

SC066916

Registered provider: Fullwood Care

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This private children's home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 18 to 19 December 2017

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 24 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people live in an exceptionally friendly and supportive home. They enjoy extremely positive experiences and make remarkable progress in education, managing their feelings and behaviour, healthy lifestyles, building positive relationships and being safer from harm, exploitation and criminal activity.
- The staff are exceptionally skilled at engaging with young people and building trusting and meaningful relationships. This has been important in helping young people to feel valued and to have a strong sense of belonging.
- Young people receive exceptional, personalised care. Staff are highly skilled, trained, experienced and qualified. They are strongly motivated to help young people to achieve their full potential and have better opportunities. Their professional practice is insightful and is informed by recognised research-based methods.
- The registered manager's highly productive working relationships with social workers, teachers, and police and health services ensure that young people get the right support to meet their needs. The registered manager takes decisive action when young people are struggling or are not getting the right help from social workers and schools.
- The registered manager and staff have built an exceptionally strong safeguarding culture at the home. The young people are always listened to and taken seriously and feel safe. They are protected from abuse, neglect and exploitation.
- The registered manager has an extremely detailed and well-informed understanding of the strengths of the home and the areas for development. She accurately measures the effectiveness of the home's impact on young people's lives and uses this information to improve the quality of care.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Improve the external and internal monitoring to give leaders and managers a thorough understanding of the quality of care provided and its impact on young people's lives, to ensure continuous improvement.
- Provide young people with containers in the bathroom to hold their toothbrushes and toiletries, and repair the damage to the set of drawers in the spare bedroom.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/07/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/06/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Homes must meet the child's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7) In particular, provide young people with containers in the bathroom to hold their toothbrushes and toiletries, and repair the damage to the set of drawers in the spare bedroom.
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home must make a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.6) In particular, the independent person's assessment must be evaluative and show young people's experiences and the impact that the quality of care provided is having on outcomes and improvements for the young people. The assessment should also consider the views of children's parents and relatives, and professionals working with the children.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people have extremely positive experiences living in this safe, nurturing and supportive family home. They have safe, healthy and constructive relationships with the staff. These secure and sustained attachments have brought much-needed stability to their lives. The registered manager and staff understand young people's needs extremely well. They give young people an exceptional standard of care that is skilfully tailored to meet their personal needs and the aims of their plans. As a result, young people who have complex needs are making sustained improvements in every aspect of their lives. An independent reviewing officer said, '[Name of young person's] last review was a really positive meeting. It was also lovely to see him so clearly happy, relaxed and "at home" in his surroundings and with staff. It is my view that the home has been and continues to be a very positive and supportive placement for him and he is flourishing there.'

The registered manager and staff treat young people with respect and enable them to express themselves as individuals. They work hard to help young people to feel accepted and to develop a positive view of themselves in terms of gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural background, and sexual identity. The registered manager and staff listen to young people's views and encourage them to have suitable freedom and choice in relation to the day-to-day arrangements for their care. Young people make decisions about the clothes that they wear, the food that they eat, how they spend their spare time and how the house is decorated. The registered manager also takes into account

their views about the quality of care that they receive and how well staff look after them. Staff support and encourage young people to go to important meetings about their lives to talk about their wishes and influence the plans for their futures. Staff balance the young people's wishes against what they judge to be in their best interests and always take suitable steps to protect them from harm.

The registered manager and staff network extremely well as part of young people's wider support network. They are highly effective at working with parents, social workers, schools, colleges, health and youth justice services, to meet each young person's needs. They share important information about the young people's experiences and progress with the other people involved in supporting the young people in their daily lives. The registered manager and staff work tenaciously to make sure that young people always get the best possible support and take action when they are not getting it right for the young people.

The exceptionally high quality of care that young people receive is helping them to make improved and sustained progress in their education, health and emotional well-being, and independence. The registered manager and staff provide structure, stability, encouragement, and opportunities for young people to take part in education. Young people's increased participation in education has been exceptional after they have moved in. Their attitude and commitment to learning has improved and young people now have positive aspirations for their futures. A young person won the annual achievement award for his progress at school; he gained qualifications and represented the school at the Holocaust Memorial Day.

Staff work extremely closely with teachers and college tutors to support young people's education as any good parent would do. The registered manager and staff understand that education continues to be a challenge for the young people and they tackle any barriers to young people's learning and progress. A social worker said, 'Staff are very supportive of [name of young person's] education. They have been proactive with college when his course was not suiting his needs and have helped identify something better.' The registered manager and staff have also challenged schools to provide young people with the support that they need straightaway when they have been excluded from school. The registered manager has made sure that young people are supported to return to school as soon as possible, and has demanded that young people have had additional academic support to make sure that they do not fall behind when they are out of school. She has also challenged schools to make sure that young people have been assessed at the right level to suit their abilities and are pushed to reach their potential. Staff provide young people with opportunities to develop their skills and confidence informally at home. They encourage young people to develop the practical life skills, including cooking, shopping and managing money, to help them become more independent. The registered manager and staff help young people to feel confident in their own talents and social situations. One young person, for example, plays football in the same team as some of the staff.

The registered manager and staff actively promote young people's physical health and emotional well-being. They make sure that young people have very healthy and varied

diets, take plenty of physical exercise, and understand the risks to their health from tobacco, substances, cannabis and alcohol. Staff have an excellent understanding of young people's specific health needs, and manage their health with sensitivity and confidence. They closely monitor young people to make sure that they are healthy, supporting them to attend routine health checks, such as going to the dentist and optician. The registered manager and staff also ensure that young people have suitable medical advice and treatment when they have had accidents, are feeling unwell or if they are concerned about their health or the impact of their medication. The registered manager and staff make sure that treatment plans are consistently followed and go back to the doctor if the young person is not getting any better. The arrangements for dealing with young people's medication are safe. Young people are encouraged and supported to look after and take their own medication, when this is appropriate.

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

The registered manager's and staff's highly competent professional practice is protecting young people from harm and helping them to make remarkable progress. An independent reviewing officer said, '[Name of young person] was placed at the home following a very unsettled period of being missing and general non-engagement. Since being there, he has settled really well and re-engaged really positively in his education.'

The staff's ability to build positive and trusting relationships with young people has been crucial in making a difference to their lives. The staff provide young people with a warm, extremely supportive and reliable environment that helps them to feel safe and emotionally secure. Young people are extremely positive about the staff and, through building meaningful relationships, they have an extremely strong sense of belonging. Young people feel valued and respected. They know that they have trusted adults who listen to their worries, care about what happens to them, give them excellent advice, and will deal with any problems that they have. The risks to young people's safety have increasingly reduced since they first moved in. They are safer from the risk of abuse, neglect, exploitation, going missing from home, using drugs, and being involved in criminal activity.

The registered manager and staff are skilled at identifying the signs that young people may be at risk of harm, including from bullying, using social media, sexual exploitation, and radicalisation. The registered manager and staff are extremely vigilant. They always follow the safeguarding procedures and take effective action to involve the local authority and police when they have concerns about young people's safety. The registered manager has excellent and productive working relationships with these safeguarding agencies. They work together positively to identify, understand and manage risks to young people. The registered manager assertively challenges the local authority and the police when they have not given her the information she needs to protect young people. The registered manager always takes what young people say seriously and deals with allegations involving staff appropriately.

The registered manager uses extremely thorough recruitment and performance

management processes to make sure that staff are suitable to work with young people. She makes sure that staff have the right personal qualities, enthusiasm, experience, skills and values. She collects all the available information about staff to make the right decision about a person's suitability. This includes verifying by telephone information about a person's practice, experiences and abilities from previous employers.

The registered manager and staff continually assess the risks to young people and the arrangements to protect them. They understand and manage the current level of risk for young people exceptionally well. They actively take into account young people's changing needs, circumstances, behaviour, health and emotional well-being. The registered manager and staff reflect carefully on how these changes affect the individual young person and the impact on the other young people. They adapt protective measures to the level of risk and ensure that they measure how effective the strategies are in reducing risks. The registered manager takes appropriate action when she has concerns that the risks for certain young people are too high for them to continue living in the home safely.

Staff balance effectively protecting young people while enabling them to take appropriate and reasonable risks to promote their personal growth, including spending time with friends in the community. Staff take reasonable precautions to promote young people's confidence and independence in the community, and to promote their understanding of how to use social media safely. The staff help young people to understand risk and to develop the skills to manage risk and keep themselves and others safe.

Staff help young people to understand the risks and dangers involved if they go missing, and make sure that the young people know how to get help. The staff take reasonable precautions to check on young people's welfare when they are out. When young people have gone missing from the home, staff always act quickly to try to find them by actively looking for them, making contact with their family and friends and informing the police and social workers. A police officer said, 'The home act appropriately whenever a young person is reported missing/absent from care. They attend all meetings when necessary and will facilitate meetings at the home. The home appears very settled at the moment.' When a young person returns home, staff always provide them with a warm welcome, check to see if they need medical attention and ensure that young people have something to eat and drink. Young people always have the opportunity to see an independent person to talk about what happened and the reasons for them not wanting to come home.

The staff's expertise and research-based way of working help them to understand young people's emotional needs and supports them to make progress. The staff have a detailed knowledge of disorganised attachment and trauma, and this helps them see beyond young people's behaviour. They understand how young people's experiences may leave them feeling confused, rejected, anxious and angry. When young people have struggled to manage their feelings and control their behaviour, staff have managed the situation well. Their consistently calm and empathic approach helps to take the heat out of the situation and avoids the need to use restraint. The registered manager and staff have an

excellent understanding of the best ways to communicate with, and to help, each young person to manage their feelings and solve problems. They listen carefully to young people to find out what is wrong. The staff validate the young person's feelings and experience while working with them to find out what they can do to help. A social worker said, 'It's about how staff engage with [name of young person]. They make him feel comfortable as he would living in a family home. He loves living there. He has a very good relationship with his key worker. He relates well to him, sits and talks, listens to his advice. The way he is handled is excellent. He can go off like a bottle of pop, but they are helping him see what his future could be. He is spoken to like a young person and not like a naughty child.'

By providing young people with stable, predictable and supportive relationships, staff have helped young people to rebuild important relationships. Staff have helped a young person to get on much better with his mum. They have supported her to provide him with clearer and consistent boundaries and helped him to manage his frustrations constructively. He now sees his mum, brothers and sisters more often and is regularly staying with them overnight. This included staying over for Christmas. Staff provide the young person and his family with a great deal of excellent support. The staff understand that it can be difficult at times and are always on hand to give advice to his mum or to collect him when things get too much. They make sure that it is a safe and positive experience for everyone.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is suitably qualified and vastly experienced in children's residential care. Young people benefit immensely from her clear and dedicated leadership, effective management and compassionate approach. She has high aspirations for young people to do well, reach their full potential and to have happy and fulfilling lives. This ethos is firmly embedded in the running of the home, the values of the members of staff and their professional practice. She has high expectations for staff to give young people the best possible support that helps them achieve better outcomes. The registered manager and staff see to it that young people live in a stable, supportive and safe family home. They are determined to give young people an extremely high standard of personalised care. This is helping young people to make remarkable and sustained progress, regardless of the complexity of their needs and previous experiences.

The registered manager has a very detailed understanding of young people's progress and the priorities for their care. She is quick to identify when young people are struggling and takes the necessary action to improve things. She uses extremely constructive working relationships with social workers, teachers, colleges and health services to make sure that young people get the best possible help. This has included helping young people overcome problems in education and making positive decisions about the best place for young people to live. She acts in young people's best interests when she feels that this home is not the right place for them to live and to get the support that they need.

Leaders and the registered manager provide the right environment for staff to support young people with an extremely high standard of care and consistency. The staff team is well established and works together cohesively. Young people, as a result, are always looked after by people who get to know them well and understand the arrangements for their care. The continuity of care that young people receive has made it possible for them to build extremely positive and trusting relationships with the people looking after them.

The registered manager provides each member of staff with excellent professional support, guidance and encouragement. Staff have regular opportunities through practice-related supervision and team meetings to reflect on young people's progress, their own performance and the emotional impact of their work. The registered manager, for example, uses supervision and team meetings exceptionally well to develop consistent and personalised strategies to help young people manage difficult behaviour. Members of staff have their performance and suitability to do their jobs formally reviewed at least every year. Leaders and the registered manager support and encourage staff to develop expertise through qualifications and providing good-quality training relevant to the needs of the young people, including in the risk of child sexual exploitation, safeguarding, behaviour management, attachment disorders and trauma.

The registered manager's meticulous and continuous analysis of the quality of care young people receive gives her an accurate understanding of the home's strengths. She uses this information to understand the impact that the quality of care is having on each young person and to identify areas that need to be improved. For example, she has reviewed and improved the arrangements for admitting young people. This has involved gathering the available information to match the young people's needs and compatibility to the staff's expertise and the needs of other young people.

However, the independent monitoring of the home does not provide in-depth scrutiny. The independent person's reports do not provide an evaluative assessment of the arrangements for safeguarding and promoting young people's welfare. They do not include the views of parents and relatives, and professionals working with the young people, about the quality of the support. Neither do they show the impact that the quality of care is having on the experiences of young people, or their outcomes. The reports describe what has happened and that records are being kept, but they do not evaluate the quality and effectiveness of the support that young people are receiving. The lack of thorough independent monitoring does not assist leaders and managers to understand fully the quality of the care and young people's experiences and to identify and make further improvements.

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: SC066916

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Fullwood Care, 103 Amphill Road, Liverpool L17 9QN

Responsible individual: John Joel

Registered manager: Elaine Cooke

Inspector

Nick Veysey, social care inspector

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