

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	21/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC374640
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Crossways Care Ltd
Registered person address	Crossways Care Ltd, Unit B/2, Elmbridge Court, Cheltenham Road East, GLOUCESTER, GL3 1JZ

Responsible individual	Christine Cameron
Registered manager	Ryan Gamblin
Inspector	Heather Chaplin

Inspection date	21/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Improved effectiveness. The home has improved in effectiveness because the young people continue to progress very well in every area of their lives. The staff provide warm, nurturing care which is tailored to the young people's needs. They foster positive relationships with parents and professionals to provide a strong team around each young person. As a result, the young people are increasing in confidence in social situations, and are learning to manage their own safety. They are developing resilience in situations that previously caused them significant distress. For example, the staff have given reassurance and confidence to a young person who has a significant medical condition, so that he was able to undergo a diagnostic procedure that he had previously found too stressful to tolerate. The young people are progressing very well in their education. One young person has attained a level 2 award in mental health, and is now considering her options for college. Another young person, who finds social situations difficult, has been able to participate in performing in his school's play. These are tremendous achievements. One parent commented in the home's own consultation questionnaire, 'after two years out of education, it is to your credit that X appears to be engaged and doing well.' The young people have warm and supportive relationships with each other, and enjoy some shared activities. They went on holiday to an adventure holiday park this year, and the staff are planning to take them overseas for the first time next year. They have obtained passports for the young people, and are already planning how they will help those who may feel anxious in unfamiliar situations, to cope with flying. Both young people said that they are happy in the home. They are very positive about the care provided. One young person, who is making exceptionally good progress with her semi-independence programme, earned a reward for her hard work. She was taken to London to a music event, which she thoroughly enjoyed. She sent a text to her member of staff, saying 'tonight was amazing. I loved the	

best night of my life. Thank you so much.'

The manager has worked sensitively and effectively with parents and the placing authority to support one young person's move into a long-term placement in a residential service for children with disabilities. This young person had been receiving a short breaks service, which had helped to sustain him in his family home for years.

The young people in this home are kept safe from harmful people and situations. As they grow and develop into their later teens, this becomes an increasing challenge, but the home has responded to their changing needs sensitively and in a way that allows them to take well-managed and measured risks.

For example, some young people, as part of their independence programme, have free time in agreed public places, and contact with friends of the opposite gender. The staff have worked very hard to ensure that the young people are equipped with information and support to help them handle these relationships, and further staff training is planned to inform this work.

The young people do not go missing. They have shown exceptional maturity and common sense, by keeping in touch with the staff when they are out on free time. If they become concerned, they contact the home for advice.

The home has worked very effectively with the police, the local authority designated officer for child protection, the school and placing authorities to help reduce risks to young people. For example, the manager called a multi-agency meeting to help to safeguard a young person. This has resulted in some very sensitive and targeted joint work to support the young person.

The home's registered manager has recently completed his level 5 award in leadership and management. He monitors the home very effectively, and has worked hard to improve the paperwork systems. He commented that the new file structure has supported the process of monitoring the quality of care.

The manager is very proud of the team training plans. He explained that new training is scheduled for the coming year, which includes detailed information on child sexual exploitation, working with disabled children on sexual health, and young people's faiths and cultures. The manager has also implemented a new system to enhance staff supervision. This involves the staff writing four reflective practice accounts, which are then discussed in their next meeting with the manager.

Since the previous inspection, the company has improved the arrangements for the Regulation 44 visits. The current independent visitor writes very clear, detailed reports that identify actions and support improvement. She suggested that the home should develop better links with the local community, to help the young people to feel a part of the neighbourhood.

The manager has made considerable progress in this respect. For example, the young people in the home are now involved in charitable work, and the manager coordinates the Neighbourhood Watch for part of the village where the home is situated. The staff and one of the young people distribute the parish magazine. This shows that the manager is very willing to respond to ideas and suggestions. Volunteering helps the young people to be a part of their community and introduces them to local activities and helps them to overcome their difficulties in social situations.

The manager has also responded to all the matters raised in the previous inspection. One requirement was made under the quality and purpose of care quality standard. The required improvements to the environment have all been made, with the exception of replacing the windows in the conservatory. This job has been scheduled to start four times, but on each occasion, the weather has caused the works to be postponed. This is beyond the home's control, and the work is rescheduled for January, so the requirement has not been repeated.

The requirement also cited the need to review the home's function and purpose, in terms of providing long-term care alongside short breaks. Although the registered manager says that this can work well for some children, a decision has been made that the home will no longer accepting short break placements.

The single recommendation made at the previous inspection concerned recording controlled medicines. This has also been resolved, and the young person who received controlled medication is no longer having short breaks at the home.

The home has had to undertake a number of restraints in the five months since the previous inspection. These have involved two out of the three young people, and all were managed safely.

The vast majority of these incidents have been recorded well. There is one example where the staff did not communicate well with each other, and failed to record the incident in sufficient detail. The manager identified and dealt with this appropriately, to reduce the risk of a recurrence, so no requirement is necessary.

There have been a number of other significant incidents since the previous inspection, all of which were responded to at the time in a competent and professional manner. The staff are well trained to manage challenging behaviour, which has enabled them to keep the young people safe.

All but one of these incidents was reported to the appropriate authorities, including Ofsted, at the time. This serious incident occurred in public, and had the potential to become extremely dangerous, as the young person has no perception of risk. The staff responded swiftly and appropriately to this situation at the time, and thanks to their quick thinking, a more serious incident was averted. The manager has identified the trigger points for the young person, who finds it very difficult to wait for rewards he has earned. He has taken steps to reduce future risk

considerably by revising the young person's positive consequences.

Because the police were not involved, a decision was made not to notify the event to Ofsted. The inspector's view is that even though the staff handled the situation well themselves, there were concerning elements that would have made notification advisable. A requirement has been made.

Information about this children's home

This privately-owned home is registered for up to three young people of either gender, who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities.

Two young people are permanently resident. Until recently, the third bed has been designated for short breaks for a young person who came to stay for a weekend every two weeks. This arrangement has now ceased, and going forward, the home intends to accommodate full time placements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/07/2015	CH - Full	Good
21/01/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
05/07/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
14/01/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

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
40 (4) The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if— (a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation; (b) an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; (c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there; (d) a child protection enquiry involving a child — (i) is instigated; or (ii) concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or (e) there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. In particular, review the home's definition of a situation that the registered person considers to be serious, to include those incidents that, at the time, posed an immediate risk to life. (Regulation 40 (4) (a) to (e))	31/01/2016

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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