

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC065189
Inspector	Ceri Evans
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Meadows Care Limited
Registered person address	Egerton House Wardle Road ROCHDALE Lancashire OL12 9EN
Responsible individual	Niel David Shelmerdine
Registered manager	Pria Griffiths-Sen
Date of last inspection	22/01/2014

Inspection date	07/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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Young people make exceptional progress living in this home. They are well cared for by staff who are extremely dedicated, committed, warm and nurturing. This promotes trust, respect and helps young people forge good attachments. Excellent care planning and effective risk management practices ensure that young people's needs are well met. This results in positive outcomes and an excellent standard of care for all young people.

Staff are extremely child-focused and place young people's safety and welfare at the centre of their practice. Young people say they feel safe and staff practice is underpinned by robust safeguarding protocols. The team fully understand their responsibilities to protect young people from harm. They work effectively with other professionals and ensure young people receive optimum safety and protection at all times.

Young people benefit from effective management within the home. The Registered Manager demonstrates strong leadership skills. Excellent monitoring procedures and oversight ensures that any shortfalls are quickly identified and acted upon appropriately. The manager and staff demonstrate a clear commitment and drive to improve the service. This further enhances young people's outcomes.

Recommendations from the previous inspection have been met. There is one identified good practice recommendation from this inspection. This has had no impact on the welfare and safety of young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is one of a number of children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/01/2014	Interim	good progress
30/05/2013	Full	outstanding
20/12/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress
25/04/2012	Full	outstanding

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

Recommendations

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

- Risk Assessments of the whole children's home environment are carried out, to identify any potential sources of harm to the children are recorded in writing and regularly reviewed. NMS 10.8

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people have made exceptional progress given their individual starting points. They have developed a positive self-image as a direct result of individualised care planning, nurturing, structure and warmth within the home. Relationships within the home are extremely positive with young people and staff sharing strong attachments with each other. This has contributed to young people growing in confidence and self-esteem.

The home is settled and young people benefit from consistent routines and boundaries. Individual behaviour management approaches, such as incentive charts, individual key worker sessions and project work enables young people to recognise when they are feeling anxious or frustrated. As a result, young people have developed more socially acceptable behaviour which has contributed to increased self-esteem and confidence.

Young people receive excellent support from health professionals and staff help them to understand the need to make healthy lifestyle choices. As a result young people are enjoying healthier lifestyles and where appropriate are able to take care of their own medical needs.

All young people have excellent attendance and enjoy education. Given their individual starting points young people have made exceptional progress in their academic achievements. For example, one young person achieved excellent GCSE examination results and has gained a place on an apprenticeship scheme in business and accounting. The likelihood of young people having better prospects in adulthood has significantly improved due to their educational successes.

Young people's meetings are well attended and purposeful. Meetings enable young people to express their views and opinions which are listened to and respected by staff. They have an active voice and have input in decisions such as the décor of the home, plans for activities, celebrations and holidays. This level of engagement contributes positively to young people's social skills and confidence. Furthermore, young people are now more able to express their wishes and feelings in a positive manner.

Young people are developing life skills appropriate to their age and understanding. For example, they are now able to budget successfully, go shopping, cook meals, travel independently, and do their own laundry. This enables them to build confidence and develop the necessary emotional and practical skills as they transition to independence

Quality of care

outstanding

Relationships within the home are extremely positive and young people benefit from living in a warm, caring and genuinely supportive environment. Staff have high aspirations for young people and a genuine drive to help them meet their full potential. Consequently, young people feel valued, respected and have blossomed as individuals. Young people confirm that they enjoy exceedingly positive relationships with staff. One young person said, 'I feel really happy here and I get on with everyone'.

Young people's needs are well documented in detailed and individualised placement plans, risk assessments and incentive charts. These plans are monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they accurately reflect the current needs of young people. As a result, young people receive personalised support that fully meets their individual needs.

The Registered Manager and staff have excellent working relationships with partner agencies who comment positively on the frequency and content of updates. This promotes a holistic approach to meeting young people's needs. One social worker stated that the progress made by the young persons is 'truly remarkable and X has made significant and positive progress in all areas and is a credit to those who have cared for him over this period'.

Staff ensure that daily routines support young people's participation in education. They consistently promote the importance of education and liaise with providers to identify the needs that young people may have. For example, staff recently secured additional mathematics tutoring for a young person who demonstrated a particular skill and talent in this area. As a result young people have successfully overcome barriers and are achieving positive educational outcomes.

Young people are supported to plan and participate in their individual interests and talents. Young people talk enthusiastically about their hobbies such as playing squash, bike riding, and visiting a local agriculture centre. These activities further enhance young people's confidence and help them to develop new life skills.

Young people live in a comfortable house which is suitably designed to meet their needs. The home is well maintained and decorated to a high standard. Several areas, such as the games room, dining room, lounge and young people's bedrooms have been personalised to the individual tastes of young people. Young people feel a sense of belonging and are able take ownership over aspects their home.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

The home has stringent and robust safeguarding measures in place that promote the safety and wellbeing of young people. Young people say they feel safe, secure and well cared for. They are protected from harm by committed staff who fully understand their needs, any risks they face and their vulnerabilities. Consequently, young people's safety and welfare is promoted at all times.

The home has a comprehensive safeguarding policy which is fully implemented in practice by staff. The Regional Manager ensures that all policy updates are read and understood by the team. Furthermore, safeguarding protocols are discussed in supervision, team meetings and development forums. As a result staff demonstrate excellent knowledge of safeguarding practices and work effectively with other agencies to promote young people's safety and welfare.

Young people's behaviour is effectively managed. Staff know young people well and understand how to support them when they become anxious, frustrated or upset. As a result there are no recorded incidences of physical restraints. This serves as a positive indicator that young people are making safer choices in relation to their behaviour.

Bullying is not identified as an issue within the home. However, young people understand that bullying is not acceptable and they are confident that staff would act should any incidents arise. This enables young people to live in an environment that is safe, secure and non-threatening.

Staff are thoroughly checked and vetted as part of the organisation's safe recruitment policy. Visitors to the home are required to provide identification before entering. This means that young people are protected from individuals who may pose a risk to them.

Young people live in a physically safe environment. They are protected by a number of health and safety procedures and routine checks. Staff and young people are regularly involved in fire drills to ensure they know how to safely evacuate the home in case of an emergency.

The home generic risk assessment is not consistently reviewed and updated following incidents. For example, one young person was able to close the security latch on the front door which prevented staff from entering the building for a short period of time. This was an isolated incident and did not pose a direct risk to young people. New safety protocols are now in place and staff have access to keys and are able to enter the building at all times.

Leadership and management

outstanding

Young people benefit from living in an effectively managed home. The Registered Manager has been in post since October 2010 and has the relevant management qualifications to undertake the role. The manager is an enthusiastic, committed and a passionate leader who places the welfare and safety of young people at the heart of her practice. Excellent leadership and management ensures that the team are well trained, supervised and motivated to drive the service forward and achieve improved outcomes for young people.

The home is well resourced and employs a sufficient number of qualified staff who work well as a team. Mandatory training keeps staff well informed of key issues such as child sexual exploitation and self-harm. This further supports their competence in safeguarding young people. Staff further benefit from consultation workshops from an in-house therapist. This enables staff to develop an understanding of complex issues such as separation, loss and attachment. As a result staff are more resilient and have a greater understanding of how to support young people on a day to day basis.

The home has a comprehensive Statement of Purpose that is clear, accessible and fully sets out the home's aims and objectives. As a result, young people, stakeholders and parents know what service they can expect to receive.

Young people's records are extremely detailed and present a thorough picture of their experiences within the home. Records are well organised and information is structured in such a way that helps young people to understand their history, identity and culture.

Effective and robust monitoring systems are in place to ensure the continued improvement of the service. For example, the manager oversees the effectiveness of the service through internal audits, monthly file reviews and detailed regulation 33 and regulation 34 reports. The manager stringently evaluates the effectiveness of sanctions and behaviour management strategies to ensure these measures are safe and proportionate. This further demonstrates that the home places the welfare and wellbeing of young people at the forefront of practice.

Significant events are appropriately reported to Ofsted in the required timescales. Information is clear in relation to the incident and the action taken by staff. This further demonstrates the manager's ability to effectively scrutinise and evaluate safeguarding practices within the home.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.