

SC356565

Registered provider: Eagle Children's Home

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for two young people who have experienced childhood instability, resulting in trauma and associated complex behaviours.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in 2013.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 July 2018

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

Date of last inspection: 2 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/05/2017	Full	Good
08/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
01/06/2016	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(b)(e))	10/09/2018
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report"). The registered person must— supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.	10/09/2018

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c)(3)(4)(a)(b) (5))	
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)) In particular, the registered manager should ensure that key documents such as risk assessments and children's monthly progress reports are kept up to date.	10/09/2018
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— understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b)(2)(f)(h))	10/09/2018

Recommendations

- The Statement of Purpose is of particular importance to this Standard (regulation 6(2)(a) and (b)(i)). Homes are required to develop and keep under review a "Statement of Purpose" (regulation 16 and schedule 1). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff know children and young people well and invest in them. This helps children and young people to build trusting and secure relationships with staff and develop a sense of belonging. As a result, children and young people make good progress when considering their difficult and complex starting points. A social worker told the inspector, 'He [child]

has had a number of placement breakdowns. This is the most stable placement he has had. He seems more settled.'

Children and young people play a key role in the day-to-day running of the home. For example, their views are central when planning weekly activities, menus and trips. Staff capture children and young people's views using a variety of means, including daily discussion and children's meetings. Furthermore, staff consult children and young people on more complex aspects of their care such as reviewing their risk assessments and progress reports. This helps children and young people to understand and take ownership of their plans.

Some children and young people arrive at the home with poor and unsettled education experiences. Indeed, one child was not in education on arrival. The registered manager is a strong and determined advocate and challenges the local authority to ensure that children receive an education provision. Children and young people can display complex behaviours and, as a result, education progress is mixed. One child is receiving off-site education due to school exclusion. Despite this uncertainty, staff continue to liaise closely with the school and local authority to advocate for his return to school. Another young person has successfully completed school, achieved a Duke of Edinburgh award and is planning to attend college.

Children and young people access a range of social and recreational activities in their community. Detailed weekly planners include trips to local museums, ten-pin bowling and go-karting. This is supplemented by other activities such as swimming and visits to local parks. Staff also arrange for children and young people to attend local youth clubs. This brings children and young people a sense of enjoyment.

Children and young people develop practical independence skills. For example, children and young people travel independently on public transport, undertake laundry tasks and help to prepare meals. This helps children and young people to improve their confidence and increase their social skills.

Staff ensure that children and young people receive specialist help when necessary. For example, external agencies offer children and young people support to manage their risk-taking behaviour and an opportunity to discuss their feelings. In addition, a child has been introduced to a mentor, while another young person engages with Barnardo's. As a result, children and young people receive care that responds to their needs.

Children and young people know how to complain. They feel able to seek out members of staff to discuss their issues and concerns. Importantly, children and young people feel that their concerns will be taken seriously. A child told the inspector, 'Staff listen to us. They will do things about them (our views) as well.'

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

Complex and traumatic care histories mean that some children and young people continue to place themselves at risk. In response, staff offer robust and proactive responses to minimise risk. Staff maintain regular dialogue with social workers and the police to help reduce risk of harm. A social worker told the inspector, 'I can't fault the staff. They are always in touch with me and the police. I don't think there is any more

they could do to keep him (child) safe.’

Children and young people’s risk assessments are individualised and contain clear staff measures to manage risk. Significant incident records show that staff responses to risky situations are robust and consistent. However, children and young people’s files do not contain up-to-date risk assessments. The impact of this shortfall is lessened as staff understand each child and young person’s risks and respond appropriately to keep them safe.

Children and young people who go missing receive well-co-ordinated responses to help keep them safe. Staff follow clear protocols which include looking for children and young people, maintaining contact with them and contacting their family. Staff consistently report children and young people missing to the police when they do not return by the agreed time. The registered manager escalates her concerns if the response from other agencies falls short. She initiates professionals’ meetings to share concerns and to put plans in place to manage risk.

Staff help children and young people to understand risks and provide them with advice to keep themselves safe. Targeted key-work sessions give children and young people an opportunity to reflect on their risk-taking behaviour. In addition, staff frequently talk to children and young people about their safety and involve them in writing risk assessments and behaviour contracts. This helps children to take responsibility for their own safety.

Children and young people benefit from consistent routines and boundaries. Staff offer children and young people calm and nurturing responses when their behaviour escalates. As a result, children and young people learn how to manage difficult thoughts and feelings. Incidents of restraint are very rare. A member of staff told the inspector, ‘We give him [child] space to cool off. He will then apologise. It’s about knowing each child and young person and what works best for them.’

Staff promote and reward positive behaviour. Children and young people receive extra money each day for coming in on time, attending their education provision and other important appointments. Children and young people respond well to this strategy and enjoy meeting their targets.

Staff have a strong and proactive relationship with the police. Children and young people benefit by working alongside the police early intervention team to discuss and challenge their risk-taking behaviour. This preventative measure ensures that children and young people receive specialist support to understand and manage their risks. Furthermore, it protects them from unnecessary involvement with the criminal justice system.

The registered manager does not always ensure that notifications of significant events are made to the appropriate agencies. This is a lost opportunity for agencies to provide oversight and guidance to ensure that staff learn from events.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is child-focused and has high aspirations for the children and young people in her care. Her enthusiasm and dedication inspire the staff team to

deliver good-quality care. However, her 'hands on' approach contributes to shortfalls in other aspects of her management role. For example, the home's development plan, six-monthly review of care and statement of purpose are significantly out of date.

The registered manager ensures that there are sufficient staffing levels to provide children and young people with consistent care. The staff team has a range of experience and skills. As a result, children and young people have access to staff with a range of expertise.

The registered manager is passionate about the children and young people in her care. She has an in-depth knowledge of each child and young person's needs and uses this to monitor the quality of care that they receive. However, monitoring systems are informal and do not provide the necessary oversight to formally identify strengths and weaknesses. This is a missed opportunity to continually improve the experiences of children and young people. The registered manager acknowledges this shortfall. In response, she has recently appointed a deputy manager for additional support and intends to embed formal processes to monitor and develop the service.

Children and young people's internal placement plans are individualised and respond to their needs. They are in line with local authority plans. Staff maintain frequent contact with key individuals such as social workers, independent reviewing officers and family members. This co-ordinated care helps children and young people to make progress from their starting points.

The registered manager and staff regularly review known risks to children and young people. They are in frequent contact with safeguarding agencies to take advice and guidance to keep children and young people safe. A police officer told the inspector, 'They [staff] are very proactive in sharing information.'

Staff feel supported by the management team. Their training programme equips them with the necessary knowledge and skills to meet the needs of children and young people. This originates from a comprehensive induction process. A new member of staff told the inspector, 'The manager is very supportive and approachable. I am working though my induction pack. She observes my practice before signing me off as competent.'

Supervision sessions offer staff the opportunity to discuss children and young people's progress and their own professional development. However, there are gaps in supervision files and the quality of recording is inconsistent. The impact of this shortfall is lessened as regular staff meetings focus significantly on children and young people's progress.

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: SC356565

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Eagle Children's Home

Responsible individual: Millicent Vernon

Registered manager: Millicent Vernon

Inspector

Gareth Leckey, social care inspector

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