

SC065780

Registered provider: Milestones Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home that is registered to accommodate three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 September 2017

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: 23 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The registered manager, deputy manager and staff team have turned around a service that was struggling to provide good care. The home is almost unrecognisable, following the significant improvements that have been made

since the last inspection.

- The registered manager and deputy have demonstrated a commitment to improving the care and safeguarding arrangements in the home.
- The registered manager and staff have made considerable progress in addressing the shortfalls, including the requirements and recommendations that were raised at the last inspection.
- Young people were extremely complimentary about the home and the support they receive from staff. They reported feeling 'safe' and 'happy', living in the home.
- The young people benefit from good health. Staff provide a high level of support to ensure that their health needs are met.
- The young people are fully involved in the running of the home and have good opportunities to have their views heard.
- Staff promote contact for the young people so that they sustain their close relationships with the people who are important to them.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Records need to be accurate, signed and dated, and have a rigorous management overview.
- Maintenance in the home, particularly dealing with any damage to carpets in young people's bedrooms, should be carried out in a timely manner.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2017	Full	Inadequate
16/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/04/2016	Full	Good
21/12/2015	Interim	Not judged

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, 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
12: The protection of children standard The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. 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, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12(1) and (2)(d)) In particular, replace any damaged carpets.	30/10/2017
36: Children's case records Ensure that the registered person maintain records ('case records') for each child, which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up-to-date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))	30/10/2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

At the full inspection on 23 May 2017, the home was judged inadequate. A monitoring visit took place on 22 June 2017, to assess the progress made by the home. At this full inspection, the home was judged good. The registered manager and the staff team demonstrate commitment and determination to improve their practice and the services provided to young people. The atmosphere in the home is calm, and there has been a significant reduction in the number of incidents in the home. A young person commented, 'This is a happy house again.'

Young people make significant emotional and social progress. Interactions between the staff and young people are warm and considerate, and the inspector observed positive relationships between staff and young people. A social worker said, 'I have observed very good staff interactions with the young people and the house has a very positive vibe.' A young person said, 'The staff are ace, they are always there for us.'

The young people benefit from making a positive contribution to the home and their care plans through a variety of forums, such as key-work sessions, young people's meetings, placement meetings and statutory reviews. Young people discussed the possibility of having a house pet with the registered manager and staff team. The young people now have a pet kitten, and they all contribute to looking after it. One young person said, 'This is the newest member of the family.' Young people confirmed to the inspector that they know how to make a complaint if they are unhappy, or have any concerns about their care.

Education is now given a high priority, and a new education planning document has been created. This enables the staff to identify each young person's ongoing educational needs. The document clearly sets out individual provisions and strategies in place to encourage young people to attend education. This will ensure that a planned approach is taken in relation to young people's education, and that their individual needs will not be allowed to drift. Consequently, staff at the home are now equipped to promote the importance of learning and education for all young people.

Young people do go missing from the home. However, staff have a robust protocol in place. This includes doing as any good parent would and searching for the young people. Staff are proactive in working with the young people to reduce the number of missing-from-home episodes. This has been successful for one young person, who stated, 'Part of my bonus chart is that I come in on time and don't go missing. I want to earn my bonus so I have been coming in on time.'

The registered manager plans admissions to the home. Staff visit young people before they move into the home, and they support young people to visit. This enables a robust assessment to be undertaken, to gain a view of the potential impact on other young people. As part of the assessment, young people meet staff members and other young people they will be living with. They can look around the home and ask any questions

they may have. This ensures that young people's needs are clearly identified, and are met by the staff. Furthermore, this demonstrates that compatibility and individual needs are considered to be of high importance.

Young people are given the opportunity to experience fun activities that support the positive use of leisure time, and that provide positive shared experiences with staff and other young people. For example, young people are active members of local youth clubs, and young people have recently enjoyed a holiday at a holiday park with staff. A young person commented, 'I loved the holiday. It was fab.'

Independence plans and transition plans are all individualised to meet the needs of the young people. For example, a young person planned, budgeted and prepared a meal for two of her friends, who joined her for an evening meal. This type of experience is helping to prepare this young person for semi-independent living, and encourages her to have friends in her home for a meal.

The home presents as a lived-in family home. It is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The quality of furniture and decor is very good. A social worker said, 'The addition of the new kitten adds to the family home feel. It is a really nice house.' However, one of the bedroom carpets has numerous burn marks on it. The registered manager acknowledged that this detracts from the comfortable environment presented in the house.

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

The safeguarding concerns present at the last inspection have decreased. The registered manager and staff review the risk assessment and management plans. In addition, the registered manager has been monitoring the records to ensure that they accurately reflect young people's known and emerging risks.

The registered manager has shared with the staff team all information in relation to safeguarding. Staff are now much clearer about their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. Reporting protocols have also been reiterated to ensure that any disclosures from young people are reported to the local authority safeguarding team, within the required timeframes. Furthermore, all staff have attended in-house training on how to respond to disclosures from young people, and the steps to take thereafter.

There is evidence that the new systems introduced clearly highlight the decision-making process in relation to all safeguarding matters. Furthermore, risk assessment documents clearly identify the individual needs of each young person, and the strategies in place to manage these in line with the local authority care plan. A social worker said, 'The manager was very quick to respond to a potential safeguarding concern and kept me updated fully.'

Staff have a calming influence when young people become anxious, or struggle to manage their behaviour. Behaviour management plans have useful de-escalation

strategies that support young people. Young people agree to the consequences given, which are in relation to minor issues. Consequences are proportionate, and are not punishments. A young person said, 'They are fair and we get told exactly what we have done wrong, but also we can get a chance to show good behaviour too.' The home operates an incentive scheme for good behaviour, which works very well, and young people have fully engaged in the scheme.

Careful recruitment of staff helps to safeguard young people. Effective procedures and clear lines of accountability are followed, to ensure that only suitable adults work in the home. The registered manager has updated all staff recruitment files to ensure that they are detailed and comprehensive, and that they contain all relevant information. Furthermore, she has ensured that all the records have up-to-date references. This ensures that the staff team has the skills and experience to work with children and young people.

All medication is stored and recorded appropriately. Consent for medical treatment and first aid is in place for each young person. The registered manager has a robust auditing system in place for overseeing the safe administration of medication.

The physical environment is safe, and protects young people from accidental injury. Health and safety processes are robust. Each young person has a detailed individual risk assessment that staff understand. As a result, the home is able to take all necessary steps to reduce the likelihood of young people being at risk of harm.

Environmental risk assessments accurately reflect all risks and potential hazards. Young people and staff understand fire safety systems, and understand how to respond if emergencies occur. The safety of young people is promoted further through good environmental health and food safety processes.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is qualified, and has the experience to undertake her role. She leads by example, and is actively involved in all of the home's operations. This enables her to monitor everyday practice in the home as she works alongside colleagues and young people. Young people and staff speak highly of their manager.

The registered manager routinely monitors, evaluates and analyses the work undertaken by the staff. Daily, weekly and monthly monitoring takes place, and this has enabled her to identify weaknesses and to take remedial action. However, some records are unclear. For example, records of individual risk assessments had been updated; however, the previous actions to address particular risks had not been removed. This could lead to confusion for staff when meeting the individual needs of young people.

The registered manager and staff have established strong working relationships with a range of agencies and professionals who are involved in young people's care. Staff work closely with schools, colleges, social workers, health professionals and leading child

protection agencies. Feedback from all stakeholders is positive. They praised the commitment and communication of the staff team, and recognised the progress that young people have made.

Since the last inspection, the staff have received good training opportunities. The staff spoken with said that training and learning opportunities have been helpful. They said that they have learned to consider different approaches when responding to the young people's presenting behaviours and needs.

Staff members receive regular supervision by the registered manager or deputy manager. Supervision sessions take place each month. This enables the members of staff to discuss matters that are important to them. They discuss the young people in depth, and how they care for them. Staff members discuss their developmental and training needs, and ways in which any identified gaps in training can be addressed. A staff member said, 'Supervision is really good; I feel completely supported.' Rotas demonstrate that there are adequate staffing levels to meet the needs of the young people.

The statement of purpose has been reviewed recently and captures the ethos of the home. Staff practice is reflective of the statement of purpose and the ethos of the home. Furthermore, the locality risk assessment has been updated; it was pleasing to see that this document included the comments on the local area from the young people. This ensures that young people are alert to any known risks in the local area and understand how to keep themselves safe when out in the local community.

The home has appropriate systems in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant bodies of significant events that occur in the home, or with young people. This ensures that those with an interest in young people's welfare are kept appropriately informed.

The registered manager is clear about the strengths and weaknesses of the home and the staff team, and has plans to develop the home's processes and procedures based on this knowledge. Staff commented that they feel supported by the manager, and are encouraged to bring new ideas to her. This demonstrates that managers and staff have ownership in supporting the young people to continually progress and have a positive experience.

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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Mark Armstrong

Registered manager: Nina Howarth

Inspector

Elaine Allison, 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 looked after children, 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 <http://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://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

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: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017