

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	15/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC356963
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Kirklees Council
Registered person address	Kirklees Council, 30 Market Street, HUDDERSFIELD, HD1 2HG

Responsible individual	Mr Paul Johnson
Registered manager	Mr Victor Szczesnowicz
Inspector	Pauline Yates

Inspection date	15/09/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC356963

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make good progress in respect of their confidence, resilience education and develop future aspirations.
- Staff fully support young people, understand their needs and take an active interest in their education.
- A particular strength of the home is the warmth and positive regard that young people receive. They trust the staff and feel that staff genuinely care about them.
- Young people develop good relationships with each other and people who are important to them.
- The home has committed leadership and staff actively advocate on behalf of young people.
- Staff respond to the complex challenges that young people present with patience and insight. Young people receive the services they require to support their emotional health.
- Areas for improvement are identified. These relate to record keeping, accessing key local authority documentation and improvements in assessing young people's independence skills and needs. These do not currently impact upon the welfare of young people.

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). When conducting the review , the registered person must consult, and take into account the views, of each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (1) (2))	02/10/2015
The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4) (c))	17/10/2015
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard, with particular reference to being proactive in young people contributing to their records, the registered provider must ensure: (2) (f) that staff help each child to access and contribute to the records kept by the registered person in relation to the child.	09/10/2015
5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, with particular reference to obtaining all relevant documents such as up to date care plans and reviews, the registered provider must ensure: (c) if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or relevant person's performance or response to be	17/10/2015

inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans.	
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Recommendations

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

- As the home will have a day to day understanding of young people's capabilities and needs, children's homes staff will have a valuable contribution to make to the pathway planning process. They should actively seek to make the fullest contribution, working with other relevant persons. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 17, paragraph 3.28). This is with particular reference to developing systems or documentation which fully reflect young people's abilities and gives them opportunities to practice new skills, such as budgeting.
- Some records may be kept electronically (regulation 38) provided that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with a legitimate need to view it and, if required, be reproduced in a legible form. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 14.2) This is with particular reference to residential staff being trained to access electronic records.
- 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 the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4) This is with particular reference to significant discussions and key-working sessions being recorded in a timely manner.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and operated by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for six young people who experience behavioural and emotional difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/08/2014	Full	Good
18/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
30/04/2013	Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people make good progress from their starting points. They receive nurture and care that over time has a positive impact upon their self-esteem and emotional health. For example, young people significantly reduce the amount of self-harm. They are more willing and able to speak about previous life experiences and are open to trust the staff. They experience care which is understanding of their needs and insightful with regards to the barriers they may initially present. Both independent reviewing officers and social workers identify the good emotional support that young people receive as being a feature of the care that is given. Young people have positive relationships with staff, who respond to them as individuals with unique strengths and needs. This individualised care gives young people continuous affirming messages that they are important and valued. This supports young people to become self-aware and strive to succeed in other areas of their life. Some young people have challenging emotional and psychological needs. Staff respond to them with unfailing patience and time that results in a reduction in their more extreme expression of emotions. Young people said about staff, 'She's lovely, I'm really close to her, she supports me a lot,' and, 'I used to be this vulnerable child and now I am more confident staff found me ways to get through it.' All young people have an identified educational provision with good levels of attendance. They are continuously supported to achieve in their chosen study and young people have developed aspirations for their future. These include becoming mechanics, teachers and setting up their own businesses. Some young people are highly motivated with regards to their futures. Staff are positive role models and provide clear expectations, helping young people learn successfully to negotiate living with others. Staff manage conflict carefully so that young people develop resilience in stressful situations. Young people appreciate and value the time which staff spend with them. One young person commented, 'They love to sit with us watching TV, chatting listening to music – it bring us closer together.' Young people are regularly consulted on a range of issues which affect their day to day care. They feel listened to and they actively take-part in meetings and discussions with staff. The manager responds promptly to young people's requests and suggestions. This has led to; extended bedtimes/cinema nights during college holidays; the computer room is open longer at night; quad biking during the	

summer holidays; new lamps and installation of wifi in the home. Staff also act as advocates for young people about other issues such as contact with people who are important to them. One young person commented, 'They fought for me to have contact.'

Young people, commensurate with their age and understanding, learn skills in self-care. They do their own laundry, develop good hygiene routines, apply for bursaries and bus passes and assist staff with weekly food shopping. They are also encouraged to make meals and take exercise. Focused assessment of young people's skills and progress in acquiring a wider knowledge base however does not take place. Previous difficulties in providing an independence skills programme led to its abandonment, but with no revision or alternative. This does not afford young people the fullest opportunity to make successful transition into adulthood.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Staff have a good understanding of young people's vulnerabilities and risks. They work pro-actively with other professionals such as the Youth Offending Team (YOT) in order to reduce young people's risk of re-offending. One YOT professional commented, 'It's a pleasure to work with them, they attend risk management meetings and I always know what is happening with X. I do visit the home regularly and very member of staff has something positive to contribute.' Staff actively pursue services such as child and adolescent mental health to ensure that young people receive the specialist input they require. The multi-agency working ensures that risks to young people are fully understood and there is a shared approach to keeping them safe. Young people have key members of staff with whom they can talk to and trust. They feel they are listened to and helped to understand decisions that are made that they may not always agree with. Young people become increasingly safe through the actions of staff and the individual advice they are given. When missing and absent from the home, young people respond to staff when they contact them to make sure they are safe. There are detailed and individualised risk assessments which inform staff actions and responses. All young people are offered independent return-home interviews but often decline to take part. Young people however do discuss their safety with staff on a regular basis. Any incidents of bullying are responded to appropriately by staff and an educational approach is taken both individually and as a group. Young people are	

offered alternative views and insight into how their behaviours towards others may be perceived. One young person commented on being asked whether there was bullying in the home said, 'I'd say no, but the staff might see it as bullying and intervene, but I'd say it is just us expressing our opinion.'

Young people are encouraged to behave appropriately towards each other and staff. Expectations and boundaries are clear and the use of positive reinforcement preferred over the use of sanctions. The quality of relationships between staff and young people underpins the settled and calm atmosphere within the home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
The Registered Manager is suitably qualified with over 25 years experience in child care and management. He has been the manager of the home since 2007. He keeps up to date with his own professional development and is embedding a new evidence based approach to caring for young people. There are a number of shortfalls which make the effectiveness of leadership and management require improvement. The manager has systems in place to review the quality of care for young people, but these are not robust enough. There are gaps in the recording of individualised work that staff complete. Management advice to staff to move away from 'formal' key-working sessions has led to significant omissions in recording. Insight into young people's development and progress is not evident. Some records have not been updated for 5 months. Managerial quality assurance checks have not identified this shortfall and limits the ability to improve the quality of care. Managerial review of support to young people has not sufficiently addressed the promotion of independence. Previous attempts to introduce such an independence programme were viewed as unsuccessful. Since then there has been no review or consideration to an improved approach. As a result young people are not encouraged to attempt more challenging aspects of independent living while still in a supported environment. Essential placing authority information regarding the detailed histories of young people, up to date care plans and reviews are not all available. Although immediate and on-going care given to young people is of a good standard, understanding of their previous life experiences is significantly curtailed. In order to acquire this information, the management team have not sufficiently challenged the placing authority.	

The manager's and staff access to necessary information is further limited by not having training or permission to make use of electronic records.

A recommendation made at the previous inspection has not been met. The home's location assessment has not been completed. This compromises the manager's ability to consider potential risks in the locality and their possible impact on young people.

Staff appraisals have not taken place as required on an annual basis which limits the effectiveness of staff development.

Although young people are given opportunities to see their records they have commented that they have to request this rather than being invited to do so on a regular basis. In addition, they have said that managers have often signed-off the records before they have had opportunity to make comment. This limits the management oversight of young people's views.

The home is appropriately staffed, representing a cross-section of ages and cultural heritage. Individually and as a team they contribute to the care of the young people through a good range of life skills and professional expertise. As a result all young people can identify members of staff with whom they can speak or identify. They work effectively as a team and recent adoption of a new child care model has contributed to a better shared understanding of care. One member of staff commented, 'It grounds us and brings us on to the same page,' and another commented, 'It brings us closer to family life in some respects.'

Managers and staff receive regular supervision and staff feel supported in their role. They work collectively with young people at the centre of their activities. They are driven to achieve positive outcomes for young people. This drive ensures that other agencies are on most occasions effectively challenged if services are not delivered in a timely way. Staff develop positive working relationships with other agencies which ensures that young people's needs are holistically met.

The home is welcoming and inviting. It is well equipped and each young person's room reflects their personalities and tastes. Staff work hard at creating a home in which good routines are developed, such as eating together, providing positive leisure activities and relaxing together in the evenings. Attending education is actively promoted and expected. There is a good level of interest and support which staff give to young people to help them achieve.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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