

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	24/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC362965
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Five Rivers Child Care Limited
Registered person address	Five Rivers Childcare, 47 Bedwin Street, SALISBURY, SP1 3UT

Responsible individual	Ms Mausumi Maulik
Registered manager	Miss Zoe Ratcliffe
Inspector	Heather Chaplin

Inspection date	24/11/2015
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	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC362965

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

The manager and staff ensure that children are kept at the centre of their practice, and take into account their individual needs. Children are highly valued, afforded dignity and respect, and are consulted about their care.

- The staff team all provide good quality, consistent and nurturing care, with clear boundaries which keep the children safe from harm. The children are beginning to make attachments to some of the staff in the home.
- The staff members all go to considerable lengths to research alternative communication systems to help the children express their feelings and views.
- Children, who initially did not wish to engage with education or attend youth clubs, have been helped and supported to do so. As a result, they are beginning to accept the need to go to school, and are starting to make friends with peers.
- Parents and professionals have commented on the good progress that children have made since arriving in the home.
- The home is well managed. The registered, qualified manager leads a competent, well trained staff team. In addition to their regular supervision, the staff team receive regular consultation sessions with the company's child psychotherapist.
- The home is situated within easy reach of the sea and open countryside. It provides a pleasant, attractive environment for children and 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
35: Behaviour management policies and records 35 (3) The registered person must ensure that— (a) within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— (i) the name of the child; (ii) details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; (iii) the date, time and location of the use of the measure; (iv) a description of the measure and its duration; (v) details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; (vi) the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; (vii) the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and (viii) a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; (b) within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— (i) has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and (c) within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. In particular, ensure that the restraint log (whether on paper or in electronic form) contains all the information listed in this regulation. (Regulation 35 (3) (a) to (c))	15/01/2016

Recommendations

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

Ensure that children understand who they are and where they come from, for example through undertaking life story work or other direct work. Staff in children's homes should play a full role in work of this kind. In particular, ensure that there are images of and information about, inspirational people and events from the children's own heritage readily accessible in the home, to help children to develop a positive ethnic identity (Guidance to the Children's Homes Regulations (April 2015) paragraph 3.14)

Ensure that children understand their rights as a child living in a children's home. Children must be informed of how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner for advice and assistance about their rights and entitlements. In particular, ensure that the contact information for the Children's Commissioner is accurately displayed in the home and on other documents (Guidance to the Children's Homes Regulations (April 2015) paragraph 4.19)

Ensure that the company maintains good employment practice. The registered person must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. In particular, record detail of the reference verification conversation with the referee (Guidance to the Children's Homes Regulations (April 2015) paragraph 13.1)

Ensure that case records are kept up to date, and signed and dated by the author of each entry. In particular, ensure that the children's mental health workers are recorded and that the health care plans are signed and dated. (Guidance to the Children's Homes Regulations (April 2015) paragraph 14.3)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately-owned home is operated by a national organisation as part of a portfolio of children's services around the country. It is one of six children's homes in the south west region. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for one young person who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
15/12/2014	CH - Full	Good
10/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
22/05/2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Children in this home receive good quality, consistent, individualised care from dedicated, child-centred staff. Although they have been admitted relatively recently, children are beginning to respond to the staff team and clearly enjoy their company. Parents, staff and professionals are all pleased with the progress that the children have made. For example, children are engaging with the home's reward system, which is helping them to improve their behaviour. They have started to develop peer relationships at the local youth club, despite having misgivings about group activities. Children have passed level 1 of their Cycling Proficiency Award and are working towards level 2. A parent said that their child's behaviour had improved considerably, and commented, 'I'm really proud of him.' The staff team relate very positively to the children and place their needs at the centre of all the home's activities. For example, they greet the children warmly and with genuine interest as they return from school. The adults in the home have worked hard to help children to communicate. Some children struggle to identify their feelings, and so the staff constructed a wall chart which shows different faces and moods. The children can put stars on the faces or point to indicate how they are feeling. There are indications that children are beginning to feel more secure, because although they still test out behavioural boundaries, they have begun to develop interests. They are learning how to empathise with people in traumatic situations. For example, one child initiated, researched and completed a project on the plight of refugees. The home has sensitive arrangements for introducing children who may come to live there. Children receive a visit while still living at their previous placements. They are offered the opportunity to visit the home before moving in, and are consulted about their views. Children and young people's transitions into independence are also carefully managed. One young person, who moved on from the home several months ago, received extensive, dedicated care for over four years. She was very well	

supported to progress to a residential family centre. The staff said that they were deeply affected by her move, and the change in regime and approach that she would have to learn to cope with in her new setting.

The children currently living in this home have had difficult previous experiences in mainstream schools. Consequently, they have a tailor-made outreach education programme for 27 hours per week. The manager believes strongly that children should not be educated in their own home, so she has arranged for the teaching to take place at a local youth club. Although they are visibly reluctant to go, the children are attending well. This is good progress compared with their educational situation on admission.

The children have access to a wide range of interesting activities, including swimming, cycling and youth clubs. The home has a diverse, active staff team representing different ages and genders, so this provides ample opportunity for children to share activities with an adult who has similar interests.

The children in this home are too young to be prepared for independent living, but have already started to help in the house. They enjoy baking and can earn stars for helping to clear up after meals. They receive an enjoyable, nutritious diet in line with the planned menus, in order to prevent a drift into unhealthy foods. The staff are all well aware of children's development in relation to their body weight, and monitor food intake accordingly.

The children in this home enjoy good quality face-to-face and phone contact with family members, and can visit them at home. One child was able to attend a family birthday party during the inspection. The parents are happy with their children's care, and the good communication from the manager and staff.

Children's healthcare needs are met well. They have access to specialists to help them with specific difficulties, and there is good communication between these professionals and the home. The staff team receive regular consultation with a child psychotherapist, to help inform their therapeutic style of practice.

Health care plans are generally good, with clear information for staff to follow. The most up-to-date records are electronic, and so the copy on file is not always the current version of the document. This paper record has not been updated with details of one of the key professionals involved, and has not been signed and dated. A recommendation has been made.

The children are consulted about their day-to-day routines; for example, choosing their own menus and activities. They know how to raise complaints. Only one complaint has been made about the home, and the manager responded to this appropriately. Children have access to contact information for an advocacy service, but do not yet fully understand how this could help them. There is a notice in the dining room which has outdated information on it regarding the former Children's

Rights Director, who retired several years ago. A recommendation has been made to provide information about how to contact the Children's Commissioner.

The staff respect the children's cultural and ethnic needs in terms of the care provided, but there are very few positive images or other sources of information in the home that reflect the children's ethnicities. A recommendation has been made to provide some examples of successful and inspirational figures from the children's cultural heritage, to help them to develop a sense of personal identity. The registered manager began to action this immediately after the inspection, by visiting another home in the group to learn from their practice.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires Improvement
The home's recording of restraints requires improvement, because these interventions are not recorded in line with regulation in either the hard-backed log or on the home's electronic summary. For example, there is insufficient detail about the antecedents to the incident, or of the strategies attempted before the hold took place. One child has been restrained on 15 occasions since admission nine weeks ago, to avoid them from harming themselves or others. All the interventions have been appropriate and have been recorded in sufficient detail on the incident reports. However, the shortfall in recording in the restraint logs means that the manager does not have good quality summary information to enable her to analyse practice, or work towards reducing the number of restraints. In addition, some holds appear to have been for a very long duration. One is recorded as lasting for 45 minutes, and the day prior to this inspection, the log book records that a child had been held for 26 minutes. It is more likely that this was the length of the incident, and not of a single hold. However, there is insufficient detail to be certain, so the system is not robust. The second shortfall in safeguarding practice concerns staff recruitment, which is managed centrally for the whole company. The quality of file information is sufficient to meet regulatory requirements, but the person verifying references is recording only their initials and date, and not the detail of the call. This means that any detailed information arising from the check is not available to managers. A recommendation has been made. Children feel safe in the home and are beginning to show signs of developing a sense of security. The staff team is well trained in safeguarding, and ensure that children are protected from harm. They have a good understanding of the impact	

of childhood trauma on self-esteem, mental health and behaviour. There have been no child protection concerns in the home, but if these should arise, the staff have all the necessary information to enable them to report the matter appropriately. There has had no need to contact the local authority designated officer (LADO) recently. The LADO confirms that contact in the past shows that the manager understands the benefit of a positive working relationship with the safeguarding services.

The home has clear behaviour management plans and risk assessments to help the staff to look after the children. Children have clear targets to guide their progress. These include specific behaviours that they need to learn, such as 'listening to staff'. Children showed the inspector how they are beginning to understand the concept of positive consequences, by awarding themselves a star for listening to the staff the previous day. The registered manager explained that one child has earned enough stars to receive a computer game, which is good progress.

One child's social worker confirmed that he is kept well informed of any incidents, and has no concerns about the way in which the home manages behaviour. Although there have been some concerning incidents, only one of these resulted in police involvement. The staff had no choice at the time, because there was a potential risk to other children in the community.

The children have access to the internet to promote their learning. The manager has ensured that the system used blocks any unauthorised sites. The children are further protected by always having staff with them when they are accessing the internet, because they are currently too young to use many of the social networking sites.

The manager has ensured that all the home's health and safety checks are up to date. Fire safety checks and fire drills have been conducted correctly. Children and members of staff who have special needs have a personal evacuation plan to help ensure safe egress from the home in the event of an emergency.

Members of the staff team all have a good understanding of the correct procedure to be followed if children go missing. There have been very few incidents of unauthorised absences. Children have absented themselves on three occasions. They go to known locations, so the staff follow them and encourage them to return to the home. There was one incident, in the early stages of a placement, when a child left the garden while the staff were undertaking fire safety checks, and went to the local park. On that occasion, the police were called because the child's behaviour escalated and other young people were potentially at risk, but there has not been a repetition. This incident was notified to the local authority and to Ofsted appropriately.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been with the company for 12 years, and was registered in this role in November 2013. She holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management. The manager is well supported by two very able senior practitioners in the home, and by her own line manager. The senior leaders are child-focused and place the children's needs at the centre of their work. One professional commented, 'X had a particularly warm and accepting relationship with (the registered manager). He wanted to show her songs he had learnt on his key board and she showed an interest and praised him for his efforts.' Leaders and managers are fully aware of the children's progress in the home. The manager was able to provide clear examples of children's development in the relatively short period of time that they have lived there. She has a good understanding of the care plans, and actively strives to achieve specific objectives for the children. The manager works closely with placing authorities and has visited their offices on occasion to promote effective communication. There were significant challenges with a previous young person's placing authority, and this tested the home's ability to bring this placement to a successful and well-planned conclusion. The manager ensured that this was achieved. Management monitoring is detailed and thorough. The most recent Regulation 45 report sent to Ofsted is sufficiently evaluative, and reflects the home's development and learning over the long duration of the previous young person's placement. The single recommendation made at the previous inspection concerned the manager's monitoring records, and she explained that all the points raised have now been incorporated into her Regulation 45 reports. The home receives monthly visits from an independent person, who prepares helpful and positive reports. The manager actively uses these reports to drive improvement. The minor matters identified in the latest report have all been resolved. The home's records are well kept and provide an effective resource for the children and the staff team. Apart from the matters discussed above regarding restraint recording and health care plans, the records are detailed and comprehensive. The staff in this home work well together. There is now a full complement of staff, with eight whole time equivalent employees and three sessional workers. The sessional staff work mainly in this home, and there are no agency staff employed. This helps to provide continuity of care for the children. The manager manages supervision effectively, and this is up to date. Staff	

members receive good quality training, and eight are qualified at level 3 in the care of children and young people. The remaining members of the team are undertaking the award.

One member of staff has been designated the training coordinator. The learning and development department is extremely good at identifying relevant learning. For example, some children have significant attachment difficulties, so the team has recently received updated training on the subject, with more planned in the near future.

The home has a clear and accurate statement of purpose, which meets regulatory requirements. The home is operated in accordance with this document. Children confirmed that they had been given information about the home before they arrived.

The registered manager has good relationships with placing authorities and other agencies. She ensures that the social worker receives incident reports and a weekly summary. The social worker has confirmed that this is the case, and he is happy with the level of communication. The police community beat officer has visited the home in the past, and is to be invited to meet the current children. This enables children to get to know a police officer and start to develop trust.

The home has very good links with the company school, which provides an outreach education service for some children. During the inspection, one child's CAMHS worker visited the home to keep in touch.

The home is very well situated in a quiet neighbourhood in a small coastal town. The house is properly maintained, homely, attractive and nicely decorated. The children have access to a large, safely enclosed garden, which has potential for further development.

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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015