

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	13/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC377702
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Holibrook House Limited
Registered person address	First Floor, 172 Hoe Street, Walthamstow, London, E17 4QH

Responsible individual	Mr Herman Allen
Registered manager	
Inspector	Miss Seka Graovac

Inspection date	13/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
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.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC377702

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- The multiple changes in management and lack of a Registered Manager for almost a year have had a negative impact on the young people, the staff, the administration and the monitoring of the quality of the service.
- Some young people describe their overall experiences of living in this home and the help that they receive as poor and needing to be better. They miss having a permanent manager in place.
- The consequences for young people's unacceptable behaviours are not clear and not consistently implemented. This makes them feel confused, frustrated and insecure. Young people do not always recognise how the staff help them to keep safe.
- The home is not effectively monitored. Some records are not well organised and weaknesses are not always identified and rectified. Poor record-keeping is not consistently challenged.

The children's home strengths

- Social workers from the placing authorities are very positive about the quality of the service that the young people receive and about the progress that they have made.
- Young people enjoy a great range of recreational, fun and learning activities that they themselves have chosen. This helps them to grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff members consistently follow a clear protocol for safeguarding young people who are missing from care. In addition to the comprehensive recorded risk assessment, each young person has a safe care plan regarding missing.
- Engaging young people in key-working sessions and workshops that focus on keeping safe in the community and on-line have enhanced their safeguarding awareness.

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
If the registered provider appoints a person to manage the home, the registered provider must, without delay, give HMCI notice of- (a) the name of the person so appointed; and (b) the date on which the appointment takes effect. (Regulation 27(2)(a)-(b))	01/09/2015
The registered person must ensure that all employees- (c) have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(c))	01/10/2015
The registered person must prepare and implement a policy ("the behaviour management policy") which sets out- (a) how appropriate behaviour is to be promoted in the children's home; and (b) the measures of control, discipline and restraint which may be used in relation to children in the home. In particular this relates to the proportionate and consistent application of sanctions. (Regulation 35(1)(a)-(b))	01/09/2015
The registered person must- (a) maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4; (b) ensure that the records are kept up to date; and (c) retain the records for at least 15 years from the date of the last entry. In particular this relates to the record of admissions and discharges.(Regulation 37(2)(a-c))	01/09/2015
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if- (c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there: (Regulation 40(4)(c))	01/09/2015
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. (Regulation 45(1))	01/11/2015

The registered person must- (a) supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45(4)(a))	01/01/2015
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Recommendations

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

- improve the health care plans so that they clearly show how children and young people who smoke and might be taking drugs are helped to understand the risks and to develop healthier lifestyles (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 35, paragraph 7.18)
- build on a safeguarding culture in the home by maintaining a safeguarding log and having clear systems for record-keeping in relation to dealing with safeguarding concerns (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 43, paragraph 9.8)
- review and update the home's child protection and safeguarding policy so that it includes arrangements for countering risks of self-harm, suicide and radicalisation (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 44, paragraph 9.19)
- in consultation with a child or young person, formulate a safe care plan that in one document specifies the steps to help them to feel and be safe within the home, when there are concerns about the relationships and on-line safety (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 43, paragraph 9.13)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This section should outline:

- the home is registered for six children of either sex, who may experience emotional and/or behavioural difficulties
- the home is privately owned
- the provider has two other children's homes and also provides education
- the home aims to provide a therapeutic environment

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/11/2014	Interim	declined in effectiveness
24/06/2014	Full	Good
28/01/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress
19/08/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	requires improvement
Young people's overall experiences of living in this home are not consistently good. One young person judges the home as inadequate, one as requiring improvement and one as outstanding. They describe the overall impact that the home has had on their lives, as well as the quality of relationships between the staff and themselves, in similar terms. Their feedback about feeling listened to and understood by the staff is also mixed. One young person describes the staff as fantastic, kind and caring. Another young person comments that the staff have not made any efforts to get to truly know young people. However, this young person also says that her opinion is heard. Another young person describes feeling ignored by the staff. This person also says: 'I see the manager as somebody I can talk to, to get things sorted. Other staff do not have the power to do it. Without the manager, I don't have anybody to talk to.' The young people who identify areas for improvement say that having a stable manager is the main thing that would make the home better. The young person whose experience of the home has been exceptionally positive is new to the service and has not experienced any changes in management or other key staff. Young people's social workers are very positive about the quality of the service that the young people receive and about the progress that they have made. A social worker says that the staff have been keen to get a good understanding of the young person before she moved in and have thought creatively about how to give her the best opportunity of settling in to the placement. All young people agreed that they were warmly welcomed to the home at the beginning. All young people are in education and engage in it to varying degrees. They enjoy a great range of recreational, fun and mind-expanding activities that they have chosen. This helps them to grow in confidence and self-esteem. One young person in particular has made tremendous progress at re-establishing ties with his family. Young people's individual health plans show that they receive health advice and support from a number of professionals. However, those plans do not always clearly identify how young people are helped to stop smoking cigarettes or cannabis, when this is a known problem for them. Many young people who have left the home have stayed in touch. They continue to make progress while being fostered or living more independently.	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Staff set clear rules and boundaries with young people and reward them for constructive behaviours. However, the consequences for destructive behaviours are less clear and are not consistently implemented. Staff do not always specify the timescale and the amount of money that the young person needs to pay back as reparation for the damage caused. Staff do not always adhere to the sanction that has been agreed. On occasions, staff have deducted more money from a young person's weekly pocket allowance than had been originally agreed. This makes young people feel confused, frustrated and insecure. The records of the measures that have been used to control young people's behaviour are not consistently kept. Some records are incomplete and some sanctions have not been included in the central log. Monitoring of the behaviour management measures is not robust. This includes monitoring of physical interventions. A record of one physical intervention states that the young person was 'held by foot' by staff members. This description has gone unchallenged, although the record was made in April 2015. The staff practice in relation to behaviour management is not effectively monitored. The home's risk management process is thorough and starts from the point of referral. Young people's risk assessments include clear strategies to minimise any identified risks. Staff regularly review and update risk assessments. They take comprehensive actions to help young people to understand the risks and adopt safer behaviours. Engaging young people in targeted key-working sessions and workshops that focus on keeping safe in the community and on-line, have enhanced their safeguarding awareness. To provide guidance and promote a good relationship between the safe neighbourhood team and the home, a community safety officer has delivered a workshop on 'knife-crime, offensive weapons and gangs' to young people and staff. One young person has raised with the staff members and the police, a number of safeguarding concerns regarding their own safety and the safety of others. Staff have shared these concerns without delay with Childrens Social Care services and where relevant, with the Local Authority Designated Officer for safeguarding. The concerns have been appropriately followed within a framework of multi-agency partnership working. This multi-agency partnership working was not immediately apparent at inspection. This was due to the lack of a safeguarding log and a clear system for how and where information is kept. The changes in the key-personnel who dealt with the concerns added to the difficulties in finding some important information, such as	

details of the strategy meetings. Not keeping records of safeguarding concerns in a systematic manner undermines monitoring and review of the practice, and minimises opportunities for any lessons to be identified and learnt.

Staff members consistently follow a clear protocol for safeguarding young people who are missing from care. In addition to the comprehensive recorded risk assessment, each young person has a safe care plan regarding missing. These plans consider any additional risks, such as child sexual exploitation, self-harm or health concerns. They also provide more comprehensive information than the risk assessments on the best strategies to promote the young person's safety when they are missing.

Staff do not formulate safe care plans for any other concerns apart from missing from home. This is the case even when young people have clearly identified that it is when they are at home that they do not feel safe. The examples include their concerns regarding the relationships with other young people and on-line safety. Other information available on the young people's files and other places, such as the staff duty roster demonstrates robust actions being taken. However, without a safe care plan, the information is scattered and how the young people were consulted and engaged is less clear.

Staff receive regular training on how to safeguard and promote young people's welfare. They have access to up to date legislation and statutory guidance. However, the home's own safeguarding and child protection policy has not been updated since last year. Although it makes reference to self-harm and suicide, it does not include any information on countering the risks related to this or to radicalisation.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
The home has not had a Registered Manager for almost a year. The lack of stable management has had a negative impact on the young people, the staff, and the administration and monitoring of the quality of the service provided. Young people paint a mixed picture of the feelings that they have about the effectiveness of different managers. One young person says that she misses having consistency in management and things being well-organised. Another young person says that the staff do not do their job properly when there is no manager. The staff members receive comprehensive training and good support, but the	

annual reviews of their individual performance are overdue. An example of this is that one staff member has not had their annual appraisal since July 2013. The majority of other staff members had their last appraisals in April 2014.

The multiple management changes have led to the home not being efficiently managed. The records are not well-organised. It took extended time to produce some of them for inspection. In addition to the issues that have already been mentioned regarding record-keeping, the register of admissions and discharges is not accurately kept. Although the home notified Ofsted of the great majority of the significant incidents, the management failed to notify Ofsted of an allegation of abuse of physical nature that a young person raised against a staff member.

The independent visitor's reports have identified some shortfalls. This led to the improvement in some areas of the service, such as health and safety, being achieved. However, the home's internal monitoring and quality assurance processes are poor. The last available report on the manager's periodical review of the quality of the service was for the period up to July 2014. The last monthly review that feeds into this report was for March 2015.

The leaders, interim managers and staff work hard to keep the service going in line with the homes' Statement of Purpose. They have continued to prioritise the needs of young people. They make sure that young people are safe and work towards achieving their individual targets as set out in their care plans. The staff have continued to engage effectively with a wider network of professionals to make sure that young people continue to make progress.

However, without stable permanent management, there is limited reflection on practice and scrutiny of records is sporadic. The leaders have successfully addressed the great majority of the requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection, but have failed to identify and rectify the new weaknesses when they began to emerge.

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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