

## Children's homes inspection - Full

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| <b>Inspection date</b>           | <b>21/07/2015</b>                                                                                    |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>   | <b>SC374640</b>                                                                                      |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>        | <b>Full</b>                                                                                          |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>         | <b>Children's home</b>                                                                               |
| <b>Registered person</b>         | <b>Crossways Care Ltd</b>                                                                            |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | <b>Aspirations, Unit B/2,<br/>Elmbridge Court, Cheltenham<br/>Road East, GLOUCESTER, GL3<br/>1JZ</b> |

|                               |                              |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Mrs Christine Cameron</b> |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Mr Ryan Gamblin</b>       |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Heather Chaplin</b>       |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                          | <b>21/07/2015</b> |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                            | <b>N/A</b>        |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                 | <b>None</b>       |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                          |                   |
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b> | <b>Good</b>       |
| The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.            |                   |
| <b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                              | <b>Good</b>       |
| <b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                     | <b>Good</b>       |

**SC374640**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people, parents and professionals confirm that this children's home delivers excellent quality care, resulting in outcomes that range from consistently good to outstanding.
- Young people enjoy warm, nurturing relationships with a permanent, well-trained staff team. Staff demonstrate strong commitment to the young people and understand their unique, individual needs.
- The home has excellent relationships and communication with the company's school, to ensure that young people receive exceptionally good support to improve and sustain educational attendance. Young people's educational attainment has exceeded expectations, and staff have high aspirations for them.
- The registered manager is strong, effective and well established in his role. He monitors practice to a high standard and provides staff with regular supervision and appropriate challenge when required. As a result, the staff are well supported to meet young people's needs.
- The home consults with young people in an accessible, inclusive way to help them express their views about their care. Young people are fully involved in decision-making in their daily lives.
- Staff work very hard to support positive contact between young people and their families, when this is part of the care plan.
- Young people say that they feel safe in the home. Those whose life experiences have made them particularly vulnerable no longer take significant risks, and there have been no instances of going missing from the home, offending or substance misuse.
- The four recommendations from the interim inspection have been met in full, as have all the recommendations and actions from the independent Regulation 44 visits. The single breach of regulation does not impinge on young people's welfare or safety. The registered manager initiated action in the areas identified during the inspection.

## 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   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, ensure that:</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(b) ensure that staff—</p> <p>(ii) protect and promote each child's welfare;</p> <p>(vii) provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably;</p> <p>(c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to –</p> <p>(i) meet the needs of each child.</p> <p>In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• review the present policy of mixing young people on short breaks with longer-term residents;</li> <li>• ensure that there is suitable, domestic-style fencing around the garden perimeter;</li> <li>• replace the conservatory window frames;</li> <li>• remove the exterior bars from the upstairs windows and replace with suitable internal restrictors.</li> </ul> | 30/09/2015 |

### Recommendations

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

- Ensure that medicine administration is recorded in line with *Managing Medicines in Care Homes* (March 2014).

In particular, administration should be recorded both on the medicines

administration record and the controlled drugs book. Controlled drugs should be signed by two members of staff. (*Handling of Medicines in Social Care*, March 2014, chapter 2, pp 18-19 and the Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the Quality Standards April 2015, paragraph 7.17)

## Full report

### 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 may be permanently resident, and the third bed is provided for short breaks to one young person who comes to stay for a weekend every two weeks.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement   |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 21/01/2015      | CH - Interim    | Improved effectiveness |
| 05/07/2014      | CH - Full       | Adequate               |
| 14/01/2014      | CH – Interim    | Satisfactory Progress  |
| 25/04/2013      | CH – Full       | Good                   |

## Inspection Judgements

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | <b>Good</b>     |
| <p>Young people in this home make very good progress in all areas of their lives. Staff provide high-quality care which is tailor made to meet each young person's needs.</p> <p>Unusually, the home provides short breaks for one young person alongside residential care for two longer-term residents. Although this combination of needs is carefully managed and works well most of the time, there have been occasions when the home's longer-term residents find the change in dynamics during short breaks difficult. Disparities in needs should be kept under review as time goes on and the individuals within the group grow and develop.</p> <p>Young people's experiences in the home are very positive. Parents confirmed that the home provides an invaluable, dependable service. Their child can now access activities and community resources that he could never experience before coming to the home.</p> <p>Young people have been on holiday to a well-known activity resort. The home has access to the company's caravans in the west of England and Snowdon National Park for young people to enjoy. Staff are now helping two young people to travel overseas together, by gradually introducing them to flying so that they will not be alarmed when they go on holiday.</p> <p>One young person has done exceptionally well in education since arriving at the home. She was attending 23% of the time, but now achieves 97% attendance. She has just taken exams in several core subjects, which now enables her to access GCSE courses.</p> <p>The staff have been instrumental in helping this young person to achieve these objectives. They supported her throughout her early days in school, and have engaged in excellent communication with the head teacher to ensure that there is an effective transfer of care between school and the home. This is securing the best outcomes for this young person and preparing her well for the future. The registered manager said, 'we are really proud of the progress she has made.'</p> <p>Young people enjoy very positive relationships with each other and with staff. One young person said that the best thing about living in the home was one of the</p> |                 |

other residents, but they also enjoy being there and they like the staff. Asked how the home could improve, two young people said that they would like a larger TV. One young person also wanted some extra beanbags, and the chance to redecorate their room.

The home provides a nurturing and supportive environment which helps young people to build relationships and increase their confidence. A particular strength of the home is the way in which staff communicate with young people, often using car journeys back and forth to school to keep in touch with how young people are feeling about challenges that face them from time to time. This has led to an environment where young people help and support each other, as they would in a family home.

One young person who previously used mainly specialist symbol communication, has learned to communicate verbally with the staff and other young people since he came to live at the home. Feeling safe and secure with the staff has helped him to overcome other lifestyle-limiting difficulties, and he was interacting very positively with everyone during the inspection. Staff spoke very fondly about all the young people, and some have worked with them for a long time. It is clear that this is not just a job, but a way of life for some members of staff. This creates stability and a sense of permanence for the young people.

Young people have access to routine medical appointments and can see specialists as required, to support their emotional wellbeing. Some have specific medical conditions which require careful monitoring, and others have significant learning disabilities which require specialist skills. Staff are trained and competent in responding to all these needs.

Medication in the home is generally well managed. It is kept safely and securely to prevent unauthorised access; and administration is recorded on the young people's individual records. One particular medicine is a controlled drug, but has not been recorded in the book provided for this purpose. Also, the medicine is not administered by two staff, as recommended in the relevant guidance. A recommendation has been made accordingly.

The home provides a healthy, well-balanced diet and staff encourage young people to join in with shopping, basic household tasks and cooking, as they might in a family home. One young person has dramatically increased her level of activity since she came to live in the home. She now goes swimming several times a week and keeps herself fit. Other young people also willingly participate in a range of exciting pastimes.



Young people are encouraged and supported to express their views. They participate in most aspects of the home's operation, including helping to chair house meetings and assisting with staff recruitment interviews. Not all young people choose to make use of advocacy services, but this is strongly encouraged and there has been some progress in this regard.

Because of their complex needs, not all the young people in the home will be able to live independently when they move on, but the staff support them very effectively to take on increasing responsibility as far as they are able. One young person has been extremely proactive. She wrote to prospective employers and obtained a job for herself, which was a tremendous achievement. She now works in a café in a busy tourist area, which is providing invaluable experience in dealing with high numbers of potentially demanding customers. The staff take the young person to work and collect her again, because of the distance and public transport issues. Without this support, it would be difficult for her to maintain this work.

Staff work exceptionally hard to support young people who live a long way from home. They transport them to and from their home area regularly for contact with their families and friends. Social workers and parents commented very positively on the staff's commitment to making out of county placements work well, and their dedication to the children. One social worker said, 'X has come on so much since he went to the home. When he was really poorly, the staff went to see him in their own time.'

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|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Judgement grade |
| <b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Good</b>     |
| <p>The staff and manager ensure that risks to individual young people are very well identified and evaluated. Each young person has clear strategies in place to help them to manage their behaviour, and this has contributed to the high level of safety in this home.</p> <p>There have been seven physical interventions since the last inspection, all of which were appropriate. The manager has monitored these well and has on occasion made suggestions to help staff improve their recording. These suggestions have been accepted and incorporated into practice.</p> <p>Young people are generally very well behaved, but when they do not behave appropriately, they receive restorative consequences rather than sanctions. These positive measures allow young people to contribute to a solution, which is much more effective than a punitive measure.</p> |                 |

Health and safety checks are managed well in this home. Fire drills and alarm checks are conducted within the prescribed timescales to help keep young people safe. The manager has identified some environmental issues, for example, the exterior wooden window frames around the conservatory, which are rotten. These were being repaired during the inspection, but on closer examination, it became apparent that they need replacing. This has been incorporated into the requirement.

The manager has already included some perimeter fencing in his development plan, but this has not yet been actioned. There is a stretch of agricultural fence between the garden and a pasture field that was breached by farm livestock. The farmer repaired the fence, but the makeshift repair is not suitable for a domestic garden where young people run around and play. The boundary on the other side of the garden would benefit from fencing, as there is a steep unguarded drop from the lawn down to the lane.

The home has a safe system of staff recruitment. This was formerly managed centrally, but the registered manager now recruits his own staff and retains his own personnel files. This has enabled him to take increased responsibility for this important area of work. He has received training in safer recruitment to support him in this task. Young people have also received training to assist with recruitment interviews and to help them to compose pertinent questions for the candidates.

The staff files inspected on this occasion contained all the required documents and information. In discussion, the manager agreed to record in more detail when verifying references, so that there is a full record of the referee's interview.

The young people currently living in the home do not go missing from there, or harm themselves. Some have previously faced risks from members of the public, but in response to the high level of nurturing care in the home, they are now safe.

Staff and the manager have received updated training in physical intervention, child sexual exploitation, self-harm and child protection, so that they know how to respond if there are any concerns. There have been no recent child protection enquiries arising from staff practice or Regulation 40 notifications. Local authority designated officers confirm that the manager acts correctly and in a timely manner when any safeguarding enquiries are raised with them.

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| <b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | <b>Good</b>     |
| <p>Leaders and managers are fully committed to prioritising children and young people's needs. Placing children at the centre of practice is undoubtedly a major strength of this home.</p> <p>All the children and young people have made significant and sustainable progress in relation to their starting points. Although the children have very different needs, the compatibility between them is generally good. Because compatibility may vary over time, the manager has been asked to continue to keep the current admission strategy under review, but there is no reason at present to cease providing the short breaks element of the service.</p> <p>Staff are very well trained and supervised. There is now a training manager in post who coordinates all the training for staff. This is a significant development and enables training to be monitored and set up by a professional with that specific role.</p> <p>The registered manager is a highly experienced, qualified person who has been with the company for several years. He is now in his fourth year at this home, and has recently completed his level 5 award in leadership and management. He is currently awaiting certification.</p> <p>The manager understands the home's strengths and weaknesses well. He has an active development plan, which is tailored to his home's individual needs. For example, the garden has undergone considerable improvement. There are now raised beds, children's play equipment, new fencing and a picnic area. The manager recognises that there is more work to be done outside the home.</p> <p>The strong staff team received much praise from all the parents and professionals consulted during this inspection. The team is very well supervised and supported. Training is provided for staff in a timely manner.</p> <p>The home is run in accordance with the statement of purpose. This document has been updated and revised to comply with the revised Children's Homes Regulations and Quality Standards. There are very good quality children's guides, which are personalised to each child's needs.</p> <p>The registered manager received accolades from the other professionals involved with the service. One social worker said that she was very pleased indeed with the quality of care in the home. Another said that the staff are extremely flexible and highly supportive, and that parents depended upon the short breaks service. All professionals agreed that there is excellent communication, particularly with the schools. Staff travel long distances to attend meetings in the placing authority area. Some social workers were particularly impressed with the key workers' reports, which often have photographs in them to illustrate their child's progress.</p> |                 |

The home also has very positive relationships with the police, the LADO and with healthcare professionals to provide a dedicated team around each child.

The registered manager is a strong, assertive leader who is not afraid to challenge other agencies, independent reviewing officers and commissioners when the need arises. His personal qualities enable him to assert his views, while maintaining very positive and productive inter-agency relationships.

## 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*.

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