

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	21/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC066560
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Meadows Care Ltd
Registered provider address	Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale OL12 9EN

Responsible individual	Niel Shelmerdine
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Rebecca Quested

Inspection date	21/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. Since the last inspection the home has operated as a solo placement for one young person. He has made considerable progress with improved outcomes in all areas and a significant reduction in risk-taking behaviours. This progress is recognised by his placing social worker: 'Things have really improved – compared to when he was at the other home, there are less incidents, and he has improved engagement with me. Staff are very supportive.' Staff have a detailed understanding of the young person and consequently they are able to manage his behaviour effectively. Staff are able to identify which rewards are effective to reinforce positive behaviour, and also how to distract and de-escalate situations. As a result, staff have not needed to use restraint. The number of incidents of damage to property have reduced dramatically as the young person has invested in the placement and become more settled. Staff support him to develop alternative strategies to manage his behaviour, and he is now able to reflect about his behaviour and take himself away to calm down. This represents considerable progress from his behaviour in the previous placement. Staff support the young person to become increasingly safe, and all risk-taking behaviours have reduced significantly or stopped completely. The young person has not been missing. He is investing in relationships with staff and in the home and does not want to be away from the home. He has chosen furniture and soft furnishings for his room. He engages with staff on a daily basis. This means that staff understand what is important to him and are able to conduct important direct work sessions with him, including sessions regarding relationships, fire safety and education. Staff encourage the young person to consider his future. Most significantly they have reintroduced him to a full-time educational placement. Prior to this placement the young person had completely disengaged from school and had not been attending for a number of months. His attendance is now excellent, with 100% attendance achieved in his first half-term. This represents outstanding progress. Staff have supported the young person in applying for college and apprenticeships for the next academic year. They are proactive in contacting the virtual school headteacher to ensure that the young person can continue to attend college after	

his public examinations are complete, so that he maintains the structure of attending his vocational courses. Staff prepare the young person for looked after children's reviews and support him to consider his options and present his views. This ensures that the young person's wishes and feelings remain at the centre of his care plan.

Staff support the young person's relationships with his family and friends, where the relationships are safe and in his best interests. As relationships improve he has increased the time he can stay with his family, and he is now able to stay overnight. This improves his sense of identity and self-confidence. The young person's parent said: 'I'm really pleased with the progress.' Staff ensure that the young person engages with activities in the community with his friends. He particularly enjoys going trampolining. Staff communicate effectively with parents, and professional stakeholders, ensuring that the young person benefits from consistent care.

The home has not had a registered manager since reopening in October 2016. There is a manager in post but Ofsted has not received his completed application. This represents an unacceptable delay. The manager has been monitoring and reviewing the quality of care which identifies the positive outcomes for the young person. The manager has addressed the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection, which has improved the quality of staff practice. Staff report feeling well-supported through both formal and informal supervision, and they work effectively as a team. There is a shortfall in the statement of purpose which does not clearly reflect who actually works in the home. The manager has tackled effectively the shortfalls in the physical environment of the home which had resulted from the home being closed for a long period. The home is now a clean, comfortably furnished and welcoming environment.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for two children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home forms part of a large company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/10/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/08/2015	Full	Good
27/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Recommendations

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

- The information set out in the statement of purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. In particular, that the statement of purpose clearly sets out which staff work in that home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', April 2015, page 15, paragraph 3.6)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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