

SC374640

Registered provider: Crossways Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a public limited company. The group has eight children's homes, three semi-independent units and a school. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 July 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **inadequate**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **inadequate**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **inadequate**

There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected and their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded and the care and experiences of children and young people are poor.

Date of last inspection: 16 June 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is inadequate because:

- A young person has not received appropriate support following a serious incident. Records relating to the serious incident are inaccurate. Members of the senior management team admit to deliberately editing evidence relating to the incident. The acting manager admits her failure to challenge this course of action once she became aware of it. By doing so, the integrity of managers has been brought into question.
- The acting manager failed to notify the local authority and Ofsted of a serious incident in line with statutory requirements.
- Staff are failing to supervise some of the young people within the home and, as a result, young people continue to place themselves at risk.
- Training provided in conflict management is not always effective. Physical intervention is inappropriately used as a means of managing young people's behaviours.
- Some of the sanctions that staff use to manage young people are ineffective.
- Managers did not assess the risks to young people already living in the home of introducing a new young person.
- Young people have not received consistent care and support due to a high turnover of staff since the last inspection.
- The home is not operating in line with its statement of purpose.

The children's home's strengths:

- Young people who move on from the home are supported well through the process.
- Young people have good attendance at school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/06/2016	Full	Good
21/12/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/07/2015	Full	Good

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 protection of children standard The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare, and that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. In particular, ensure that no vehicles are accessible to young people. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(vi)(d))	13/10/2017
The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; and ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child and 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. (Regulation 13 (1)(b)(2)(a)(c)(e)(f))	13/10/2017
The care planning standard The care planning standard is that children have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that children are admitted to the	13/10/2017

home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that arrangements are in place to ensure the effective induction of each child into the home. In particular, ensure that the company caravan is not used for the purpose of introducing a young person into the home. (Regulation 14 (1)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(i))	
Statement of purpose The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (1)(5))	13/10/2017
Appointment of manager The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27 (1)(a))	13/10/2017
Fitness of manager A person may only manage a children's home if the person is of integrity and good character and the person has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills to manage the home effectively and lead the care of children. In particular, the registered persons must ensure that the acting manager has the skills to effectively challenge decisions made by the senior management team. (Regulation 28 (1)(a)(b)(i))	13/10/2017
Behaviour management policies and records The registered person must ensure that 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 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") has spoken to the user about the measure and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate, and 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, the registered persons must ensure that the record of information remains an accurate account of the measure used, and that no information or detail is edited. (Regulation 35	13/10/2017

(3)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	
Notification of a serious event The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	13/10/2017

Recommendations

Regulation 19(2) details sanctions that are prohibited in behaviour management. Any sanctions used to address poor behaviour should be restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Young people are displaying worrying and unsafe behaviours such as assaults on staff and damage to property. Due to a lack of supervision one young person was able to access the home's vehicle while it was parked on the home's drive and immediately placed themselves in danger.

Some staff work hard to help young people stay calm. However, this does not happen consistently, resulting in dangerous situations. There is insufficient evidence of the acting manager assessing the impact that the arrival of a young person would have on the group as a whole. This failure led directly to dangerous and unsafe behaviour. A requirement is made to ensure that the manager, or responsible persons, assesses the impact of young people living together.

Since the last inspection, young people have experienced a significant number of staff changes including a change of manager. While staff work hard to form relationships with the young people, for some young people this lack of continuity of care has meant that they have not been able to form positive relationships.

Young people have good attendance at school. Regular communication between school and the home means that there is a collaborative approach to the support of each young person. Achievements are celebrated and young people have a good range of incentives

and support to continue to make progress.

Staff pay close attention to the health needs of the young people and through regular attendance at health appointments, physical activities including walking and cycling, and a well-balanced and healthy diet young people are helped to lead healthy lifestyles.

Young people who are ready to move on to independence are supported well. Effective collaboration between the acting manager and the local authority means that young people moving to independence have clear plans. One young person who successfully moved from the home did so safely.

Recently, one young person was not introduced to the home in line with the home's statement of purpose. On this occasion, the company's caravan was used as a place for the young person to stay in prior to moving into the home. This does not provide a wholly effective induction to the home. The young person spoken with told the inspector that they were not happy with the way that they were introduced to the home. A requirement is made to ensure that all young people have a positive experience of moving into the home.

The young people live in a home that is very well decorated and has a homely feel. There is plenty of room for each young person to play, socialise and have privacy. Photos and pictures throughout the home give a sense of who lives in the home, their likes and identities and interesting places they have been.

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

Prior to the inspection, information shared through the whistleblowing process questioned the accuracy of a serious incident record and the effect of this on a young person. Following investigation, it is clear that a young person gained access to the home's car and let the handbrake off. The car consequently rolled down the drive on to the road and crashed. The young person was not harmed but the risk that the young person was exposed to was serious.

The original record of the event was significantly changed by a member of the senior management team. The edited version no longer refers to the young person gaining access to the car and taking off the handbrake. The young person did not receive support and care following the event. There is no record of an investigation into how the incident was allowed to happen or what could be done to prevent it from happening again. Neither the local authority nor Ofsted were informed. Requirements are made to ensure that more vigorous risk assessments and behaviour management plans are produced and implemented to ensure the safety of young people.

All members of staff are provided with training in behaviour management and physical intervention. However, records scrutinised confirm that the staff are not always applying their training effectively, and, as a result, physical intervention continues to be overly used as a means of behaviour management.

Overall, restorative sanctions are used and young people record that they are fair.

However, during the course of the inspection, removing personal items as a means of managing behaviour was observed. The manager and staff acknowledged that this was not best practice and was not effective. The young person said that they felt it was a 'form of bribery that didn't work'. A recommendation is made to ensure that this approach is reviewed.

Young people rarely go missing. When they do, staff follow the procedures and protocols in place. Young people are safely and swiftly returned to the home.

Risk assessments for the young people contain sufficient information. The assessments are reviewed and updated following the serious incidents that have been recorded. They contain details of how risks will be managed and reduced, but this is not always put into practice.

Overall, the home has a good relationship with the young people's local authorities. An independent reviewing officer and a local authority team manager both report generally good lines of communication, and reports being shared routinely. However, neither the local authority nor Ofsted were informed following the recent, serious incident. A requirement is made to ensure that serious incidents are notified to the appropriate people.

The acting manager continues to recruit new staff following safer recruitment guidelines.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

During the course of the inspection, a number of serious concerns arose in respect of the integrity of the acting manager and members of the senior management team. Following a serious incident, the acting manager failed to challenge the decision made by members of the senior management team to edit the evidence. The acting manager was aware that the record had been altered and did not take appropriate action to ensure that an accurate record was kept. Ofsted and the local authority were not informed. The manager did not address the incident with the members of staff involved or provide the young person with adequate support. A requirement is made to ensure that the registered person guarantees the fitness of the manager.

Since the last inspection, there have been significant changes to the staff team. There has been no registered manager since February 2017.

As a result, staff have not received strong leadership. Some of the staff team members' practice has not been in line with the statement of purpose and some of the young people have not been sufficiently supported.

Young people have the required care plans and records that are kept up to date and in good order. They provide sufficient detail on how to provide care for each young person. However, there is insufficient evidence of staff following the care plans, or of plans being revised when they are ineffective and, as a result, young people continue to present with highly challenging behaviour.

Staff spoken with demonstrated a dedication and commitment to improving the young people's outcomes and recognised the negative effect that changes of staff have had on young people's behaviours. A requirement is made to ensure that the home is effectively and efficiently managed by a permanent manager.

Since being in the role, the acting manager has improved the monitoring and reviewing of the quality of care provided. A range of newly implemented tools provide the acting manager with the means to collate data. The acting manager has used them to inform a clear and focused development plan.

Staff receive supervision and appraisals in line with their individual needs and the company's policy. Staff spoken with say that they have confidence in the acting manager and senior management team, and that they are supported well. The acting manager is suitably qualified and ensures that all staff receive regular training.

The independent person visits regularly and makes certain to include the views and opinions of the young people and staff. The acting manager is quick to address actions following these visits.

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: SC374640

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Crossways Care Limited

Registered provider address: Crossways Care Limited, Unit B2, Elmbridge Court, Cheltenham Road East, Gloucester, Gloucestershire GL3 1JZ

Responsible individual: Christine Cameron

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Linda Bond: social care inspector

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