

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC386430
Inspector	Tracey Ledder
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Plus One (South West) Ltd
Registered person address	Plus One Ltd The Mount 21 High Street WELLINGTON Somerset TA21 8QT
Responsible individual	Lou El Gilany
Registered manager	Amy Davey / Susan Cecilia Bate
Date of last inspection	23/10/2013

Inspection date	18/11/2014
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Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	inadequate
Outcomes for children and young people	inadequate
Quality of care	inadequate
Keeping children and young people safe	inadequate
Leadership and management	inadequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	inadequate
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Children in the home are not safe and do not feel safe. Leaders and managers have failed to undertake a robust assessment to ensure that young people are compatible, resulting in the home spiralling into chaos. Young people have been admitted inappropriately and the impact on young people and staff has not been carefully analysed.

The level of violence and aggression in the home is unacceptable. For some young people, the impact of witnessing such aggression has caused emotional distress. Leaders and managers have failed to ensure appropriate strategies are in place to keep people safe.

Not all staff feel confident or safe coming into work. Staff are assaulted on a regular basis, which has led to one member of staff phoning the home prior to arrival to ensure it is safe for them to enter. Due to the volatility of the home, there are periods when staff have very little control of the range of behaviours and violence.

Risk and care planning to respond to the violence and aggression have led to inappropriate and unreasonable measures being imposed for all young people in the home, breaching regulations. Some key information is missing from documentation and not all staff are aware of the steps they need to take to follow care planning.

Staff at times have to respond to situations without clear behaviour management strategies, resulting in inconsistent approaches to risk management and care.

Some young people who have made significant and positive progress whilst living at this home are distressed as a result of the environment they currently live in. One young person stated, 'this does not feel like my home anymore' and expressed a deep unhappiness in not having access to all areas of the home.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home, which is operated by a locally-based private company, provides care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

The provider also operates other homes in the area. The company has a contract with another private care provider to provide education services through a small specialist school, situated approximately 20 miles away.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/10/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
08/05/2013	Full	good
30/01/2013	Interim	good progress
11/07/2012	Full	good

What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	ensure that the children's home is conducted so as to—(a) promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated there (Regulation 17 (1))	01/01/2015
17 (2001)	ensure no measure of control or discipline which is excessive, unreasonable or contrary to paragraph (2) shall be used at any time on children accommodated in a children's (Regulation 17 (1))	01/01/2015

17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose (Regulation 17B (3), (4))	01/01/2015
26 (2001)	ensure a person is not employed or allowed to work at the children's home unless that person is fit to work at a children's home (Regulation 26 (1) (a), (b) (3) (d))	01/01/2015
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed in the home receive appropriate training, supervision and appraisal; and are enabled from time to time to obtain further qualifications appropriate to the work they perform (Regulation 27 (a), (b)).	01/01/2015

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **inadequate**

Young people do not currently have their emotional and psychological needs met. This is a result of poor compatibility assessment resulting in a home in turmoil. The emotional resilience of young people is being tested and the impact of the changes to the home has had a detrimental effect.

Young people are encouraged to make good choices for their all-round health needs. One young person attends a martial art class each week and plays football and this has been significant in them losing excess weight and understanding the importance of fitness.

Young people attend education provision and are motivated to learn. One young person has made significant progress from their starting point and receives regular achievement awards that they are proud of.

Young people are encouraged to undertake additional activities after school. One young person is actively involved in drama and is rehearsing for a production in the near future. Appropriate support and praise is given by staff for these achievements. Young people have enjoyed skiing holidays over the past two winters and plans are in place for a further trip this year.

Young people benefit from appropriate contact with their families and are able to understand why they are living away from home. Staff actively support contact and include key family members in day-to-day decisions about the care provided.

Quality of care **inadequate**

The home is a well-furnished house surrounded by farm fields set in a tranquil part of the county. Unfortunately, young people do not currently feel like this is their home. Leaders and managers have directed staff to restrict access to parts of the home to all young people. The rationale for this is one young person's poor behaviour. Young people cannot access the kitchen and at times the lounge because of this approach to behaviour management.

Young people have to ask a member of staff for items such as a teaspoon as cutlery and other basic kitchen equipment is locked in the office. Young people are unhappy about this approach to their care. Staff feel unable to change the current arrangements of the home, stating that it is in chaos.

Relationships and interactions in the home are difficult. Staff lack the skills to ensure

that consistent, appropriate boundaries are in place for young people. They do not know what is expected of them in respect of care and risk planning, meaning that young people are not cared for in line with their individual placement plans.

Some staff report feeling scared of one young person which results in them not challenging poor, anti-social behaviour for fear of negative consequences. As a result, one young person has an inappropriate level of control over the house.

The level of violence and aggression has increased in the home following a recent admission. The decision to agree to this placement has had a negative impact on other young people resulting in them becoming emotionally distressed. The care needs of young people are not currently being met due to the way in which the home is functioning. One member of staff referred to this as 'firefighting all of the time'.

Some young people have received good, consistent care prior to the recent admission to the home. They were able to see the house as their home; unfortunately, this is not now the case.

Keeping children and young people safe inadequate

Young people in the home are not safe and state that they do not feel safe. Risk and care planning is not implemented in a consistent way, leaving young people at risk of harm. Poor compatibility assessment by leaders and managers has resulted in young people who had felt safe living in the home becoming emotionally distressed.

Staff lack the skills or experience required to manage the situations of risk that they are currently faced with. Part of the current risk planning is for staff to lock themselves in the office, leaving young people at risk of harm.

Some staff in the home report that they do not feel safe coming into work. They are regularly assaulted and this impacts negatively on young people in the home. Staff currently fail to manage the risks in the home.

Young people who had not previously absconded from the home have started to go missing as a way of coping with the behaviours they are witnessing. Staff do not implement adequately the absent from home policy, resulting in young people not being safe.

Not all staff are aware of significant safeguarding concerns. Updated risk management plans are not shared or implemented effectively by leaders and managers. Staff are not provided with training to manage the risks they are presented with. They do not have the skills required to safely care for the young people, placing the young people at risk of harm.

Restraint has recently become commonplace in the home; this has had a detrimental

effect on young people who have been living there for a long time. Leaders and managers fail to monitor the recording of incidents and restraint, resulting in lack of clarity in respect of difficult situations and how they should be managed. Staff report that these errors are the result of the chaos they are trying to manage while on shift.

Not all staff working at the home are carefully selected and vetted. Concerns within the application process are not investigated adequately and the quality of references is poor. Agency staff are currently being used to increase the staff ratio to support behaviour management. However, not all of these staff have a good professional reference available.

Leadership and management

inadequate

Leaders and managers do not currently demonstrate a commitment to meeting the needs of all young people. They display a lack of insight into the specific needs of one young person, which is having a detrimental effect on the smooth running of the home.

Leaders and managers have produced care and risk planning documents that require staff to lock doors and prevent young people from accessing the communal areas of the home. Basic kitchen equipment is not available for young people. One young person says, 'this does not feel like my home anymore'. The level of restriction is not compliant with regulations.

Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that the home is adequately resourced with skilled and experienced staff who are able to respond to the needs of young people. Staff are not provided with appropriate training to ensure that they have the skills and confidence to manage poor and dangerous behaviour in the home.

Leaders and managers have failed to ensure that all records are clear, up to date and contribute to an understanding of young people's life. Managers fail to ensure that all staff have key information required to safely care for young people.

Leaders and managers fail to ensure that all staff understand care planning and risk management, leading to inconsistent approaches to care and the needs of young people.

Leaders and managers have failed to recognise the negative impact on the staff team following the admission of one young person. Leaders and managers have failed to provide adequate support to the staff during this difficult time, resulting in the home being run in a state of chaos and crisis.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.