

SC066560

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to three children.

The organisation has an integrated therapy service available to the children and young people.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in August 2018. She is in the process of completing her level 5 qualification in leadership and management.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 September 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/07/2018	Full	Good
15/03/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
07/11/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good

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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(c)) With specific reference to accessing missing from home refresher training.	25/11/2019
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(e))	25/11/2019

Recommendations

- Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing from the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.31)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, the home has had an unsettled period with some young people exhibiting high levels of risk-taking behaviours. Notice to close placements was served on two young people. It was recognised that their risk-taking and challenging behaviour was detrimental to themselves and other young people living at the home. In these circumstances, the manager responded appropriately and worked closely with the placing authorities to identify a more appropriate provision.

More positively, the home has now moved on to a settled period and both young people living at the home are making good progress. Staff treat young people as valued individuals with unconditional positive regard, dignity and respect. Staff have a good awareness of young people's specific needs and vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to address them.

Young people get on with the staff team. When asked why, one young person stated, 'Staff are like good parents. I'm happy here, it's much better than the last place I lived.' Feedback from professionals also confirms the positive impact that the home has on young people's lives.

Young people re-engage with education as a result of the supervision, support and encouragement that they receive from staff. A teacher told the inspector, 'Communication with staff and the manager is fantastic. They are quick to respond and always make sure that [young person's name] comes into school ready to learn. We've already noticed a massive difference in her. She appears happier, more settled and is in a much better place.'

Placement plans are very well written, with clear objectives designed to help the young people to progress and achieve. Staff provide young people with good-quality care and support in line with written plans, and this promotes the young people's overall development.

Young people are supported to make successful transition to semi-independence. Where appropriate, staff continue to support young people once they move, as part of the planning process. Staff have worked hard to maintain positive relationships with young people who experience anxiety in the period prior to leaving the home. This helps to ensure that transition to independence is positive.

Staff encourage and support young people to participate in a wide range of interests and activities. Staff recognise the importance of these activities in increasing young people's confidence and self-esteem.

In response to a previous requirement, significant improvement has been made to the home environment. The home has been redecorated throughout and a new bathroom has been fitted. This means that young people live in a comfortable and well-maintained home.

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

The home has had an unsettled period with some young people exhibiting challenging and often risky behaviour, for example going missing, engaging in criminality and drug misuse. Such behaviour was compromising young people's safety and welfare. However, the registered manager and staff displayed a strong commitment to overcoming the difficulties and effective action has been taken to address these concerns. As such, the home has now become more settled. This was confirmed by a variety of professionals.

Risk management plans are well written. The documents identify how staff will support, manage and monitor young people's risk-taking behaviours. Staff understand what actions to take to minimise risk and work effectively with other professionals to ensure that young people are kept safe.

Staff promote young people's positive behaviour and there is good use of targeted incentives and rewards. There is evidence that staff use a restorative approach to helping young people reflect, understand their behaviour, and to identify alternative ways of responding to situations.

Staff demonstrate a commitment to helping young people to overcome their difficulties. Staff spend time with young people in key-work sessions, listening to young people and helping them understand and change their behaviour. There are many examples of this work being effective.

Following the last inspection, there has been a high number of missing from home episodes, with one young person going missing on almost a daily basis. However, the registered manager facilitated a strong multi-agency response to risk management. As such, the young person's missing from home incidents have reduced significantly.

While good practice is noted in relation to the management of missing from home incidents, records relating to these incidents lack pertinent information. For example, not all records detail the action taken and the circumstances of the young person's return. This makes it difficult for the manager to monitor practice and gain an accurate picture of the event.

Staff are trained in safeguarding and understand what actions to take if, for example, a young person makes an allegation. However, not all staff have been trained in the management and prevention of young people going missing from home. This would further enhance their knowledge and better equip them to understand the push and pull factors behind such behaviour.

Recruitment and selection procedures and processes are good. Management oversight, at all levels, reflects a total commitment to ensuring that only the most suitable and safe adults are employed.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has worked in residential settings for approximately 11 years. In this time, she has acquired skills and experience relevant to the role. The registered manager is ambitious and passionate about improving the lives of young people and the development of her staff.

Staff spoken to during the inspection said that the registered manager provides effective leadership to the staff team. Staff feel well supported in their roles and have access to regular team meetings and supervision. This helps to develop their practice.

Achieving consistency in staffing has posed a significant challenge for the home. At times, there has been a need to use staff from other homes within the organisation. However, staff rotas confirmed that things have started to improve. Over the last three months, there has been a steady reduction in the use of non-core staff. That said, this remains an area of risk for the home and a requirement is made to ensure that as much as possible is done to maintain a consistent staff team.

Staff told the inspector that staff morale has 'improved massively'. They recognise that the movement within the staff team has been positive. The newly formed team brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise. Staff have a thorough understanding of the home's aims and objectives and are working together with a shared goal.

The registered manager is diligent in monitoring all aspects of the home. She utilises a range of quality assurance processes and is proactive in addressing any identified shortfalls.

The manager continues to strive to improve all aspects of the home, consulting with the staff team in the development of processes. This results in a home where there is ambition to provide good care for young people.

The manager responds effectively to, and investigates, any serious incidents to ensure that appropriate action is taken. All significant events relating to the welfare and protection of young people are reported to the appropriate authorities in a timely manner. This provides effective protection to young people.

Partnership working is effective, and the manager has good working relationships with placing authorities, as well as with other professionals such as the police.

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: Kelly Wild

Inspector

Ceri Evans, social care inspector

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