10/02/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people. Notifications must include details of the action taken by the home's staff to the event. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations. April 2015. Page 63, paragraph 14.13)

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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