

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	22 March 2016
Unique reference number	SC066242
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Progressive Futures Care Limited
Registered person address	C/o, 18a London Street, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0UE

Responsible individual	Zoe Wilkinson
Registered manager	Justin Pagan
Inspector	Pam Nuckley

Inspection date	22 March 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Not judged
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC066242

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home has not had any young people in place for nearly two years because the manager has not had any matching referrals. However, a young person was placed recently from an adjacent home to ensure that she was fully safeguarded. The home had a staff team in place, the members of which were covering in other homes or were working casually in other services. There is a full staff team in place and the home's records show that a robust recruitment procedure took place, with all safeguarding matters fully verified.
- The home gathers professionals' thoughts on the home through consultation documents. A range of professionals describe the home as warm, welcoming, and friendly. They say that communication with the home is very good, that they are aware of all essential information and are kept up to date.
- The young person said that staff are approachable, caring and that they listen. Therefore, she is able to discuss any concerns, thoughts or issues she may have. She said that the advice she is given is good and allows her to reflect on situations.
- Young people are supported to complete further education, which enhances their chances of acquiring a recognised qualification for future employment.
- There is good continuity of support provided to young people. For example, all safeguarding incidents are robustly reported and the home is instrumental in ensuring that strategy meetings take place. This means that all professionals are kept informed and that they are working towards agreed goals and outcomes.
- The young person's views, wishes, and feelings have been taken into full consideration around her moving on. She wishes to have some support as she recognises that she is not fully capable of making good decisions about her life. As a result, professionals involved in her care are trying to identify a provision that will assist her.
- Regulation 44 visits are being completed by an independent service. However, they are not factual. The report says that there have been no safeguarding incidents in January and February. This is incorrect. There have also been several strategy meetings to discuss safeguarding concerns and there is an ongoing investigation being carried out by the police.

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the quality of care within the home ('The Guide to the Quality Standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5).

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home can accommodate two young people with behavioural or emotional difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27 November 2015	CH – Interim	Not judged
24 March 2015	CH – Interim	Not judged
11 September 2014	CH – Full	Good
18 March 2014	CH – Interim	Satisfactory progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The young person has recently arrived at this home from another home within the company. Good planning ensured that there was a smooth transition that placed the young person's needs at the centre of the decision making. The young person said, 'I like it here and I already knew some of the staff as they covered shifts in my other home. So settling in has been easy'. She continued to say, 'Staff are really good. They try their best and, most importantly, they are here for you.' The young person has completed her schooling and received some exam results. Staff have supported her to continue with further education and she attends college. She said, 'I have completed level 1 in hair and beauty and I am due to finish the level 2 in June. I do not know what I really want to do as a career but at least I will have something to fall back on.' This shows that she has the same opportunities as her peers and has taken on the advice that it is important to have a skill that will assist with employment. The young person receives good support and advice in all aspects of her health. She is currently seeing a counsellor on a weekly basis to discuss her emotional health. She said, 'I have a good relationship with her and this gives me someone away from the home to talk to.' She has recently had a routine operation and is recuperating from this. She said that staff have cared, and are continuing to care, for her well. All staff are trained in dispensing and giving medication. Good records show whether there are any contra indicators or side effects to the medication, times given and how unused medication is disposed of. This means that young people receive their medication in line with their prescription. The young person said that she knew how to raise an issue or complaint, but had not needed to yet. She said that she could identify different staff to talk to if she had a concern and was confident that they would listen and respond quickly. She was also able to identify several independent people, such as Ofsted, her counsellor and the independent visitor, who she could raise any concerns with if needed. The young person does not have face-to-face contact with any family members. She does have letter box contact, but does not wish to at present. Staff say that they often discuss this issue and will fully support her if she changes her mind. Good contact plans explicitly show any restrictions to contact which have been informed by the placing authority. This ensures that young people are protected from unsuitable adults.	

The young person is on a semi-independence plan and often makes her own arrangements for activities. She said, 'I prefer to go out with friends but I do go to the cinema with staff. I went to a panto at Christmas which was really good.' She continued to say, 'I can invite friends back to the home, they stay for tea or just stay in with me.' However, she also said, 'I sometimes don't pick the right type of friends, but I am learning to say no.' Staff say that she often does not realise that she is being manipulated and some friends just want her money. Therefore, staff and her counsellor are working on these issues and she is becoming more resilient.

A good feature of this home is that young people are well prepared for semi-independence. This starts with a good assessment of their skills and plans to build upon them. For example, observing their cooking skills, choices of food and routine. They are then assisted to make better choices, looking at comparing prices, having cookery lessons from staff, learning to budget effectively and learning to become completely self-sufficient in preparing meals for themselves. The young person receives a bursary and is encouraged to save for her future. She has recently visited a well-known furniture store to see how much things cost. She said, 'I did not realise that you had to pay for a bedstead and a mattress separately. I was shocked at how much everything cost.' Therefore, staff are talking to her about shopping around for things she needs new and what could be bought second-hand. This means that she can budget accordingly.

A good transition plan completed by the young person shows her views, the options available and the actions that people are taking to secure a good move. The young person said, 'I do not think I will be able to cope on my own, and I have told staff and my social worker this. I will need help when I leave.' All professionals involved in her care agree and steps have been taken to secure funding for this. She has also been allocated a personal adviser from the leaving care team. She said, 'I am working closely with her social worker and I have visited on a couple of occasions to meet her and gain her views.' Therefore, the young person will get support, advice, and guidance until she is 21 years old.

The home is nicely decorated and all maintenance issues are dealt with quickly. The young person has added photographs and pictures around the home which shows that she is comfortable and settling in well.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The young person used to live next door but moved to this home after she disclosed some information. The move was made with the agreement of all	

professionals. This ensured that she and another young person were fully safeguarded. The young person said that she felt safe and well cared for at this home. She talked about the good advice she was given to help keep herself safe in the community. She also completed a being safe course at college over a week. The home works closely with the missing from home coordinator from the police and with colleagues who focus on young people who are at risk of child sexual exploitation. When concerns arise, strategy meetings are held to discuss the incident and the necessary action to take. Because of the good relationships between the young person and staff, she has been able to talk about previous issues and ongoing concerns. This means that the police, staff, and professionals have taken swift action and all incidents are fully investigated. Effective and meaningful partnerships between the home, police and other safeguarding professionals promote young people's safety and welfare. Staff spoken with during the inspection fully discussed their roles and responsibilities in ensuring that young people are safe and the procedures to follow. A range of professionals said that the home and its manager communicate effectively with them, that they often instigate strategy or planning meetings and that they are fully informed of any incident or concern immediately. Therefore, they had confidence that all appropriate action is taken to safeguard young people fully.

Prior to coming to this company, the young person was a prolific missing from home person. She significantly reduced these episodes and was no longer a high risk concern. But she has recently been reported missing. She said, 'It was really silly and I regret it because I have lost trust with staff now.' She wrote a letter of apology to staff and discussed with the inspector how concerned the staff were for her safety. Her risk assessment has been updated to reflect this incident, and staff continue to liaise with the missing from home coordinator to safeguard her fully.

Care plans and placement plans clearly identify individual needs, routines, daily living tasks, concerns and risks. These are incorporated into a young person's behaviour management plan. This ensures that staff are able to work consistently with young people and that they receive the same responses. Therefore, young people understand what is acceptable behaviour and the consequences of negative behaviour. These plans are routinely reviewed in staff meetings to ensure that they are current and updated regularly. Staff discuss expectations with young people and they are given the opportunity to make things right through restorative practice. Staff say that this gives young people the opportunity to reflect on their behaviour and to make things right. They also involve young people in exploring what staff or they could have done differently to manage their behaviour. The manager said, 'We often find that reflecting on the incident rather than putting in negative consequences works better. For example, the young person agreed to complete a key working session on being missing from home and the safety issues rather than been given a consequence.' Incentive and reward schemes work well at this home. Young people can earn additional money, large activities, personal items and beauty treatments, depending on their individual tastes. This has led to improvements in their behaviour, attendance at education and inclusion in daily

routines.

Young people have not been restrained at this home. Staff are well trained should an incident occur that requires a young person to be held for their safety.

There is a new full staff team in place. Recruitment records show that a robust procedure is followed. This includes checking their suitability to work with young people through verifying references and their employment history. They complete an induction to the company, complete all mandatory training before starting work and some have worked at the sister homes while waiting for a young person to be placed at this home. All staff complete a six-month probationary period. Within this period, staff, young people and other professionals are asked for feedback on their practice. A high level of supervision and probationary meetings throughout the induction period also support them. These good arrangements further protect young people.

All certificates for renewing or ensuring items are safe are routinely completed. Staff and young people take part in monthly fire evacuations to ensure that they can respond to an emergency safely, if necessary.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager was registered with Ofsted in March 2011. He has the relevant qualifications and experience to lead a staff group and to manage the home. He also manages another three-bed home that is adjacent to this property. He ensures that he spends equal periods of time within each home. The home recently employed a deputy manager to support him but she was offered a more senior position with her previous employer which she has taken. Therefore, the home is re-advertising the position. Most staff are qualified in caring for young people. One member of staff is near to completing an equivalent award and one has recently been registered on it. Staff report that good arrangements are in place to ensure that they receive monthly supervision, annual appraisals, and development opportunities. They said that staff meetings are open forums to discuss young people's progress, practice issues and preparing for the month ahead. For example, staff say that they are looking at information supplied on radicalisation in the next staff meeting. This means that they will be more aware of social issues within the community. The staff training matrix shows that staff receive all mandatory training, which is	

refreshed regularly. Some training is accessed through online training packages and some training is sourced from elsewhere. The manager said, 'We are looking at a system to test how much knowledge staff have gained or retained from completing online training. Therefore, I will have a greater understanding of their learning needs.' This means that staff are well supported in their role and have the skills to care for young people well.

Care plans and placement plans reflect the individual needs of the young person. They are updated regularly to reflect her changing needs. Reviews are held frequently and the young person said that she attends them. She said that she could influence her care plan and has regular opportunities to comment on her records. The manager prioritises the needs of the young person very well and has a clear understanding of the progress she has made and the further help that she requires. He knows and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home and incorporates these, and feedback from professionals, into the home's development plan. The home is achieving its aims and objectives as set out in its statement of purpose. There are good professional relationships between the home, families, placing and host authorities, independent reviewing officers, police, schools and health services. This ensures that there is the best possible all-round support to the young person across all areas of her development.

Regulation 44 visits are undertaken by an independent service. The manager has challenged the visitor previously around the content of the information supplied. He has seen a small improvement but said, 'They still need to improve further so they assist me to develop the home.' However, the inspector brought to the attention of the manager that, in the January and February 2016 reports, the section covering safeguarding states 'no incidents this month'. This is incorrect. The young person was moved into the home in January 2016 due to a safeguarding concern, a strategy meeting took place, and there is an ongoing investigation being done by the police. Therefore, the report does not robustly monitor the quality of care within the home.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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