

SC066560

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is one of a number of children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

If required, children and young people can access the organisation's school and therapy department.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 July 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 7 November 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
21/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible. Help each child to attend education or training in accordance with the expectations in the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 8(1)(2)(a)(viii)(x))	05/09/2018
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. In particular to ensuring that staff benefit from effective and regular supervision. (Regulation 33(4)(b)(c))	05/09/2018
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant professional without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(e))	05/09/2018

Recommendations

- For the children's home to be a homely environment, the registered person should ensure that high standards are maintained throughout the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Children's homes staff should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. Where children have specific health needs or conditions, they should be supported to manage these subject to their age and understanding. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including

the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The staff team works hard to develop trusting and caring relationships with young people. As a result of this, young people can express their feelings and start to come to terms with past experiences. Staff understand the underlying reasons for behaviour and respond with great care and empathy. Consequently, young people feel accepted and secure.

The education outcomes for young people are mixed. One young person has completed her GCSEs and is looking forward to starting college. However, another young person is refusing to engage and has experienced a prolonged period of absence from school. Because of this, she has not had the opportunity to acquire the knowledge, skills and experience to move on positively to further education.

Staff help young people develop the skills that they need for independence. These skills include budgeting, cooking and basic household tasks. The young people are given lots of opportunities to access a range of activities. These include walks, local events, cinema trips, baking and feeding animals at a local farm.

Young people are in good health. They receive suitable guidance from staff on maintaining healthy lifestyles. However, one young person, despite support and guidance from staff, is refusing to attend routine health appointments. This has the potential to hinder her long-term health outcomes.

Care planning and care practices are highly influenced by the therapeutic input provided from the organisation's therapy team. This enables staff to develop innovative and individually tailored strategies of support to young people on a day-to-day basis.

Staff liaise well with other agencies and feedback from professionals is positive. Agencies report that communication is effective and this supports young people's progress.

There is extensive evidence to demonstrate that the young people's wishes and feelings are central to how the home is run. Their views are constantly sought and they are fully involved in care planning. They have a purposeful say over how they would like to be cared for and what they hope to achieve. Consequently, young people feel valued and motivated to work towards the goals that they have set for themselves.

Overall, the physical environment is maintained to a high standard. However, at the time of this inspection the bathroom was dirty and unhygienic. This was addressed by staff and the area was cleaned immediately.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff have a good understanding of young people's specific needs and vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them. The safety of young people is consistently at the centre of staff's practice.

Staff support the young people to come to terms with their past and find stability in their often chaotic lives. They treat the young people with sensitivity and with positive regard. As a result, most young people begin to understand their emotions and can articulate how they are feeling. This provides a firm foundation in which young people become more resilient and move on positively in their lives.

Staff are well trained and benefit from the input of allocated therapists, who provide guidance and support on how to manage risk-taking behaviours such as self-harm and aggression. Staff work together to ensure that the young people know and understand the boundaries and routines at the home. This means that young people feel secure and understand how the staff team will manage and react to their risk-taking behaviour.

The young people currently living at the home do show some complex and challenging behaviour. However, in the main these are managed well by staff. One social worker said, '[Young person's name] has made massive progress. She had a little blip a couple of months ago, but this was managed well by staff. Staff know her well, understand her triggers and know how to support her. Staff bring her back down quickly and enable her to remain in a good place for longer.'

There have been 16 incidents of missing from care since the full inspection in November 2017, 14 of which relate to a young person who has now moved on to independence. In all cases, staff have made efforts to locate the young person, followed agreed reporting protocols and worked with the police and the placing authority to secure a safe return to the home.

Eight staff have left the home since the last full inspection. Safer recruitment practice has been followed in recruiting to these posts. All new staff have been subject to careful vetting, thus ensuring that they are safe to work with vulnerable young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

There has been a change in manager since the last inspection. At the time of this inspection, the new manager has been in post for three days. She has quickly developed a good understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. She has a strong commitment to securing ongoing developments to improve the service and understand how this can be achieved.

Records show that staff did not receive regular supervision from their previous line manager. This does not ensure that staff are fully monitored in their role. Staff training remains effective. Staff routinely undertake mandatory training, including safeguarding, self-harm, first aid and behaviour management. The manager also ensures that further opportunities for additional training are organised in response to young people's needs.

Since the last inspection, a number of new staff have joined the team. The staff team is suitably diverse and there is a good mix of experience. Some staff have acquired the required level 3 childcare qualification, with sufficient arrangements for the remaining

staff to achieve this within the required timescale.

The previous manager did not take effective action to ensure appropriate learning following serious incidents. On one occasion, a young person entered the office without staff and acquired car keys. This resulted in her entering a car and attempting to drive off the premises. Following this incident, limited action was taken to minimise the risk of this happening again. For example, car keys are not routinely locked away. This does not demonstrate effective safeguarding.

Significant events involving young people living at the home have not been reported to Ofsted. Because of this, the regulator is unable to carry out its monitoring function to ensure that appropriate action is taken by the provider to safeguard young people. This is a repeated requirement from the last inspection.

Liaison with other agencies is effective. Positive relationships exist between staff and other professionals. Comments include, 'Communication is excellent', 'I have regular feedback and receive very detailed reports', 'I am happy with how things are going and staff are doing a good job with a very complex young person'.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC066560

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road,
Rochdale OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Karen Brandon

Registered manager: Robin McLoughlin

Inspector

Ceri Evans, social care inspector

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