

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	10/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC066458
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Pebbles Care Limited
Registered person address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS5 3BT

Responsible individual	Mr Luiz Guilherme
Registered manager	Miss Jane Wilson
Inspector	Mr Mark Broomhead

Inspection date	10/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC066458

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- There is a homely environment which promotes the nurturing ethos of the home. Those using the service acknowledge it is a loving environment where young people are encouraged to feel safe and achieve the best that they can.
- Good connections between young people, staff and managers promotes trusted and secure relationships. Staff understand the strengths of each other and utilise this to tailor individualised care for young people.
- Young people are supported to be involved in day to day decisions about their life and about decisions relating to their futures. Independence work is very good and there are measurable outcomes demonstrated by the success in young people moving on from the home.
- Staff are genuinely interested in what young people do. Young people know and understand that adults are there to help and support them to keep safe and to do well.
- Young people are able to discuss things they find difficult with key-workers that they have been able to bond with. This has allowed staff to approach difficult situations with confidence and work with young people to make positive decisions.
- Staff at the home are very proactive in challenging others when they feel that the young person is not receiving the best service. They encourage young people to be confident to get what they want, when it is in their best interest. They enable young people to take matters into their own hands which improves their self-esteem and confidence.
- The home supports promoting good behaviours, rather than reacting with a
- consequence. This has delivered some very good outcomes and behaviour displayed by young people is good.
- Young people are able to engage in activities which demonstrate a measured level of risk. This is because staff understand them well and work with them to expand their boundaries and to progress to more independence.

- Staff work hard to promote contact, even when this has been challenging. They ensure that young people are supported to get the best contact they can with families and those that are important to them. This demonstrates to young people that they are cared about and staff will work with them, and their social workers, to maintain or improve contact.
- Young people become increasingly safe when at this home. Behaviours that demonstrate high levels of risk at the time they arrive are continually reduced. As a result, young people do not go missing from the home, nor do they engage in smoking, drinking or use of other substances.
- Educational attendance is excellent. Staff work with young people to get them to engage in education. As a result, where young people previously had no structured education, they now do. In addition, they attend regularly and achieve good results.
- Planning for young people arriving at the home and leaving the home is excellent. The manager ensures that information is provided to the home to allow her to make decisions on whether those needs can be met and if the young person will gel with others already living there.
- The manager is a strong leader who is supported by a strong team of managers and staff. As a result, staff feel very supported and confident in carrying out their role. The manager has introduced enhanced supervisions which fully engage staff and allows for reflective practice to guide staff to develop to their full potential.

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the home is a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children, they will in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. In particular, ensure that consideration be given to the amount of documentation that young people are required to sign. This needs to take into account the purpose of the signature and whether young people prefer to sign certain records. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15 paragraph 3.9)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The registered provider is a limited company. This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties or mental disorders, excluding learning difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
04/12/2014	Full	Good
27/01/2014	Interim	Good Progress
30/05/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	outstanding
Young people are very well supported by staff who take a sincere interest in their daily lives. They have relevant and productive key-work sessions, which target areas identified from their care plans. As a result, young people are able to build strong and trusting relationships with staff. This allows them to feel they are central to the home and are cared for by a group of people who genuinely care about them. Young people in this home are actively engaged in their own care. Staff empower young people to take control of those aspects of their lives that they are capable of. One young person has been supported to engage with children's rights and deal with concern they have about the service they have received from their placing authority. This has been positive for the young person, albeit that there is still work ongoing. Staff have also has significant success in dealing with complex and challenging decisions about a young person's health. This was managed by promoting the very good relationships that staff build up with young people which then allows them to talk to young people in a way appropriate to their level of understanding. This resulted in a positive decision being made by the young person about their own health. Educational attendance by young people at this home is excellent. One young person had no education at time of arrival and progressed to regular attendance while another young person moved to mainstream school, has excellent attendance and is now forecast good results. Staff worked with this young person when they were committed to attending mainstream school. They supported the young person to visit a number of possible schools and assisted in deciding which would suit them best. This has been a significant success and the young person is committed to achieving some good qualification. Staff help young people with their school work and have helped the young person to get practical work experience in the community. Staff at the home have also taken the extra step of sourcing additional education resource. One young person attends for additional support in two subjects. During the inspection I was able to observe the assistant manager pushing the young person's social worker for information on additional revisions classes and extra lessons at school following a meeting to discussion the young person's education plan. Young people are engaged in a number of activities in and outside the home. They are able to go to local facilities, such as bowling or cinema, but also go on trips to other parts of the country. Young people have been on trips to Blackpool, Alton	

Towers and they have recently been on a holiday to Centre Parcs. For one young person, this was their first ever holiday.

Independence work with young people is very good. As a result, young people have been able to make a successful transition from the home. Young people are encouraged to cook and clean for themselves. They also learn how to budget and manage their money. Young people are encouraged through reward, however, rewards are not simply for a task. Staff work with young people to engage them in everyday living and so they would need to complete a number of tasks or chores in any one day. This gives young people something to aim for and a sense of achievement. Young people are also encouraged to save for their future as part of their rewards. They are allowed to have part of any financial rewards put aside. Because of this, young people have been able to save a considerable amount of money for their future. This promotes their own sense of self-worth and the knowledge that saving a little means they can obtain something that they want.

Young people have good health promoted while they live in this home. Previously, young people would not engage with health professions but through perseverance of staff and the support provided to young people they understand the importance of taking care of their own health and seeking advice and guidance from professionals when necessary. The provider also employs a clinical psychologist who the staff at the home can call on for any advice about behaviours. Young people now readily attend appointment with their doctor, dentist and optician. As a result, the health of young people is very good. There is no smoking and no use of drink or drugs.

Young people are treated with dignity and respect. They are encouraged to keep themselves safe and the staff know them well so can work with them to allow them more independent free time. Young people benefit from targeted key-work sessions, which allow them to develop skills to manage their own conflicts and to express their concerns to staff. This allows young people to resolve their concerns which reduces their anxieties. Staff at this home understand the young people well and can recognise how they communicate their anxieties through behaviour and take steps to deescalate situations quickly. Young people are required to sign their name on a number of documents. This is not always necessary and can make the home feel institutionalised. The manager agreed to review what documents are signed with a view to reducing this as far as possible.

Young people have contact with families and important people, in accordance with their care plans. Staff at the home work very hard to ensure that contact is a positive experience for young people. They challenge social workers when they feel that contact could be better and work with families so that they are also supported to make contact the best experience it can be. Staff understand the importance that young people place on contact and go out of their way to make sure it takes place, including travelling long distances when necessary.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
Young people become increasingly safe when they come to live at this home and remain so. Young people report they feel protected and comments from other people involved in their care also support this. Some young people have arrived at the home posing significant risks to themselves. They had previously absconded from home and were at risk of exploitation. One young person came to the home while pregnant and staff worked quickly to build strong relationships to education and keep the young person safe. Staff deal with conflicts in the home quickly. They take a consistent approach and use their strong team working skills to ensure that messages on how behaviour is managed is understood by everyone. Reward is a key feature in this home and there are many incentives for young people to display positive behaviour and achieve objectives. This helps them understand that they can have better experiences by working with staff to improve their behaviours. This also equips them with a strong positive ethos when moving to more independent living. Young people, and others involved in their care, reported that young people were kept safe while at this home. Young people said they felt safe and that they were safe living in this community. Young people do not go missing from this home and do not engage in the use of drink or drugs. Staff take time to understand the needs of young people and construct plans for their care based on information provided by the local authority. They ensure that all staff understand the risks posed and use the key-work sessions to target any specific concerns. For example, they have sessions in relation to exploitation, what it means for that young person and how they can educate the young person so they understand what happened to them and also how they can change that behaviour. They have had considerable success and as a result young people understand the danger they place themselves in, even when they do not realise they are doing it. Only once concern has arisen since and it was managed quickly and effectively by the staff team. Other agencies were involved and the concerns were appropriately reported. Internet use is monitored via restrictive software. Young people are allowed free time, when their care plans allow. Once young people demonstrate they are able to keep themselves safe, staff work alongside social workers and parents to expand that free time. This gives young people an	

understanding that when they know how to keep themselves safe they will be given more time to do what they want with their friends. One young person is allowed free time to spend with their boyfriend and his family. Staff ensure that risks are considered and that decisions are made jointly with social workers based on information they gather. This ensures that young people can enjoy developing their social lives while still keeping safe and knowing they have the support of the staff at the home. When young people are away from the home, staff ensure they keep in contact with them to make sure they know where they are. They go and meet young people if necessary, and then allow them to continue with their free time.

The staff follow policies in relation to safeguarding which gives them guidance on what to do if there are allegations made against staff. In addition, they have policies which help them manage any incidents of exploitation, bullying or behaviour management. Some additional documentation that is kept with the policies should be updated to reflect the current guidance. This did not impact on the care being provided. During the inspection I questioned staff on what their proposed action would be if they were to see an abusive incident in the home. All were able to give an appropriate explanation of their actions.

The manager has a comprehensive risk assessment for the location of the home. This takes into account any specific risks posed by young people currently living in the home and also properties operated by other agencies, such as probation. This could be further enhanced by identifying the level of risk before and after instigating steps to reduce the risk. This will then demonstrate whether the steps taken have been effective.

New staff are recruited safely and appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that young people are looked after by people that are appropriate to do so. The inspector queried one aspect of the application which was quickly addressed by the manager. This related to roles they may have in the home rather than the person not being fit to care for children and young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
The home is managed very effectively by a competent and caring manager. She has the necessary skills and experience to manage this home and is currently completed the qualification required by regulations. She is supported by a committed, competent and well resourced staff team. A social said that, 'staff are very committed and work really well.'	

Training is up to date and the manager is aware of when training requires renewing. In addition, the manager analyses any new placements to decide whether any additional training is needed for the staff team to be able to provide appropriate levels of care. The manager works with the provider's trainers to ensure that staff have the appropriate knowledge.

The manager ensures that the quality of the care being provided in the home is regularly reviewed. She has meaningful dialogue with the independent visitor who now includes their opinion on the matters required by regulation. She captures feedback on the quality of care through discussion with young people and their regular meetings. In addition, she monitors the contact books that are individual to each young person. This records discussions with those involved in their care. The manager also seeks regular feedback from social workers and has planned a 360° feedback exercise which will allow peers to comment on managers and each other.

Supervisions have been expanded and now include opportunity for reflection on things that have gone well and not well. This allows staff to highlight areas that are concerning them and promotes self-awareness and self-development. In addition, they now focus on the needs of the young people in the home and evidence what has been achieved by the young person as a result of influences staff have made. While acknowledging that the supervisions take more time to complete, the manager was confident the benefits of conducting them in this way outweighed the additional resource. Staff reported positively on the supervisions with one describing the supervisions experience as, 'worthwhile' and another stating, 'they get you thinking more'. New members also commented on what a supportive environment it was and that they could ask colleagues if they were unsure of anything.

The manager understands the expertise within her team and utilises to promote good care. One member of staff is currently studying at university and is able to bring that knowledge into the home to the benefit of other staff. The manager creates a culture of high expectations of the staff to improve the lives of young people, and this is what happens. They look at research informed professional practice and use it to improve the care being provided. The staff have an ethos of constant improvement and regularly review and improve the way in which they record and manage their work. The manager has recently introduced an 'Improvement Journey'. This quickly and easily records and acknowledges key achievements within the home. They range from starting voluntary work, attending a prom to dates young people have had their first contact visits. They record features that are important to young people who live at the home and celebrate them in a proud and public way.

The staff team challenge those involved in the young people's care so that they get the best outcomes. They support them to have good educational provision and so that they have good quality social work. They liaise appropriately with education providers and with other professionals.

The Statement of Purpose is kept up to date and reflects the practice in the home. Staff understand the ethos and work well at replicating a family environment. The physical environment is well cared for and young people are able to have their rooms decorated to their taste. It provides a welcoming, relaxing and safe environment for young people to flourish.

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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