

SC065780

Registered provider: Milestones Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager registered with Ofsted in February 2015.

Inspection dates: 19 to 20 June 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 3 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/07/2018	Full	Good
27/09/2017	Full	Good
23/05/2017	Full	Inadequate
16/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirement

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(c))	06/08/2019

Recommendations

- The quality of care review report should clearly identify any actions required for the next 6 months of delivery within the home and how those actions will be addressed. The whole review process and the resulting report should be used as a tool for continuous improvement in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)
- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20) The plan should:
 - detail the necessary management and staffing structure, (including any staff commissioned to provide health and education), the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the home's Statement of Purpose;
 - detail the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction, probation and any core training (such as safeguarding, health and safety and mandatory qualifications);

- detail the process for managing and improving poor performance;
- detail the process and timescales for supervision of practice (see regulation 33 (4)(b)) and keep appropriate records for staff in the home.

The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff – including the home’s manager. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8)

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child’s assessed needs as recorded in the child’s relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- Staff should be familiar with the home’s policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulation 12(2)(c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 64, paragraph 15.1)

In particular, the registered person should review and include consideration of the location of the home as part of the pre-admission impact assessment.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff establish trusting relationships with young people, offering consistent care and boundaries so that young people feel safe and can make progress. Young people said that during times of difficulty they know the staff will help them to feel better.

The home works closely with education professionals to overcome barriers to learning. Staff encourage young people to understand that education is a foundation for their future success, and support them to achieve. Despite challenges, young people have taken GCSE exams and have plans in place to attend college and apply for apprenticeships.

Young people are encouraged and supported to attend health appointments. Their physical well-being is promoted through encouraging healthy eating and exercise. Staff research a range of resources to support young people to develop better emotional health and resilience. The home has established links with specialist services that provide counselling and therapeutic input and staff attend meetings to provide consistency of support. The staff's deep understanding of young people's presentation and indicators of their mood means that they are responsive to the young people's needs.

Young people are supported to see the people who are important to them. Staff are aware that, for some young people, family relationships can sometimes be strained. They offer nurture and reassurance at these times. Staff make the appropriate checks so that young people can enjoy overnight stays with friends, and friends also visit the home. A range of activities are offered for young people to enjoy both in the home and elsewhere. One young person said, 'It's good, always stuff to do, not just sitting doing nothing.'

Records reflect young people's daily lives. However, on occasion, the language used is not helpful to their understanding of their experiences, particularly if young people later access their records.

Young people who have enjoyed longer-term placements at the home are well-prepared for their planned transitions as they approach independence. They maintain contact with staff as a source of advice and to share their ongoing progress.

Consultation is a strength of the service, with young people confirming that they feel listened to, and that staff respond to their requests. They have regular meetings with staff and they review their progress individually each fortnight. There have been several recent improvements to the home environment and young people have been fully involved in creating a mural of their favourite inspirational quotes. One young person was pleased that her bedroom had been personalised to her taste before she moved in.

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

Detailed, regularly updated and individualised risk-management plans are in place. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities in keeping young people protected from harm. The manager ensures that staff have additional training to meet young people's specific needs, including responding to self-harm. Young people feel that they can speak to staff about their worries and concerns, with confidence that they will be listened to.

Young people contribute to their behaviour support plans so that staff understand what helps and what hinders each young person's ability to manage their emotions. Positive behaviour is promoted through praise and a range of incentives, and through the strong relationships that staff develop with young people. Effective and creative direct work helps young people to reflect on their behaviour, as well as understand the risks that

they face and how to keep themselves safe from harm.

Sanctions are used, on occasion, in response to negative behaviour. The manager reviews the sanctions, and alternative approaches are taken if sanctions are not effective in supporting young people to make positive changes. On rare occasions, staff have requested support from the police when young people's behaviour has become extremely challenging and has threatened the safety of other young people and staff. However, the home is committed to preventing unnecessary criminalisation of young people and rarely is any further formal action taken.

Staff have not needed to use physical intervention to manage young people's behaviour. However, not all staff have been trained in the approach used by the home to ensure that any restraint methods used are approved as safe. This shortfall has the potential to compromise young people's safety and well-being if physical intervention is necessary.

Clear procedures are in place for staff to follow when young people go missing from the home, so that they are returned safely as soon as possible. The home makes sure that return home interviews take place, so that young people can talk to someone who is independent and seek any additional support from external services.

The manager ensures that she gathers all of the relevant information about young people prior to accepting a new admission. She considers the needs of young people already living in the home, as well as the home's location, to assess the impact of any risk. However, improvement to the records is needed to reflect this process more comprehensively.

Staff alert other professionals to any concerns promptly. Early reviews are requested if emerging needs or safeguarding concerns arise that mean that young people's needs cannot be met safely. The home shares information to support placing authorities in identifying more suitable placements to meet young people's needs, and the staff work with other professionals to plan transitions.

Stringent recruitment procedures are followed to ensure that new staff are carefully vetted before they are employed, to prevent unsuitable individuals from working in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The experienced and committed manager leads the home by example. She ensures that she spends time working alongside staff to observe and monitor their day-to-day practice. This approach also enables the manager to have a clear understanding of how young people are making progress in their everyday lives. She meets with young people monthly to gain their views and opinions on their progress, and on how the home can be improved.

Staff confirm that the manager encourages them to reflect on their practice in regular

and thorough supervision, and after any incidents in the home. Regular team meetings also enable staff to reflect as a group, to ensure that they provide consistent care for young people.

Staff said that they feel supported in their role by the manager. Key workers now attend more meetings about young people, so that they are empowered to develop professionally. Any staff who have not attained the necessary qualification are enrolled to do so. They bring a range of skills and experience that enable them to support the young people in their care.

External professionals commented on the excellent communication from the home, and are confident that they are informed of any concerns about young people. Staff are strong advocates. They request meetings with, and challenge, other professionals when necessary, to ensure that young people's needs are met fully.

Monitoring and review systems help to identify the strengths of the home and any areas for development. However, the views of children, parents and other stakeholders are not yet gathered consistently, and an action plan for the following six months is not included in the report on the review of care.

The registered manager has improved the workforce development plan to include the current qualifications and training completed by staff. Further improvement to the plan is necessary, to include the procedure to address any staff performance issues and the timescales to do so.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: SC065780

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Milestones Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: 32 Fieldway, Maghull, Liverpool, Lancashire L31 5NB

Responsible individual: Mark Armstrong

Registered manager: Nina Howarth

Inspector

Karen Willson: social care inspector

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