

SC356565

Registered provider: Eagle Children's Home

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is run by a private organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for two young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 2 to 3 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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Date of last inspection: 8 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is **good** because:

- Staff offer support that is tailored around the young people's experiences and

interests.

- Staff offer calm, measured responses during incidents so that young people feel safe.
- Staff respond quickly to young people's wishes and feelings, so that young people learn to express themselves and change situations positively.
- The registered manager challenges other professionals to ensure that any support offered to young people reflects their needs.
- Staff encourage young people's family contact, to develop young people's positive experiences and memories.
- Staff advocate for all young people to receive full-time education.
- Professionals hold the staff team in high regard.
- Staff work with other professionals when young people go missing and are described as 'going the extra mile, like a parent would with their own child.'
- Staff review any measures in place to protect young people from risk, balanced against young people's rights to make mistakes and learn for themselves.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The registered manager does not always identify young people's needs through the care planning.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
01/06/2016	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/06/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendation

- Ensure care meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking account of mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2) In particular, staff members accessing specialist advice, improving care planning and meeting the aims in the home's statement of purpose.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff spend time listening to and learning about young people through regular key-work sessions and house meetings. These different opportunities enable young people to receive the necessary help and support they need to optimise their well-being and to take on appropriate levels of responsibilities that take into account their level of progress. All professionals who spoke to the inspector said the staff and registered manager worked well with young people. One professional said, 'They seem to care about the young people; they show that all the time.'

Staff take opportunities throughout the day to praise progress and celebrate achievements of young people. For example, the inspector overheard staff praising a young person's appearance and he agreed he was 'stunning'. Staff also highlighted to the inspector the football skills of a young person, and that young person took obvious pride in his success. This praise gives young people a sense of achievement and self-worth. Consequently, young people are able to face challenging discussions and they can learn new ways of managing situations.

Young people live in a welcoming and warm home. There are aspirational pictures, colourful paintings and soft furnishings throughout. Staff repair or replace damaged items in a reasonable time. Consequently, young people feel valued and take pride in their personal space. For example, one young person cleaned and tidied his own bedroom, and organised his laundry.

Staff closely monitor the progress of young people and share observations directly with young people. Consequently, young people are informed of their progress and share openly the progress they have made. For example, one young person told the inspector, 'I'm doing good. I can do lots of wrong things, but I'm not doing that here.' Most young people reduce any misuse of alcohol, substances and/or self-harm because of living at the home.

Staff offer calm, measured responses during incidents so that young people feel safe. Staff adhere to the agreed boundaries defined in young people's behaviour management plans. Young people know what to expect and are able to make consequential links from their actions to reactions. This means that young people develop positive ways of

expressing their often strong and deeply felt emotions, harmful outbursts reduce and physical interventions are minimised.

Young people increase their engagement with education from arrival. The manager has worked diligently with education providers and local authorities, to ensure that tailor-made educational packages are secured for every young person. When there is delay in securing adequate provision, the registered manager now ensures that temporary support is in place quickly after admission. For example, one young person is receiving support at home alongside an education worker from the youth offending team, while a school place is secured.

Young people attend primary health appointments. Staff use a structured, daily routine that encourages healthy sleeping patterns, minimal snacking, controlled screen time and physical activity. Young people agree menu planners that are nutritionally balanced, and are encouraged to taste new foods. A range of activities outside the home are attended such as swimming, football sessions and cycling to appointments. Consequently, young people are generally healthy and active.

Staff use the advice provided by specialist services to ensure that care plans are individualised and support is effective. The registered manager has reflected on a period of instability at the home and is establishing links with individual specialists, to ensure that advice is available to staff when young people arrive, or when needs emerge, to reduce placement breakdowns with identified additional needs.

Young people learn practical life skills in line with their independence plans, and alongside developing relationship skills. For example, young people use negotiation and budgeting skills in discussing with the registered manager the use of various allowances. Consequently, young people learn how to manage daily living tasks and the responsibilities of adulthood.

Staff challenge placing authorities to ensure that contact with family members is in place for young people, particularly young people who live some distance from their family. For example, one young person has daily telephone contact with his father, alongside face-to-face contact. As a result, young people learn that the adults around them can work together in their interests.

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

The registered manager provides clear and comprehensive risk-management plans. She uses team meetings, supervision and shift information effectively. For example, a newly appointed member of staff was able to outline a risk management plan around missing. Staff are vigilant and know what they are expected to do. Consequently, young people are less vulnerable.

Staff are aware of each young person's risks should they go missing from home. Any response to missing young people is coordinated and timely. When young people go missing from home, staff follow them and look for them. All young people have independent return-to-care interviews. As a result, they can discuss information with an

independent person, which could prevent further instances of missing.

Staff are mindful of issues of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. The registered manager links well with local police, and staff are alert to any community issues that could affect young people. The registered manager is mindful of risks associated with the internet in the virtual and real world and maintains proportionate controls in the house.

Staff are insightful about the group dynamics that can affect young people. Staff supervise young people closely and remind young people when behaviour is disrespectful to others. For example, staff remind young people about personal comments throughout discussion. This means that young people build positive relationships with others and reduce the impact of bullying on themselves.

Staff use de-escalation strategies regularly and records note minimal physical interventions, but there have been serious incidents of assault on staff. Since the last inspection, the registered manager has adjusted admission processes, improved scrutiny at admission, and undertakes measured assessments with staff on the impact of any new admissions on young people already living in the house.

The recruitment process for permanent staff is robust. The use of volunteer 'shadow' sessions, for applicants to decide whether they feel able to work in this sector, has stopped. The registered manager will increase scrutiny before implementing any similar processes in the future.

Complaints, and allegations against staff, are reported to the correct professionals. Other professionals outlined to the inspector 'very competent professional judgement' from the registered manager in implementing safeguarding procedures. This ensures that information is shared and considered by all the professionals in positions to safeguard young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been in place for four years. She is a social worker and holds qualifications equivalent to level 5 requirement. She has recently altered the team structure to ensure that shift leaders support staff, following the departure of the deputy manager. She provides strong leadership with effective communication to all staff. Consequently, staff are aware of all plans and risk management issues for each young person. One new member of staff has not yet completed the required level 3 diploma in residential childcare. All other staff are in regulatory timescales for achieving their qualifications.

Although young people are able to express their views in formal meetings, following support from staff, their views are not formalised in consultations. This weakens the capacity of any review to implement changes that improve young people's lives.

Staff talk very positively about the support they receive, and the respect shown to them by the registered manager. Staff supervision is regular, and one member of staff told the

inspector, 'We reflect on things; we think about what is working or not.' Consequently, young people remain the focus of staff discussions and a culture of individualised care is propagated by the registered manager.

The registered manager ensures that staff are trained in all safeguarding processes. Staff induction is structured and comprehensive. One member of staff told the inspector, 'it's the best induction I've ever seen.'

The registered manager uses staff and her supervisor to scrutinise decisions carefully. The registered manager is aware of the shortfalls in ensuring that staff can meet young people's identified needs from admission, and an action plan is in place.

The registered manager challenges other workers assertively, ensuring that any delay in services is short, and temporary arrangements are in place to reduce any impact on young people. This means that young people's health and education can begin improving quite quickly following admission.

The registered manager reflects well on information provided by monthly independent visits, internal monitoring and inspections. However, the registered manager has not strengthened care planning to ensure that all young people receive effectively planned care. This has undermined progress for some young people and staff ability to meet the aims of the statement of purpose.

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 difference 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 who 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: SC356565

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Eagle Children's Home

Responsible individual: Millicent Vernon

Registered manager: Millicent Vernon

Inspector

Bev Harrison-James, social care inspector

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