

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC366343
Inspector	Maria McGranaghan
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Maple Leaf Care Limited
Registered person address	16a Regent Road Altrincham Cheshire WA14 1RP

Responsible individual	Morgiana Muni Nazerali
Registered manager	Nicola Jayne Higham
Date of last inspection	05/03/2014

Inspection date	26/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action against this home.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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The children's home is committed to making a positive difference to young people's lives. The commitment from the enthusiastic and knowledgeable team enables young people to become settled and make exceptionally good progress particularly in the areas of emotional resilience, personal safety and education.

Young people's safety is exceptionally well managed. Clear and effective systems work together with joint agency collaboration and regular consultation with young people. As a result, the home proves effective in reducing risk taking behaviours.

Young people are consistently consulted on all aspects of the running of the home. For example, consultation documents, young people's meetings and individual keywork sessions provide young people with an opportunity to raise their views. Likewise, because young people have developed exceptional relationships with staff, informal consultation takes place as part and parcel of day-to-day life living in the home.

Young people are looked after in accordance to their individual and personalised placement plan. Staff provide exceptionally well planned care that takes into account the individual needs and wishes of all young people. Social workers and other

professionals involved with the home say 'The staff go the extra mile. They make such a difference to young people and it is clear they want the very best for them.'

Young people are cared for by a committed, knowledgeable and consistent staff team. Suitable staff ratios ensure that young people are afforded the care and attention they need in order to build essential self-confidence and self-esteem. One young person said 'It is great here, it isn't like anywhere I have lived before.'

Leadership and management of the home is strong. The qualified and experienced Registered Manager places a clear emphasis on providing a high standard of personalised care for young people. Managers have a thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home because of effective monitoring. Likewise, external monitoring provides the home with a platform for continuous development. The home has a track record of identifying and addressing shortfalls in order to maintain the exceptional high standards of care evident in this home.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is a detached property situated in a residential area. It is the only children's home owned by a private provider. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2014	Interim	good progress
17/12/2013	Full	outstanding
21/11/2012	Interim	good progress
10/07/2012	Full	outstanding

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people make excellent progress in a home that is a safe, homely and caring environment dedicated to securing positive outcomes for them. Placement planning is highly effective with young people taking a lead in shaping and developing their plan. Each plan is child friendly, completely individual and focuses on the unique personalities of young people. Consequently, young people engage well because this form of planning enables them to feel in control of their lives and assists them to make informed and sensible choices about their future. One young person said, 'This is the best home ever. It is just the way a home should be. I love it here.'

Relationships between staff and young people are firmly established and based on mutual respect and regard. Young people trust staff and this helps them to take steps forward in making significant changes in their lives. For example, young people who previously struggled to engage with external services now engage very well and say, 'It didn't feel right before. I trust the staff here and it just feels right. I am happy with everything.'

Young people benefit from a range of educational resources that assists them either to reintegrate back into education or to maintain an already established placement. From their initial starting point young people develop immense self-esteem and confidence in order to re-embark on their educational journey, make friends in the community and undertake part-time or voluntary work in their spare time. Staff say, 'We want young people to develop to their best potential and we do whatever it takes to make sure they get the support in order to achieve this.'

Young people are far healthier as a direct result of living in the home. They are registered with local health care professionals and are provided with suitable support in order to attend appointments. Likewise, young people are aware of the importance of healthy lifestyles and engage extremely well in both in-house group discussions and input from external services. Consequently, behaviours such as smoking and drinking alcohol have significantly reduced.

The home provides young people with a range of internal and external activities to support healthy and active lifestyles. Activities include, horse riding, gym, drama and cycling. Likewise, young people make friends at school and in the community enabling them to develop their own style and sense of self. Young people say, 'I have made lots of friends at college and locally and I see them most days.'

Young people are supported to maintain relationships with family and friends in accordance with the local authority care plan. A social worker said, 'I am so happy with the placement. My child is very happy and is achieving so much. I know this is the right place for her. The staff include families where possible and this keeps the

relationship strong.' As a result, young people are supported to maintain a strong sense of identity and belonging.

Staff work exceptionally hard to ensure that young people working towards a plan of independent living are provided with excellent support in order to develop the skills essential to moving on. As a result, young people are driven to succeed and strive to further enhance their skills. For example, young people take turns to plan and cook the evening meal while others undertake additional training courses such as, safeguarding, first aid and fire awareness. Consequently, young people are provided with valuable opportunities to develop and enhance independent skills at an achievable level.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people thrive in an exceptionally warm and nurturing environment. Well established, settled and qualified staff work extremely hard to build trusting relationships that enable young people to work through some of their past difficulties and take positive steps forward. This has proved successful with all young people making remarkable progress in the home.

Young people's views and opinions are encouraged and respected in the home. Young people say, 'We talk with staff all the time. We can talk about anything. It is good because they are interested in what we have to say.' It is clear that mutual respect for one another is a priority in the home. This practice enables young people to feel safe in order to discuss matters openly with staff or as a group.

Young people are confident that should they be unhappy they are able to share this with staff. They say, 'The staff are great, they listen to us. If we need help they will help us and if something is bothering us they will always sort it out.' Young people have regular contact with independent advocates, children's rights advisors and the local community police who work closely and in partnership with the home. Staff say, 'Young people really enjoy their visits, and have built up excellent relationships with them. This has really helped to shape their view on services that are there to offer them help.'

Young people's placement plans are exceptional. Each plan perfectly captures young people's individual personality, identity and future goals and aspirations. Young people own their plan and regularly update, review and comment on the progress they make. Likewise, young people undertake regular one-to-one sessions with their keyworker to address how their plan is moving forward. Staff say, 'The young people who live here are really on board and want to achieve. They have come so far and I am confident when I say they all know we are here for them one hundred percent.'

Young people benefit from placement planning that clearly identifies individual

heritage, identity, sexuality and faith. Young people are encouraged to pursue their individual beliefs and are offered a range of material to further develop their understanding of individual choice and difference. The home provides prayer mats, religious books for various faiths, appropriate food and introductory visits to places of worship.

Young people's health is consistently promoted because of effective partnerships with health agencies. For example, regular consultation with named health professionals ensures young people have a good understanding of how to manage aspects of their own health including a better understanding of issues such as drugs, alcohol and sexual relationships. Because of this, young people are able to make informed decisions and choices in their lives.

From their initial starting point, young people with a history of educational disruption and non-attendance make exceptional progress in the home. This is because the staff team are extremely strong advocates for young people and seek out bespoke educational opportunities in order to maximise educational experience and achievement. As a result, young people are extremely well supported and successfully integrate into mainstream educational schools and colleges within the local area.

Young people live in an affluent area in a home which blends within the residential community. Young people are settled in the home and say that it feels like home. Photographs, pictures and awards are proudly displayed around the home and are an example of some of the ways young people develop ownership of their home.

Keeping children and young people safe outstanding

Young people are safe and feel safe in the home. Staff plan for young people's safety at the point of referral. This means that all appropriate safeguarding agencies are involved in the planning for risk and safety management as well as being prepared at the point the young person begins living in the home.

Risk assessments are developed in partnership with multi-agency professionals. Young people are fully involved in the risk management process and build excellent relationships with external safeguarding agencies. It is clear that young people with a previous history of being missing or absent make significant improvements resulting in a substantial reduction in this and other forms of risk taking behaviours.

Staff present as excellent role models particularly in problem solving techniques. They make good use of escalation approaches to deal with the very rare occurrences of challenging behaviour. As a result, there are no episodes of physical intervention in the home.

Young people are encouraged to demonstrate socially acceptable behaviour and

become good citizens within the community. This has proved successful. Young people build good relationships with neighbours and develop respect for those living in the community. Likewise, behaviour management plans are in place and focus on discussions with staff and planned restorative justice. Consequently, young people learn valuable lessons with regard to putting things right and accepting personal responsibility for their actions.

The home employs a robust recruitment and selection procedure that ensures young people are looked after by staff that are appropriately checked in order to work in the home. Visitors are appropriately vetted and this helps to make sure that young people remain protected while in their home.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The Registered Manager has been in post since November 2007. She brings to the role over twenty years' experience as a children's social worker and six years as a Registered Manager. She is suitably qualified holding a degree in social work and a significant history working in the field of safeguarding. She leads a strong, vibrant and skilled team in the delivery of exceptional child care practice.

Young people live in a home that is managed in their best interests. The home meets the aims and objectives of the Statement of Purpose, and young people, social workers and families are clear about the service and support the home provides.

Internal and external monitoring systems provide the home with a consistent approach to the overall monitoring of care. Detailed information highlights areas for development and the manager's action plan details the methods used to enhance the service. Staff receive a high level of support from the manager. Supervision takes place regularly and serves to identify training needs and personal development targets. An excellent annual training package ensures staff receive up-to-date quality training essential to maintaining the excellent child care practice evident in the home.

The manager makes good use of reflective practice, the views of external services and families are taken into account to ensure young people's needs are appropriately met. The home shows the capacity to improve based on the progress the young people have made to date.

The manager and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to delivering excellent child centred practice tailored to the individual and personal needs of young people. The effectiveness of this approach is measurable in the outstanding progress young people make, particularly in education and social integration.

The home employs a strong and committed staff team who have all undertaken the NVQ level three award. The training of staff at this level ensures that they are suitably qualified in the care and management of young people. Young people's

records are appropriately stored and regularly updated in order to capture to essence of young people at a given time.

One recommendation was made at the last inspection with regard to ensuring any significant event was reported to Ofsted in a timely manner. This has been suitably addressed. The manager is fully aware of the procedure for notifying Ofsted of incidents under Regulation 30, Schedule 5 and is now consistent in the reporting of all incidents occurring in the home. This practice ensures that information is shared with the regulatory agency in order that the actions and outcomes for young people can be suitable assessed.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.