

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC065789
Inspector	Marian Denny
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Good Foundations Limited
Registered person address	6 Tower Quays Tower Road Birkenhead Merseyside CH41 1BP
Responsible individual	Andrew Mannix
Registered manager	Robert Leslie Jones
Date of last inspection	13/03/2014

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

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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This is a home where young people make exceptional progress in all areas of their development. The manager of the home is very enthusiastic and committed to high standards of care and for the efficient operation of the home.

Young people are cared for by a team of highly committed staff who will always go the extra mile for them. They are central to every aspect of work carried out by staff on their behalf and have very positive views about their life experiences at this home.

Staff are well managed, and supported. They are encouraged by a very experienced and enthusiastic manager who is eager to develop their competences and skills.

Strong working relationships have been established with other professionals. The majority of professionals involved in this home have a high respect for the way this home is managed and they value the positive contribution the home makes to the life chances for the young people.

External monitoring of the home is undertaken by an independent visitor to the home. The manager also carries out the internal monitoring of the home to ensure the home provides a high standard of care. However, the manager's quality

assurance systems are not sufficiently robust. Two shortfalls were identified in relation to the young people's records and as a consequence, two recommendations have been made.

The manager ensures staff are focused on making sure young people in their care achieve extremely positive outcomes in their lives. Staff also share this ethos and embrace any challenges made to improve the way the service is provided. Consequently, there is a continuous review of all activities within the home to ensure that improvements are a constant feature.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home registered for three young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2014	Interim	good progress
10/12/2013	Full	good
18/03/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
09/08/2012	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):

- ensure sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children. This is with specific reference to ensuring children and young people are clear about the reasons for their rewards and have the opportunity to discuss and comment on this (NMS 3.8)
- ensure records are up to date with specific reference to a recent photographs of children or young people. (NMS 22)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young People are making exceptional progress and achieving excellent outcomes in all areas of their development. They benefit from consistent care which enables them to reflect on their past and to develop extremely positive coping and social skills. Young people feel valued and see the home as a stable and long term part of their lives. One manager said, '(name of young person) has made massive improvements since living at Eaton Road. Staff have really helped him make good choices in his life.'

All young people are in school or college. They have extremely good attendance and are making good educational progress. One teacher said of one of the young person, 'He has really made good progress this year and has made considerable progress in his levels of numeracy and literacy. To date his attendance at college has been a great success.' Young people enjoy very positive relationships with staff.

Staff are all extremely committed and enthusiastic in supporting young people to have high aspirations and to achieve their true potential. Consequently, they are encouraged to achieve in all areas of their life and staff ensure they are well supported to do this. For example, they are encouraged and supported to identify activities within the community that will assist them to develop their interests, talents and generally improve their opportunities in life. This has had a positive impact in relation to their confidence, self-esteem and emotional health and wellbeing. Young people are also encouraged to express their views and opinions regarding the operation of the home; for example, the day-to-day life in the home. This consultation and involvement of young people in the daily arrangements in the home ensures young people feel valued, listened to and respected.

The home has a holistic approach to care and young people benefit from living in an environment which encourages positive attachments. Young people have trusting relationships with staff, one young person said, 'I know staff really care about me. They help and support me and I enjoy very good relationships with them. They are brilliant'. Another young person said, 'There is a really good mix of personalities with the staff here. They all offer us something different. That is what makes living in this home so good.' The relationships developed with staff greatly assists young people in their feelings of self-worth and confidence. It also enhances their ability to build healthy relationships with other people and has a positive impact on their relationships with their families.

Young people develop good independence skills appropriate to their age and ability. Well organised individual plans are in place to assist young people with their independence. For example, young people are encouraged to take responsibility for keeping their bedrooms clean and tidy and ensuring their dirty clothes are washed. They also cook meals and are helped to budget. In developing these skills young

people are better equipped, both practically and emotionally, for the transition to adulthood.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people benefit from a range of support provided by a committed, experienced, knowledgeable and consistent staff group.

Staff work hard to ensure that trust and respect forms the basis of their interactions with young people. Staff ensure young people are at the centre of their practice and they provide a high quality standard of care in the home. Staff are enthusiastic, dedicated and have high aspirations, as well as a genuine drive to help young people achieve. Staff provide an unconditional positive regard for young people and respond consistently with warmth, affection and empathy. This helps young people to forge positive attachments and trusting relationships with staff. Young people said, 'That they enjoy excellent relationships with staff'.

The manager also ensures that key workers are carefully matched with young people, thereby enhancing the likelihood of a strong relationship developing between them. This enables young people to discuss their feelings, worries and concerns. Staff also act as positive role models to the young people. All young people have individually tailored behaviour management plans that focus on positives rather than negatives. A daily incentive and rewards system is also in place, which is used to encourage young people to make the necessary positive changes in their lives. However, there are some shortfalls in relation to the rewards records. For example, in two of the records, the section relating to young people's comments regarding the rewards contained no information regarding the young person's comments, nor had the young person signed the record. This makes it difficult to ascertain whether the young person had been consulted and their views obtained regarding the appropriateness and effectiveness of the reward provided. It is clear though; that the relationships developed between staff and the young people effectively encourages young people to change their negative attitudes and behaviour to socially acceptable behaviour. In so doing, this provides young people with the opportunity to make a real change in their difficult and at times, challenging lifestyles.

Excellent collaborative practices are in place with other professionals, agencies and birth families. This ensures continuity of care and transparency in working practices. Other professionals and families are extremely positive about the quality of the care provided by staff. One professional said, 'Staff are excellent in communicating with us and work totally and effectively in partnership with us'. Another said we are totally part of a team and as a result the young person is making excellent progress'. One parent said, 'Staff are extremely friendly and welcoming. The care provided is excellent. Staff are always there to help him and offer support if he is upset. They

are excellent in communicating and always keep me up-to-date on how my son is doing. I am ever so happy that they are looking after him. They are brilliant.' Another parent said, much the same, though added, 'Staff are fantastic they have not only provided excellent care for (name of young person) but have been a terrific support to me, as well as my son.' Young people are fully involved in the development of their placement plans which are individualised and specifically tailored to their needs. Placement plans are comprehensive and are regularly reviewed and updated.

Staff are consistent and highly supportive of young people's educational achievements. Education plans are in place to meet the individual needs of young people. Staff support young people educationally. Young people understand the importance of attending school, have excellent attendance and are increasingly engaging in education and learning. This greatly improves their life chances as they move into adulthood.

Young people live in a home that promotes their health. They are encouraged to eat better quality food to improve their overall health. This is clearly demonstrated in the good quality meals provided. Their physical health is also encouraged through the various activities made available such as swimming, walks and cycling.

Care plans and subsequent assessments underpin staff's work with the young people. These documents give a detailed account of how each young person is progressing. Care plans and the key worker reports are regularly reviewed by the manager. Professional links with social workers and other key people ensure a multi-disciplinary approach is taken to care planning. This ensures young people are making very good progress and achieve very significant outcomes.

There are regular staff meetings. Both the manager and staff consider these meetings important, both in terms of ensuring better communication, information sharing and in ensuring continuity of care for the young people. Staff describe a supportive culture in the home. This results in a high level of consistency in their delivery of care for young people.

Young people live in a very comfortable, safe and extremely well-maintained home, which is suitably located. The home is well equipped and extremely pleasantly furnished and decorated. A significant feature is the plethora of colour pictures around the home showing young people engaged in various activities and having fun. Walls are adorned with certificates displaying the achievements of young people at school, in sports and in their leisure activities. This provides young people with happy memories of their time living in this home. Bedrooms are also personalised and young people say they really like their own personal space and the way the home is furnished. The high environmental standards of this home greatly contributes to young people's pride in their home.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people are protected by the robust safeguarding procedure at the home. All staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities to ensure the safety of young people. The home has appropriate safeguarding procedures in place for staff to follow in the event of any allegation, suspicion of abuse or where there is evidence of unsafe behaviour by staff.

Young people say that they feel safe in the home. Bullying is not currently a problem but staff are aware of anti-bullying practices. They are vigilant to the signs of bullying and take appropriate action to combat this. Young people say they are not bullied but if they were, they feel confident in raising this with staff.

Particular vulnerabilities of the young people are recognised and these are fully incorporated in the comprehensive risk assessments. These assessments are used to inform and guide staff in keeping the young people as safe as possible and to reduce any risk-taking behaviours. These plans are monitored and reviewed by the whole staff group as needed. Safe care practices are embedded in the day-to-day life of the home. There have been no incidents where young people have gone missing. Nevertheless, the home has a robust missing person's procedure in place and is well known and understood by staff. In addition, the home carries out a risk management plan for all young people who are admitted to the home.

Young people benefit from positive behaviour management strategies. Physical intervention is not used. The use of sanctions in the home is minimal. However, when used they are relevant and reflect the age and understanding of the young people. Any sanctions imposed are regularly reviewed for appropriateness and effectiveness. Young people stated that, 'They are fair.' Generally, the excellent relationships young people develop with staff results in them responding positively to staff when issues about their behaviour are raised. This is based on the trust and respect that has been established between staff and young people. Consequently, young people do not present challenging behaviour in the home. This means that young people learn how to behave appropriately especially when out in the community. Young people also benefit from the staff's ability to balance their needs for independence with any safeguarding concerns.

Young people know how to make a complaint though no complaints have been made for the past 12 months. Procedures for managing complaints ensure they are handled in an objective manner and investigated by the manager or an external nominated person. Staff enjoy positive relationships with the young people in the home and their views are valued. Consequently, they are generally confident to raise matters or any issues of concern with the manager or staff.

Staff recruitment and selection procedures are robust. These measures positively promote safety of young people by preventing unsuitable adults from working at the home.

Leadership and management

good

The home has a strong Registered Manager who has been in post for a number of years. He is suitably experienced and able to undertake the responsibilities of the post. He is qualified to level 4 in childcare and is currently arranging to undertake the level 5 diploma in leadership and management in care services.

A clear Statement of Purpose ensures that the aims and objectives of the home are clearly set out. This has recently been updated to ensure compliance with the revised regulations. The home is operated in line with the aims and objectives of its Statement of Purpose. The children's guide has also been revised and contains all the information required under Regulation and the national minimum Standards (NMS). These comprehensive documents give a clear overview of what placing social workers, parents, children and young people can expect from the service. This means that young people and placing authorities have current and clear information about the service.

Young people benefit from the consistency of care provided by a stable staff team. Most staff have obtained the required qualifications to support them in their roles. New staff undertake a comprehensive induction programme. All mandatory courses are up-to-date and staff have access to training specific to the needs of the young people they care for. This enables staff to meet the needs of young people effectively. Staff receive regular supervision and are well supported in their roles. All staff have had their annual appraisal to assess their performance and identify any areas of development.

Professionals confirm that there is good communication between the home and partner agencies to ensure the welfare and safety of young people is protected.

All records are stored securely. They are also audited on a regular basis to ensure that they are up to date and provide a clear and accurate history of each young person's time at the home. However in one of the young people's file, there was no up-to-date photograph. This means that should the young person go missing, staff are unable to provide the police with an up-to-date photograph to assist them in their search for the young person. Any significant events though are promptly reported to all relevant agencies. This ensures that young people's well-being are promoted and the manager and staff are fully accountable for the home's practice.

Young people live in a home that is effectively managed and serves their best interests. The manager and staff clearly have a strong commitment to delivering good childcare practice and they tailor this to meet the personal needs of the young people, whom they are looking after. Both the manager and staff demonstrate through discussions and in their records that regular checks are carried out across the various, different aspects of care provided in the home. This ensures the quality

of care is maintained to a good standard and where necessary, improvements effected.

Staff have a wide range of skills, which they use to provide opportunities for young people to extend their experiences, develop new skills and acquire knowledge which will be of value in their adult life. Staff value their supervision and the supportive teamwork, which provides them with good opportunities for learning and reflective practice. Staff have access to continuous advice and guidance. This clearly benefits young people as it means they are looked after by a competent staff team, who are able to fulfil their roles. Staff are very much part of a supportive culture in the home and this results in a high level of consistency in their delivery of care for young people.

Young people's meetings and the one-to-one sessions between the key worker and the young people, ensure that the manager, staff and the young people enjoy an open and honest dialogue. It also provides young people with the opportunity to share their feelings about the care they are receiving with both the manager and staff.

The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and is well aware of the home's performance. Regulation 33 visits are carried out in a robust manner and the reporting system is good. The information obtained, together with the internal monitoring system, ensures the manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses and the overall performance of the home. This information is effectively used in the home's development plan, which identifies the actions required and sets target dates for their achievement.

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.