

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC066560
Inspector	Sarah Oldham
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Meadows Care Limited
Registered person address	Egerton House Wardle Road ROCHDALE Lancashire OL12 9EN
Responsible individual	Niel David Shelmerdine
Registered manager	Lianne Taylor
Date of last inspection	04/02/2014

Inspection date	08/10/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This private home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is also registered to provide education.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
17/04/2013	Full	good
14/12/2012	Interim	good progress
22/05/2012	Full	adequate

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
33 (2001)	ensure that the independent person, when carrying out a visit, shall interview, with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the children's home as appears necessary to form an opinion as to whether children accommodated at the children's home are effectively safeguarded (Regulation 33 (a)(i))	30/11/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the young people. This is in relation to specific communication techniques for children with additional needs (18.1).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people develop emotional resilience and make good progress from their initial starting points. They benefit from nurturing and supportive care delivered by an established and experienced staff team. This provides them with a continuity of care as well as enabling them to form positive, trusting relationships. The staff have high aspirations for all young people and endeavour to promote a sense of self-worth with all of the young people.

Young people's wishes, feelings and views are central to how the home is run. The manager and staff encourage and support them to be involved in not only things that impact on them directly, but also to think about how things impact on others. This means that young people learn to negotiate and respect each other's views. To enable all young people to contribute their views, documentation is in a range of formats and enables all young people to respond.

Young people say that they feel welcomed into the home and like the staff team. Other young people who have recently moved on from the home have commented very positively, through questionnaires, about the positive relationship with staff and the care and support they received during their time living at the home.

Placement plans contain full information with regards to individual needs and how these will be met. This includes health, education and promotion of safety and welfare. Staff from the home work in partnership with other agencies to ensure health care appointments are attended and that good health is promoted. Through in-house education with tutors, young people who have experienced difficulty accessing education previously have the opportunities to gain educational skills and knowledge to prepare them for future integration into school or college. This measure supports young people to achieve good educational and health outcomes.

Young people take part in a range of leisure activities and make full use of community based resources. This enables young people to meet with other young people and to develop positive friendships within their local community.

Contact arrangements support young people to maintain positive relationships with family and friends. Any restrictions on contact are fully discussed to ensure that young people understand why these are in place. This means that young people's safety and well being is at the forefront of practice.

Young people are supported to gain skills to prepare them for independence in accordance with their age and understanding. This includes tidying their bedrooms, assisting to plan and prepare meals as well as support to budget effectively. This enables young people to be prepared for leaving the home in a supportive manner.

Young people's views are taken into account with regards to how the home functions. This is through individual key worker sessions and regular house meetings. This includes planning menus, activities, décor and furnishing of the home as well as day trips and themed days to celebrate different cultures. These contributions enable them to develop their social and communication skills whilst sharing and respecting cultural heritage.

Quality of care

good

Young people benefit from being supported by an established staff team who have consistently high aspirations for all young people. They provide a nurturing environment that enables young people to develop their skills and to make progress. The staff team have training and experience of working with young people who are vulnerable and exposed to sexual exploitation. Over recent years, the staff have worked in partnership with other agencies, including the police, to reduce this risk. One specialist police officer said 'the home are exceptionally good at working in partnership to minimise risks for very vulnerable young people. They provide us with good levels of information and updates to enable all services to work with young people to minimise on-going risks.' However, when risks remain high, the home is responsive to these and liaises with the placing authority to review the placement and to help identify when the placement is no longer appropriate due to levels of risk or concern.

Placement plans are highly individualised documents that reflect the needs of young people and the support required. These plans are discussed with young people and placing social workers to ensure care and support is cohesive, enabling young people to make good progress. Young people have a copy of their placement plan in a format that is accessible and outcome focussed. Their plans are reviewed on a regular basis to make sure that they continue to reflect the young person's current needs. This means that young people are fully included and central to their care planning.

Educational outcomes are supported well. The organisation who own and run the home have their own school and also have tutors that can support the young people within the home if they do not have a school placement. This enables young people who have not engaged in education or experience difficulty within mainstream school to have a bespoke educational package. This supports them to achieve in preparation for integration into school in the longer term. Staff support education and work with tutors and schools to support young people with their education.

Health care plans reflect the health needs of young people. The home has strong links with the local looked after children (LAC) nurse who said 'the staff let me know when a new young person has been admitted to the home and this means that I can follow up any health care assessments or needs in a timely manner as well as

providing information and advice regarding a range of health care issues.' Staff have a clear understanding of specific health needs of young people and ensure that these are met.

Consistent behaviour strategies enable young people to develop positive behaviours and have an understanding of how their behaviours impact on themselves or others. The behaviour strategies are underpinned by detailed plans which are kept under review. This enables young people to be supported to learn self-regulating skills to reduce any negative behaviours.

The home is large and provides homely and comfortable accommodation. Young people are enabled to choose the décor and personalise their own rooms as well as contribute their views about the communal areas of the home. Regular health and safety checks are completed, and any repairs are undertaken promptly. This means that young people live in a home that is well-maintained and safe.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people say that they feel that staff care about them and help them to keep safe. One young person said 'the staff here are nice'. Other professionals who contributed their views to the inspection said that the home was proactive in maintaining the safety of young people, including those who were at high risk of sexual exploitation. Staff have a very good understanding of the risk for some young people of child sexual exploitation. They work in partnership with external agencies, including the police, follow agreed protocols and maintain detailed records to ensure that young people are supported to remain safe. This includes detailed risk assessments and relevant procedures to help minimise this risk. For example; effective information sharing resulting in police being able to take appropriate prosecution action. Other agencies have commented on the positive impact of the homes work with young people to help maintain their safety and wellbeing.

All young people have a detailed behaviour management plan in place. This enables staff to effectively monitor behaviours and establish strategies to enable young people to develop positive behaviours. Sanctions made are proportionate and young people are enabled to record their views regarding these. In addition, the home recognises and rewards positive behaviours. Young people comment positively on the fairness of this.

Physical intervention is only used in the event of a young person presenting harm to themselves or others.

The selection and recruitment of staff in this home is robust. The home benefits from a consistent and stable staff team. Additional recruitment to the team has been undertaken in accordance with safe recruitment and selection policies and procedures. These measures ensure that no unsuitable people are recruited to work with children or young people.

Young people know how to make a complaint. Information regarding this is in the children's guide and is also situated throughout the home on information boards. The complaint information is in accessible formats for all young people. This is regularly reviewed by the manager.

All staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of any allegations and fully understand the role of the local authority designated officer (LADO). There have been no recent allegations made. The home and staff maintain close links with all professionals to ensure promotion of safe care.

The manager and staff ensure that regular health and safety checks are completed. All equipment is regularly serviced. Fire risk assessments are in place and all young people know the procedure to follow in the event of a fire. Tests are undertaken to underpin the procedure. The manager has commenced a local area risk assessment to enable placing authorities, staff and young people to understand about the location of the home. This ensures that placements to the home are made following a full understanding of the home, the area and the facilities the home provides.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post since August 2013. She has the necessary qualifications, experience and knowledge to provide effective leadership and management of this home. She is supported within her role by a dedicated and experienced staff team, with the support of senior team leaders. The staff team feel exceptionally well supported by the manager and say that she provides strong leadership and management, communicates her views clearly, and is supportive in ensuring that staff follow the agreed protocols to meet the needs of the children and young people. She manages this home and another home, ensuring that her time is divided between them both to meet the needs of the young people and to maintain good management oversight.

The home's Statement of Purpose identifies the aims and objectives of the home and how the home supports young people. The Registered Manager provides effective guidance and leadership to the staff to support young people placed at the home. She has a good understanding and awareness of the home's strengths and areas for on-going improvement and development. She acts proactively to build on the homes' strengths with the involvement of the staff team and young people to ensure that all are aware of and contribute to the on-going development. A three monthly monitoring report is completed by the Registered Manager. This links in with the home's development plan and demonstrates clear progress .

Staff at the home have appropriate qualifications, experience and knowledge in working with children and young people. They have access to on-going training and development through specific in-house modules from the organisation as well as

using staff meetings to provide informal training opportunities. This helps to ensure that their knowledge and practice remains current. However, due to the needs of young people currently in placement, additional training needs have been identified regarding supporting young people with global development delay. This will enable staff to have greater insight into the specific needs associated with this diagnosis.

All staff receive regular individual supervision, and comment that this is of a high standard. This makes them feel supported within their role. All staff have annual appraisals. The manager seeks the views of young people regarding staff support and practice to include this within individual appraisals. This ensures that young people are able to record their thoughts about their care in a formal as well as an informal capacity.

In addition to the monitoring undertaken by the Registered Manager of the home, independent visits are completed on a monthly basis by an external person. A report is issued following these visits, to enable the manager to respond to any shortfalls identified in a timely manner. However, the reports do not demonstrate that the views of parents and placing social workers are gathered on a consistent basis to inform a comprehensive overview of the home.

At the previous inspection, two recommendations were made. These were in relation to the promotion within health care plans of smoking cessation, and ensuring that information with regards independent visitors was clearly identified within the Statement of Purpose. The manager has ensured that both these recommendations have been acted upon. The home has developed strong links with the designated looked after children's nurse to promote health care outcomes for young people, this includes smoking cessation support. Information with regards independent advocates is now contained within the children's guide.

Individual care case files for young people are stored securely, maintain confidentiality and reflect the individual needs and outcomes for young people. This contributes to an overall understanding of the young person's placement and progress they are making.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.