

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	27/07/2016
Unique reference number	SC066242
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Progressive Futures Care Limited
Registered provider address	c/o 18a London Street, Southport, Merseyside PR9 0UE

Responsible individual	Zoe Wilkinson
Registered manager	Justin Pagan
Inspector	Pam Nuckley

Inspection date	27/07/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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:

- Good assessment of young people's needs ensures that they are placed appropriately. This means that they have settled well.
- Staff have worked extremely hard to ensure that young people move to appropriate settings when they reach adult age. Their move is fully supported by good transition plans. Therefore, everyone knows their role in ensuring a successful move.
- Staff are excellent advocates for young people. Staff ensure that they listen to young people's views, wishes and feelings and make things become a reality wherever possible. After being at this home for three years, one young person is moving into adult foster care. The young person said, 'I was not ready for semi-independence and the staff have fought my corner and I am really happy about my new home.'
- Young people have made considerable progress in all areas of their lives. All professionals spoken with said that the nurturing and supportive environment offered to young people is the basis of the excellent progress that they make. However, this is not reflected in all of the home's paperwork. As a result, the information does not show a young person's journey through the placement.
- Young people live in a safe, caring and supportive environment. There are robust policies and procedures to support staff who demonstrate a thorough understanding and knowledge of safeguarding practices. This helps to ensure that young people's safety and welfare are promoted.
- Staff at this home value the importance of education. They ensure that young people receive the best education possible in line with their wishes and academic ability. As a result, one young person has completed her level 2 in beauty and wishes to complete her level 3.
- The registered manager demonstrates good leadership skills. He continues to develop the home by consulting with staff, young people and professionals. External monitoring of the home has improved but the manager's internal monitoring of the home is not robust.

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
36: Children's case records (1)(b) The registered person must maintain records for each child which are kept up to date. This is specifically in relation to ensuring that young people's starting points and the progress that they make at the home are recorded within all documents.	30/09/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.11)
- Ensure that records are kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing from the home. This is specifically in relation to recording any other actions that the home has taken to safeguard young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.31)
- Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate that a child is in any way at risk of harm. This is specifically in relation to staff having e-safety training. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered person should make the best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Full report

Information about this children's home

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2016	Full	Good
27/11/2015	Interim	Not judged
24/03/2015	Interim	Not judged
11/09/2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
There are good systems in place that ensure that young people are suitably placed. For example, a social worker requested a home within the company but the manager completed an impact risk assessment and identified a different home. The social worker said, 'He clearly knew the dynamics within each home and understood where her needs would be best met. She has settled very well because of this.' On coming into the home, young people are taken through the routines and boundaries of the home and are encouraged to voice their views, wishes and feelings. A young person said, 'It was great. They listened to me and fully involved me in my care. I am happy here and although I want to go home, if I cannot, I am happy to stay until I am 18.' Several members of staff, the manager and professionals talked to the inspector about the excellent progress that young people have made at this home. Young people were able to reflect on how they have progressed over time. However, the home's documentation does not show their starting points and the help that they have received to make this possible. This means that if young people wished to view their files in later life that they would not get a clear picture of their journey. Placement stability, a consistent core staff team and the nurturing care approach helps young people to develop and sustain strong and positive attachments within the home and in the community. One professional said, 'As soon as you walk in, the atmosphere is welcoming, staff and young people are engaged in everyday life and there is lots of laughter within the home.' Another professional said, 'It is clear that young people have strong attachments to staff and there is a plan in place for her when she moves on, so that she can still see and visit regularly.' A young person said, 'Staff are like family and the manager is like my step dad. He has done more for me than anybody. I cannot thank him enough.' Young people enjoy good health, lead healthy lifestyles and learn to understand the benefits of eating well. Their routine and specialist healthcare needs are effectively addressed. When a young person was initially placed she needed encouragement to attend all of her health appointments. She now makes and attends all her appointments independently. However, her health plan does not show how this was made possible. For example, it does not link to rewards, incentive charts or key worker sessions around this area. In contrast to this, young people develop a healthy self-image and build their confidence through regular key worker sessions and additional support from external agencies when required. One young person now goes to a drop-in centre for counselling when she feels she needs to talk to someone about her earlier trauma and life experiences. As a result, she has developed coping strategies around her emotional resilience and	

her behaviour has improved because of this. All staff are trained in dispensing medication and giving first aid. As a result, the storing, recording and disposal of medication is robust and staff can confidently deal with any accidents.

Young people actively participate in a range of positive activities. One young person could not swim and the home provided her with swimming lessons. She has recently passed her stage one. This means that she is now enjoying going to swimming venues and she can do this safely. Both of the current young people have recently celebrated their birthdays and they went to a theme park. One young person said, 'It was great and a member of staff went on the rides with us, so it was fun.' One young person regularly sees her friends and they are welcomed into the home. As a result, young people are trying new experiences, learning and are involved in their community.

Young people have excellent attendance at school and college placements. One young person has recently finished her level 2 in beauty and is preparing to return to complete her level 3 in September. The other young person has been in placement for a short while. Just before being placed here, she also started a new school. The home liaised with the school and set up a meeting of introduction. Since this time, she has had full attendance and teachers comment on her good attitude to learning, behaviour and how well she has settled in. This is reflected in her end of year school report. However, several staff have not read this report and could not tell the inspector at what level she was working towards or what support she required that was identified within the report. For example, the report says that the young person needs to know that it is 'OK' to ask for help if she does not understand things. This information has not been taken over to the young person's education plan. Therefore, staff are unaware of how to support the young person in this area.

Young people play a full part in decision making in the home and feel that their contribution is taken seriously. All documents held by the home start with young people's wishes and feelings, so that staff know and understand how they wish to be cared for. An outstanding area of practice is the young people's meetings. Young people discuss their week, menus, activities and any concerns. But a member of staff said, 'They were becoming repetitive and being completed just because they had to be done. So we discussed how these could be made better and be more beneficial.' Staff and young people discuss a topic that is within the news or newspaper and how this affects them. For example, a member of staff cut out an article on a young person requiring hospital treatment due to taking drugs. Young people discussed what they knew about drugs, the effects that they have and the impact on services. This also allows staff to know how much young people understand and enables staff to do further work with the young people if required.

Young people's sense of identity is promoted through meaningful and safe contact arrangements with family and friends, agreed with the placing authority. Staff work effectively with young people's families and support them to build strong relationships. Some contact is supervised to ensure that it is safe. The home is currently supporting one young person to have separate contact with family

members. She said, 'Contact is extremely important to me. I love my family.' She continued to say, 'I see my mum and brothers together. It is noisy and I would like individual time with them all. Staff here are helping me raise this issue at my review next week.' These excellent arrangements enable young people to maintain relationships that are important to them.

One young person is due to move on shortly. The original plan was for her to move into semi-independent or independent living. However, staff assessed her emotional resilience and life skills and found that she did not have all the skills necessary to care for herself safely. In conjunction with this, the young person also recognised that she would struggle. The manager appropriately challenged this decision and alternative options were explored. She chose to go into an adult foster family. She received information on several families and after visiting one family decided that this was the right place for her. She said, 'I am so happy. They are great. I have been for several visits, meals and days out. I am going to stay overnight at the weekend.' She continued to say, 'I will miss here so much. Staff are like family. They have done so much for me. I cannot thank them enough.' Good transition plans explicitly show all the work completed by staff to make this move possible. It has dates and times for visiting, who is responsible for carrying out each element and there is also a contingency plan in place should this fail. These excellent arrangements ensure a smooth transition into adulthood.

Young people live in a comfortable family home that is warm and welcoming. The home is well decorated and furnished. Young people have personalised their bedrooms and display photographs and drawings throughout the home. This gives them a sense of belonging.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people say that they feel safe, secure and well cared for in the home. They say that they can talk to any member of staff if they are worried or concerned about anything. A young person said, 'I was not good at keeping myself safe but I am learning because the staff have done lots of things with me. But I still struggle to say no to my friends. This is why I feel I need more support before going into independence.' This shows that staff work with young people to enable them to become increasingly safe but more importantly that young people are able to reflect when they still require further support in this area. Staff are fully trained in safeguarding procedures and receive regular refresher training. They are confident and competent in implementing the home's policies and procedures if they have any concerns or allegations are made about young people's welfare. Professionals speak highly of this service in how they protect, challenge and address any concerns. One professional said, 'My young person does not have any identified risks but staff have already started having discussions with	

her around being safe in the community.' Another professional said, 'This home has ensured that she understands why adults have concerns for her and have put strategies in place so she keeps herself safe.' Another professional said, 'They are a great advocate for young people and follow procedures to the letter.' As a result, young people have lessened the risks that they presented with when first placed.

Young people have access to the internet and social media sites after any risks or previous concerns have been explored. However, staff have not had any e-safety training. A member of staff said, 'I just tell them what I know.' This does not ensure that staff have the most up-to-date information, that the information is correct, is supported by research or that they can be confident that all staff are giving the same messages to young people.

A particular strength of the home is the stability of the staff team, which allows young people to develop warm and trusting relationships with staff that they respect. Young people comment positively on the quality of care that they receive and their relationship with staff. A young person said, 'I love it here. Staff are fantastic.' Staff are patient, calm and good-humoured in their exchanges with young people. They are equally confident about challenging young people when their behaviour warrants it or giving them the time and space to work things out for themselves. Staff are able to make excellent use of their relationships with young people to effect change. Professionals say that this is the basis of the excellent outcomes for young people.

Young people have not been reported missing from care for a significant period of time until recently. One young person has been reported missing on two occasions. She said, 'I just wanted to stay out with my friends a bit later. But I understand why staff took the action they did and on reflection it shows that they care about me.' When young people are late or suspected of being missing, staff immediately go looking for them, contact them through their mobile phone and send text messages and return them safely back home. They have established strong links with the local police and specialist police services and if incidents do occur, there are clear practices and agreements in place that staff understand. However, the home's recordings lack details of work undertaken with the young person on their return. For example, the young person returned under the influence of alcohol and the conversations or future work needed in this area have not been recorded. This does not ensure that all elements of the incident are robustly addressed. In contrast to this, the home is excellent at ensuring that return interviews are completed by the local authority or their agent, so that information can be shared about a young person's reasons for going missing and appropriate action can be taken.

Individual risk assessments and behaviour management plans clearly identify risks for young people, which help to protect them. Positive behaviour is promoted with clear and consistent boundaries to help young people understand the effects of their behaviour on themselves and others. Regular individual sessions, target setting, incentives and rewards are all used to good effect to help young people develop socially acceptable behaviour. As a result, risk-taking behaviour has

significantly reduced. Young people learn appropriate boundaries, require minimal sanctions and restraint has not been used. The home feels calm and nurturing and young people confirm that they feel that staff genuinely care about them.

The registered manager ensures that staff are carefully selected and vetted before starting work in the home and visitors are checked and supervised as appropriate. This helps to deter unsuitable people having access to vulnerable young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home benefits from good leadership. The manager was registered with Ofsted in 2006 and has a relevant leadership and management qualification. He also manages another home within the same company, which is in close proximity. He divides his time well between the two homes and maintains regular presence and good oversight of both homes. He has strong support from a well-qualified and experience deputy manager and an experienced and stable staff team. This means that there is little disruption to the day-to-day care of young people and because of this young people settle well. The home's statement of purpose is well written. It is clear about the care provided and its underpinning principles and arrangements for the day-to-day operation of the home. There is a stable staff team in place. The home has several bank staff that cover for any sickness, annual leave or when staff leave. They have been covering for the home for several years, so they know the young people well. Therefore, staff understand the ethos of the home, work well together and this positively influences the continuity of care that young people receive. The staff team works effectively with parents, professionals and other agencies, which provides a consistent approach to young people's care. They speak positively about the care and support that young people receive. One professional said, 'It does not matter who you talk to they all know the information you require. This shows me that they are well informed.' Another professional said, 'I am kept informed of any incidents and receive good monthly feedback on the young person's progress or concerns.' All staff have an appropriate childcare qualification. In addition to this, one member of staff is a qualified teacher and another has a health and social care qualification. Staff say that they are well supported by their colleagues and the manager. They said that they benefit from regular supervision and have developmental opportunities to progress within the company. Staff say that team meetings help them to reflect on practice and identify developmental needs. In addition to this, they say that training is strongly promoted and that they are encouraged to access a wide range of courses. The	

manager is currently looking at devising a system to check staff's knowledge when they access online training. He recognises that not all people learn the same way and feels it is important to assess what their learning style is and how he can assist them.

The manager's monthly quality assurance audit does not provide a clear evaluation of the quality of care or of the records held within the home. As a result, there is little information on how the home can improve or develop in the future. The external monitoring of the home has improved because the independent visitor is focusing on sampling records rather than giving overall statements. They are also consulting more regularly with young people at the home. This means that some actions have been highlighted to the manager and young people can comment on the care that they receive.

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 that 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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