

SC374640

Registered provider: Crossways Care Ltd

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 12 children's homes, one semi-independent unit and a school. It provides care and accommodation for up to three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 October 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 4 July 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

A monitoring visit took place on 7 August 2017

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- There has been no registered manager in post since February 2017. A manager has now been appointed but has yet to make an application to be registered by Ofsted.
- Staff failed to prevent one child going missing from the home on repeated occasions. As a result, the child was moved to a secure children's home. One child was physically assaulted by a member of staff. Subsequent investigations have been completed and staff were dismissed.
- The quality of the children's experiences requires improvement. The home has experienced a challenging few months. As a result, children have experienced a significant number of staff changes in a relatively short period of time.
- A full staff team is now in place, but requires further time to put into practice recent training and development opportunities. In particular, records completed by some staff require improvement to ensure that they provide sufficient detail and analysis.
- The home requires ongoing refurbishment and minor repairs to bring it to a good standard.
- The statement of purpose needs to contain the new staffing structure and be submitted to Ofsted.

The children's home's strengths:

- A former manager of the home, who has a history of good leadership, has been appointed. He knows the children and staff well and has been welcomed back to the home.
- Children are supported by enthusiastic and motivated staff. The children and staff are beginning to form positive and trusting relationships.
- Children are encouraged to engage in fun activities that help them to learn and develop social skills.
- Staff understand and employ a nurturing approach with the children when they are upset or worried. As a result, the need for physical intervention has reduced significantly and children are no longer going missing.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2017	Monitoring	N/A
04/07/2017	Full	Inadequate
16/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/06/2016	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
Appointment of manager The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home as there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27(1)(a))	10/11/2017
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. The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(1)(3(a)(b)))	10/11/2017
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. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(2)(e)(h))	10/11/2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The manager and staff have been successful in providing a much more settled and quiet home for the children during a period of significant change. Newly appointed and more experienced staff care for each child consistently well.

Relationships between new staff and the children are positive. However, further time is required for these relationships to develop and for staff to really get to know and

understand the children.

The children's school attendance is 100%. The children attend all necessary health appointments, visit their families and participate in many fun and exciting activities. This has contributed to each child growing in confidence and an improvement in their social skills. The staff interact very positively with the children. For example, kind, gentle and encouraging words were used to help the children understand a cooking activity and when playing on their tablet. This approach produces positive results.

Revised and updated assessments and care plans provide staff with sufficient information to support each child. Behaviour support plans also provide the staff with details that are used to support the children's different and complex needs. Consistent approaches to each child have resulted in a significant reduction in serious incidents and the use of physical intervention. Sanctions, while fair, are rarely used. Records are kept up to date, but some staff require further support to improve the quality of their record keeping.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

A new set of procedures has been implemented and is being used in practice. There has been a rigorous review of all risk assessments including, in particular, the safe parking of vehicles on the drive. Regular health and safety checks take place, and the manager and staff ensure that any remedial actions are undertaken quickly. This means that the home offers a safe environment for the children to live in.

Children are safe when out in the community and engaging in activities. Both children require supervision when away from the home. The staff follow carefully tailored plans and risk assessments ratified by the local authority and family. This helps the children to develop skills that help them to be more independent.

All staff have completed refresher training in safeguarding, child protection and the use of physical intervention. Staff speak positively of how this return to learning, coupled with plenty of reflective discussion, has helped them to understand the complexities of the children's needs.

Children go missing rarely. In response to previous inspection findings, staff who had not followed the missing from home protocol have undertaken refresher training. There have been few serious incidents. When incidents have taken place, staff have reported and shared information appropriately.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The home has been without a registered manager since February 2017 despite two managers having been recruited. However, leadership and management of the home is now provided by an acting manager. Despite an unsettling period and some challenging incidents occurring, the newly appointed manager has provided a strong presence and commitment to improving the home.

During this period, the acting manager has worked hard to address all of the shortfalls

identified at the last full inspection. While progress has been made, further time is required in order to ensure that good practice is embedded.

Team meetings and consultation meetings demonstrate how the acting manager is promoting good practice for all staff. Regular supervision enables staff to reflect on their practice and the care that they provide to children. Staff feel supported and encouraged.

Since the last inspection, the acting manager and members of the senior management team have concluded a number of investigations culminating in staff being dismissed or choosing to leave the company. This swift and assertive response has kept children safe. Inevitably, this has led to the arrival of several new staff members. While, in the first instance, this has been unsettling for the children, there is a marked improvement in the current staff team's skill base and commitment to good practice. Further time is required for the team to consolidate, but there are signs of progress.

The acting manager is a strong advocate for the children's educational and health needs. He has been instrumental in ensuring that children receive the support that they need to learn and be healthy.

Overwhelmingly, staff and stakeholders speak positively of the acting manager and the confidence that they have in him to further improve the home and the children's experiences.

The acting manager has produced a development and workforce plan that identifies the areas of improvement for the home. Monitoring and reviewing of this and other documents is regular, but does require further development to ensure that data collated really does benefit the children and the home.

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 Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Christine Cameron

Registered manager: Post Vacant

Inspector

Linda Bond, social care inspector

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