

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	17/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC066565
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's Home
Registered person	New Options Limited
Registered person address	Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 5JG

Responsible individual	Graham Norris
Registered manager	Joanne Carter
Inspector	Jacqueline Malcolm

Inspection date	17/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
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 Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. The manager has shown capacity to improve by suitably attending to all of the requirements and one of the two good practice recommendations raised at the last inspection. Children and young people's increased safety, stability and security are borne out of a management and staff team that is embedding better systems that underpin their practice. Most parents are happy with the quality of care. One said they have 'noticed a big change' in their child. Children and young people benefit from a more consistent staff team with two keyworkers responsible for overseeing their plans. This ensures that their improved, personalised care planning consistently meet their individual needs. Children and young people's ethnic origin and cultural heritage have also been implemented into their plans and continue to be work in progress. Children and young people's welfare and dignity needs are met by these positive developments. A complaint that was made at the last inspection has been resolved to the complainant's satisfaction. They said, 'I'm really, really happy with the outcome. It's like night and day' and 'They have assured me that it won't happen again.' Other complaints and concerns have been thoroughly investigated. Practice improves from the lessons learned, which ensures that no repeated incidents reoccur. However, the process would benefit from confirmation from the complainant to indicate their satisfaction with complaint outcomes. This would ensure a fully transparent and robust system. Improved medication management systems have significantly reduced the number of medication errors that existed previously. This is with the exception of one recent medication error that was quickly detected, but a recording mistake gave the impression of a delayed response. The manager quickly dealt with this issue and there was no negative impact on the child involved. More information is available from a recruitment agency to help the manager decide on the suitability of the agency staff used by them. However, the manager has recognised the need to approach a new agency to ensure an efficient service	

that satisfies the team's aspirations.

Internal management monitoring has improved. The manager's analysis shows that she has a good understanding of the service needs and the necessary action to drive forward improvement. However, the review does not include the outcome of consultations with staff, which makes it unclear how the team inform service developments.

Staff supervisions now include discussions about the children and young people. This remains a development area. The one requirement with respect to records continues to be work in progress.

Children and young people's educational attendance is exceptionally good. Their progress is monitored in accordance with their needs and behaviours. Staff work closely with schools to maximise their outcomes. Meetings with the organisation's clinical team have resulted in goal setting for the education and staff team to work towards. This aids good partnerships and collaborative work practices and supports children and young people's development in line with their individual clinical assessments and plans.

Children and young people's holistic health needs are well met by primary and specialist health professionals. Although not without challenge, for a number, their emotional wellbeing and challenging behaviours stabilise. This is supported by medication reviews, changes in the living environment that is more in tune with their needs, and implemented risk management strategies. As a result, physical interventions have reduced, and continue to be monitored both internally and externally. Children and young people reap the benefits of healthy eating and physical, fun activities. One young person has lost weight and her health and mobility has improved as result of her lifestyle changes. A parent consulted by the independent visitor said, '(Name of the child) health has improved and he is now a happy boy.'

Children and young people's methods of communication are known and used accordingly by the staff team. An independent advocate who is a new visitor to the home ensures the voice of the child is promoted. One young person who is due to move into the home chose the paint colours she would like for her bedroom and lounge. This is a good indicator of how children and young people can influence and contribute to the running of the home. The home is physically safe, warm and homely. Planned work to replace the flooring in one of the hallways is underway.

The manager shows good leadership. The staff team have a better understanding of their roles, which contributes to their improved retention and stability. This promotes continuity of care and the sharing of good practice. The manager positively said, 'We are definitely in a different place.'

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care, accommodation and education for children. The home offers a specialised service to 26 children and young people with autism.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/09/2015	Full	Requires improvement
11/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/12/2014	Full	Adequate
18/03/2014	Interim	Good progress

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(s):

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. (The Guide to Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4). Specifically, that each young person's progress and risks are fully evaluated and recorded; clear complaint outcomes and accurate medication records are fully implemented.
- The registered person should oversee the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with: each child; the home's staff; each child's family/carers where appropriate; and professionals involved in the care and protection of each child including their social worker, Independent Reviewing Officer (IRO), teachers, clinicians and other health professionals etc. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, Page 54, paragraph 10.23). Specifically consult with staff to inform the management review of service improvements.

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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