

SC065189

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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 three children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

If required, children and young people can access the organisation's school and therapy department.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
---	------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 11 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/07/2018	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/05/2017	Full	Good
05/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people benefit from long placements and have been resident at the home since before the last inspection. The experience of living at this home has had a positive impact on their lives. The length of placements demonstrates the commitment staff have put into young people's care and also that young people are invested in their placements.

There have been changes to the home's downstairs area, as part of an ongoing refurbishment plan to create more space for the young people. The decor is modern and welcoming. Young people were actively involved in choosing colour schemes and soft furnishings for the new chill room. The upstairs of the home needs attention to ensure that it is of the same standard. The games room needs redecorating, young people's bedrooms should have furniture that is in full working order and any damage to bedroom walls repaired. A requirement has been made to improve the upstairs environment.

Staff have good relationships with young people and are incredibly positive about the progress they have made. The team uses regular opportunities to celebrate achievements made by young people. The young people consistently receive weekly positive certificates for any improvements or positive changes they have made. The team reflects regularly on young people's progress and young people can earn 'achiever of the month' awards.

Young people comment positively about the staff who care for them. One young person said, 'I can talk to staff and trust them. I go to [Name of staff] if I am worried about anything.' Overall, young people feel cared for and enjoy spending time with staff. They recognise how staff help them to get better outcomes. A young person told the inspector that staff helped them to increase contact with their mother.

Significantly improved attendance, engaging in regular after-school revision classes and earning a history school trip to France are aspects of the good progress some young people are making in their education. However, for one young person, education routines need improving to help the young person re-engage in their college course. The young person does not attend college and risks not obtaining the qualification that they are fully capable of achieving. A recommendation has been made in relation to this shortfall.

The staff make sure that family time is promoted and have worked consistently with young people and their families to establish and maintain relationships. Because of this, young people's time with their families has increased. Young people have been on holiday with their families, started having overnight visits at their family's home and one young person went to Kuwait to spend three weeks with their extended family. There have been excellent outcomes for young people and their family time.

The staff team works in partnership with therapists employed by the company, to access support for the young people or to guide staff to support young people effectively. Together, the team and therapists have worked through different approaches to help young people to engage in sessions. This has included consultation with staff in team meetings, therapists being around to talk to young people on a more informal basis and communicating with young people via text messages to help them share their feelings.

Overall, young people are in good health. However, the manager should ensure that young people's medicals take place annually with a children's nurse. One young person's medical did not take place last year. This has not allowed the staff team to be able to monitor and review any health needs that may have been identified from a statutory medical assessment. This has been raised as a requirement to action.

Young people have lots of opportunities to express their views and opinions, make choices and be involved in decisions about their lives. Staff undertake regular individual sessions with young people to support them and help them make improvements to their care. Staff complete 'what went well' meetings with all young people every month, to review progress made and to agree goals and targets for the coming month. This has helped promote young people's self-esteem and confidence.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Young people's safety and well-being constitute a priority in the home. The staff team is provided with suitable training and because of this, staff demonstrate a good understanding of their safeguarding responsibilities. There has been lots of positive feedback from professionals about the proactive approach the staff adopt in their safeguarding and because of this approach, young people have become increasingly safe.

The manager and staff team have a good understanding of the risks to young people's safety and well-being. They work with agreed strategies in risk assessments to minimise risk and maintain young people's safety. The staff team is not risk-averse and works hard to help young people to understand unsafe situations and build a sense of personal safety. This has been key in supporting young people to confidently manage time with their peers and learn to choose friends who have a good influence.

Behaviour management plans are up to date and have clear expectations and boundaries for everyone to work with. Staff have a good knowledge of the young people and have worked with them to negotiate boundaries appropriate to their age. This has helped reduce unsafe behaviour and de-escalate challenging situations. There have been low levels of going missing from home and no use of physical intervention or police involvement required at the home since the last inspection.

Staff personnel files seen during the inspection showed no explanation for the gaps in employment for one staff member. Although this has not impacted on the safety

of the young people, the shortfall does not follow safer recruitment procedures or regulatory guidance and a requirement has been made.

Young people rarely make complaints, but when they do, the manager uses mediation to maintain positive relationships between young people and staff. The staff team actively supports young people when they want to complain about other aspects of their care. Staff supported one young person to complain about an incident in school that affected their attendance. As a result of the support from the team, the young person has re-engaged with school and is progressing well.

Staff pride themselves on the positive work that they undertake with young people through a structured programme called 'real love rocks'. Sessions have focused on the struggles young people have experienced in developing healthy relationships, consent, warning signs and how to manage relationships safely on social media. The staff team also supports young people with individual sessions tailored to the young person's needs, for example addressing bullying, restorative work and safety mapping linked with contextual safeguarding. This has helped young people to work through some crucial pieces of work to safeguard them and help them make better choices.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

There has been no registered manager since early February 2020. A new manager has been appointed to the home and has made an application to Ofsted for registration. The manager has worked at this home for a few years and the previous registered manager spent time training the current manager in preparation for this position.

Monthly independent visits always take place. The report provides a good overview of the home and action to be taken by the manager. The manager's overall monitoring of care in the home needs further developing to be effective. For example, checking the home environment, overseeing records for staff and young people and being able to identify strengths and weaknesses of the home is key to the development of the home.

Staff feel supported by the manager and their colleagues. This includes staff who have recently started working at the home, who talked about a supportive induction process. A staff member said, 'The team is supportive, and I can go to the staff with anything I am unsure of; we are very tight knit.' Staff receive regular supervision and review of their appraisals, which includes young people's views and comments. The staff team has a good mix of female and male staff, which the young people have responded to very well.

The company's training schedule ensures that staff receive up-to-date training and training specific to the young people's needs. For example, staff have attended sessions to educate them further on contextual safeguarding and Proud Trust training in relation to gender identity work. Two staff members are due to complete

their level 3 diploma in the next few months and four staff will be registered to begin the qualification this summer. This is within regulatory timescales.

Team meetings take place monthly. The young people have an opportunity to contribute to the meetings and share their opinions through individual team meeting booklets. The manager encourages staff to take responsibility for research-informed practice. Staff have presented a variety of research topics in team meetings to develop the team's awareness of current issues for young people. This has included e-safety, county lines and risk management, all of which have been beneficial to help support the young people.

The manager promotes consistent and regular communication with all professionals. This ensures that partnership working is a strength of the home. There has been excellent feedback from therapists, education providers and local authorities. A social worker for one young person said, 'The transformation in [Name of young person] since being at the home is fantastic. The package of care suits him very well.'

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, the 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
The quality and purpose of care standard is that children received care from staff who— understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children; use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child; and enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home. (Regulation 6 (1)(2)(c)(i)(ii)) Specifically, ensure that young people's bedrooms have furniture that is fit for purpose and damage caused by young people to their bedrooms or living areas is replenished, or repaired swiftly.	02/04/2020
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(3)(d)) Specifically, ensure that a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, is obtained in writing.	02/04/2020

The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)) Specifically, ensure that annual medical checks are completed, and details of the medical examination kept on file and updated to meet young people's health needs.	02/04/2020
--	-------------------

Recommendations

- The Government has raised the participation in education age so that all young people from summer 2015 will be required to continue in education or training until their 18th birthday. Young people can choose how to participate. This can be through full-time education, an apprenticeship or traineeship, or by combining full-time employment with part-time education or training. Whilst the duty is on the young person themselves, it is important that children's homes staff encourage the young person to continue their education or training and support them to develop the skills necessary to succeed in the option they choose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.16)

Specifically, young people should have clear daily routines and expectations in place that are consistently promoted by the staff team to ensure that young people sustain a good level of attendance and attainment in education.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, using the 'Social care common inspection framework'. This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC065189

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Registered provider address: Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale, Lancashire
OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Karen Brandon

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Cheryl Field: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://reports.ofsted.gov.uk/>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2020