

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	01/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC066010
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Quality Protects Children Ltd
Registered provider address	Quality Protects Children, Pacific Chambers, 11-13 Victoria Street, Liverpool L2 5QQ

Responsible individual	Anthony Nolan
Registered manager	Application in process
Inspector	Simon Morley

Inspection date	01/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection: This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has declined in effectiveness. Since the last inspection, a new service manager has been appointed to oversee the management arrangements. The manager and deputy were both absent for a period of time from the last week of May. The deputy returned in the second week of June and the manager at the end of June. Two of the three requirements from the last inspection are met. The third is due for completion at the end of September. Five out of the six recommendations made at the last inspection are not met and there are new safeguarding concerns. As a result, new requirements are set and a compliance notice issued to the registered provider with respect to protecting young people from harm. This demonstrates that the home has declined in effectiveness. One young person still does not have an individual missing from home protocol in place for staff to refer to. This means that the procedures to be followed, and the roles and responsibilities of staff for when he is missing or absent, are not clear. Risks to his safety have not been fully explored and therefore there is no clear strategy to reduce them. Staff practice is variable when there are missing incidents. This compromises the young person's safety. Safe and well checks and return home interviews are not consistently undertaken in line with agreed protocols between the local authority and police. When these do occur, recording is poor. Sufficient action has not been taken since the last inspection to improve these areas of practice. On one occasion a young person called the home late in the evening, communicating that she was in unsafe circumstances. While staff gave her appropriate advice, no one went to see or meet her and ensure that she was sufficiently protected. The manager agreed during this inspection that staff could have done more, but so far he has not addressed this with the staff on duty. This demonstrates a weakness in being able to take action to protect young people. There was another incident in the home between two young people, which was also poorly responded to, and adequate steps were not taken to supervise young people during the night. Since then, the service manager and manager have taken	

steps to improve staff practice at night that relates to this incident, to keep young people safe.

A member of staff suspended for not following appropriate safeguarding procedures returned to work without any follow-up training or appropriate supervision. This does not ensure that similar mistakes will not be made again. This person and another have only had one supervision since April. The service manager is addressing gaps in staff supervision with the manager and starting to make improvements with this.

Planned training for staff to raise awareness of the signs of radicalisation and how to protect young people from extremism was cancelled at the time of the last inspection. Staff have still not had this training. The discrepancy in the statement of purpose for the home about being able to support young people with sexually harmful behaviours remains. Staff do not have the training and skills to meet this need. This could be misleading for placing authorities considering making such a placement.

There is an independent visitor who is supposed to check monthly how well young people are safeguarded and whether their needs are being promoted. Written reports of his visits to the home still lack thorough analysis and evaluation and fail to pick up issues of how well young people are being protected. He has highlighted weaknesses in record-keeping but the quality of reports has not improved since the last inspection. The level of his oversight is not contributing sufficiently to keeping young people safe. Not all of his reports are sent to Ofsted as required. The frequency of report writing fails to meet the monthly target set by regulations, although he visits the home more often.

The manager now undertakes daily monitoring in relation to the welfare of young people, which informs him of any action he needs to take. Since July, there has been a new monthly monitoring system which covers wider issues in relation to managing the home. These systems need to be embedded in practice to assess their effectiveness in driving continuous improvement and to see how they ensure that young people receive good, consistent care. The manager has not yet completed the next six-monthly review of the service. This is due for completion by the end of September. The requirement from the last inspection that this review reflects appropriate levels of consultation is carried over in this report.

The manager has taken steps to agreeing guidance with the local police on police involvement, and has good relationships with local community support officers. The quality of staff rotas is better and is a more accurate record of when staff have worked and the shifts that the manager works. He has altered his hours to provide better support and supervision for staff by working alongside them.

Since the last inspection, two young people have moved out, one due to safeguarding concerns and the other as a planned move. The manager gives careful consideration to any new referrals to ensure that there is a positive match

with young people already in the home. There has been one new admission that was planned well.

Young people benefit from having a good say in the running of the home and any grumbles or complaints they make receive a positive response. They like the home and are happy with the care they receive. Staff provide young people with good levels of support to promote their individual needs. Record keeping of the support that young people receive is improving. This helps the manager to review and plan care strategies as young people progress with their development. Young people show a marked improvement in reducing risk-taking behaviour. Substance misuse, missing from home and being at risk of child sexual exploitation all decline. Young people enjoy a range of social and leisure activities and develop their independence. The manager ensures that there is a strong focus on promoting young people's education. All young people have finished school and have further education courses planned that reflect their different ambitions for the future.

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/04/2016	Full	Good
23/11/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
03/08/2015	Full	Requires improvement
30/09/2014	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meets 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* In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure: (2)(a) that staff: (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.	07/10/2016
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report'). The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (4)(7)(a)) In particular, the report must include rigorous assessment based on robust evidence of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care.	07/10/2016
The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (5))	07/10/2016

* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The information set out in the statement of purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and a placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph

3.6). In particular, review the aspect of the statement that indicates that the home is suitable for children with harmful sexual behaviours.

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11). In particular ensure staff are trained in how to prevent radicalisation.

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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