

SC386810

Registered provider: Crossway Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides care and accommodation for one young person who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 17 to 18 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 5 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- The young person has made significant progress in all areas of her life since moving into the home, in particular in relation to education, attendance at health appointments and a reduction in the risks that she faces.
- The young person's attendance and engagement in education are good. This has contributed to the academic progress that she has made. The home is working collaboratively with education professionals to secure the most appropriate college course for the young person when she completes her formal

education.

- Staff ensure that the young person receives the most appropriate healthcare to meet her ongoing health needs.
- The young person is happy living at the home. She has positive relationships with the registered manager and staff. The young person described the home as being 'amazing'.
- Risk-taking behaviours have been effectively reduced for the young person. The registered manager and staff regularly discuss risks with the young person to enable her to have a greater understanding of the risks to her. She now has a clearer understanding of how to keep herself safe.
- An independence plan is now in place for the young person. The registered manager and staff are fully supporting the young person to develop her independence skills in preparation for adulthood.
- The registered manager and staff provide a safe, secure and nurturing environment for the young person. They have supported the young person to access appropriate therapy to meet her emotional and behavioural needs. However, the young person's engagement in it has been limited. Therefore, therapists have provided the registered manager and staff with information and tools to enable them to provide appropriate therapeutic care and support to meet her needs.
- Effective partnerships are formed with professionals to ensure that the young person receives the most appropriate care to meet her needs.

The children's home's areas for development

- Risk assessments do not demonstrate that they are regularly reviewed and updated to outline the current risk levels for the young person and how these are managed.
- The young person's placement plan does not include all relevant up-to-date information. This does not demonstrate how the placement is meeting her current needs.
- The home's location risk assessment does not include current information and an evaluation of the information obtained from safeguarding professionals in the community, such as the police.
- The supervision of staff should take place regularly and all supervision records stored safely at the home. One member of staff has not received regular supervision in line with the company's supervision policy.
- The records in the home relating to the training and development of staff do not demonstrate that staff's continuous professional development needs are met. Some mandatory training for staff appears to be out of date.
- The home's statement of purpose does not provide clear and accurate information relating to young people who are missing from home or the policy regarding young people smoking.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/04/2016	Full	Good
08/12/2015	Full	Requires improvement
14/07/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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
33: Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that all employees - undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b)) In particular, staff should receive regular supervision in line with the company's supervision policy, and records for this should be stored securely at the home. Staff should also receive regular training and development opportunities, and these should clearly be recorded within training records in the home.	30/06/2017
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular reference to ensuring that staff take action to protect children when they consider them to be at risk of child sexual exploitation, the registered person must ensure that staff— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12(2)(i)(b)) In particular, risk assessments should be regularly reviewed and updated.	30/06/2017
36: Children's case records The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child, which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child: they are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c)) In particular, in regard to the recording in placement plans.	30/06/2017

Recommendations

- The statement of purpose is of particular importance and should provide clear and accurate information relating to how the home provides individualised care to meet the quality standards for the children in their care. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 14/15, paragraph 3.5)

In particular, update the information relating to children who are missing from home and the policy regarding young people smoking.

- Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

In particular, this should include an evaluation of the current information received from safeguarding professionals, including the police.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young person living at the home has lived there for almost three years. During this time, she has made considerable progress in all areas of her life. She is much more settled and outcomes have improved for her. She described the home as being 'amazing'. The registered manager and staff offer her appropriate levels of support and intervention to meet her needs. Furthermore, they work collaboratively with other professionals to ensure that she receives the most appropriate support and intervention. This has contributed to the progress that she has made.

The young person has excellent attendance in education and is achieving well. The home has been instrumental in ensuring that the most appropriate education provision is in place to meet the young person's educational needs. It provides the young person with a stable environment and good routines to support her regular attendance for education. Furthermore, it maintains regular communication with education professionals to address issues relating to education. For example, when there have been incidents in education with other young people, the home has spoken with staff to ensure that incidents have been dealt with effectively in a timely manner. The young person is due to finish her formal education this term, and the home is continuing to work with education professionals to ensure that the most appropriate college course is in place for the young person to move on to. The young person is fully involved in this process. Therefore, the education needs of the young person are met well and outcomes in education have improved.

The home is proactive in ensuring that the young person receives the most appropriate healthcare and intervention to help to manage her health needs. The home supports the young person to attend health appointments, and regularly liaises with health professionals to discuss the young person's healthcare. The home has a good understanding of the prescribed medication that the young person has and ensures that it is administered in line with her prescription. There is a detailed healthcare plan in place which clearly outlines the young person's health needs and how these are being managed. Regular discussions take place between the young person and staff to discuss her health needs and provide her with clear information for her to gain a good understanding regarding the importance of her engaging with health professionals. Consequently, the young person's health needs are being suitably addressed and met.

The young person has ongoing issues relating to her emotional development and well-being. Therapeutic intervention and support from the community adolescent mental health team and Barnardo's has taken place to address these issues. However, the young person has decided to engage with this intervention no longer. In response, the home has worked with therapists to gain guidance on how it can therapeutically support the young person. Staff accept that they are not trained therapists, but are doing what they can to offer the young person the best possible support to meet her emotional development and well-being needs. The young person's emotional development and well-being needs are regularly addressed in consultation discussions between the young person and staff. This demonstrates the home's support and commitment to meeting the young person's emotional development and well-being needs.

The registered manager and staff fully support the young person with issues relating to her identity and sexuality. The young person is exploring her sexual identity. Staff fully support her in this journey. For example, they research and share relevant information and details of help groups so that she can make an informed choice on her sexuality. The young person now attends a group, the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual and transgender group. The young person's social worker said, 'Staff are extremely supportive of the young person's issues surrounding her gender and sexuality. She says that she feels fully accepted, which is all that we could want for her.' As a result the young person's sexuality and identity needs are clearly understood and supported by the home.

The young person has positive relationships with the registered manager and staff team. She views them as her family and often refers to them as 'mum', 'nan' or 'aunt'. When we discussed this, the young person said: 'I do not see the manager and staff as staff. I see them as family and treat them as family. They also treat me like I am a part of their family, too.' The registered manager and staff spend time with the young person, and listen and respond to her views, wishes and feelings. For example, the young person has recently expressed concern about the college course planned for her to attend when her formal education ends. The registered manager immediately responded by contacting education professionals to make arrangements for a more suitable course to be identified which the young person was interested in and would engage in. An education professional said, 'The home contacted me regarding her placement at college which she wants to change for September. They were quick to highlight this change to me so that an alternative could be found.' This demonstrates that the home listens and responds to

the young person's views, wishes and feelings.

An independence plan is now in place to start to prepare the young person for adulthood and independent living in the future. The plan has been formulated in agreement with the young person's social worker and in consultation with the young person. The plan allows the young person to take small steps to build her independence skills and will progress accordingly, in line with how she responds. To date, the young person is engaging well with her independence plan and has started to prepare and make some of her own meals, tidy her bedroom before she receives her pocket money, clean up after herself in other areas of the home and have some free time in the community. The young person's social worker said, 'The staff are starting to implement more independence for the young person as she has turned 16. They are going at the young person's pace and not introducing too much too soon, as this could significantly increase her risk-taking behaviour.' The home is promoting the young person's independence and supporting her to develop skills so that she is as independent as possible before adulthood and independent living.

The home fully supports the young person in relation to contact with people who are important to her. The home facilitates and supervises the young person's contact with her parent and siblings. They complete detailed reports of the contact sessions to ensure that there is a clear record of the sessions. The home communicates regularly with the young person's parent and social worker to ensure that contact arrangements and expectations are clear. Furthermore, the home supports the young person to have supervised telephone contact with her family. Staff have a detailed contact plan in place that clearly outlines the contact that the young person has with her family and any changes to this, in line with the young person's views, wishes and feelings. However, this could be strengthened to include up-to-date information in relation to the young person's contact with her friends. The home clearly supports the young person to have quality contact with family and friends which is safe.

The young person's placement plan is lengthy, with a considerable amount of historical information. Although, the plan appears to be regularly reviewed and updated, it does not clearly outline how the home is currently contributing to meeting the young person's needs or the key aims of the placement. In particular, the placement plan does not set out how, on a day-to-day basis, the young person is cared for and how her welfare is currently safeguarded and promoted by the home. The registered manager and staff are aware of the young person's needs, but this knowledge is not underpinned by an up-to-date placement plan. Consequently, the young person's placement plan does not outline the current circumstances of the young person and how these are being met at the home.

The home is well maintained. The home ensures that repairs and maintenance work requests are carried out quickly by the maintenance company now commissioned to do this work. The home has effectively challenged delays in repairs and maintenance work being completed. For example, regular communication has taken place in relation to delays in addressing an issue of damp in the home. The home is looking a little 'tired'. However, the company has agreed for some redecorating to take place to brighten up

the home, along with some new furniture. The young person will be fully involved in choosing the new decoration and furniture for her home.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The young person is safeguarded and feels safe living at the home. The registered manager and staff are alert to any safeguarding issues that may affect the young person, and they take effective action to address these. For example, as part of the young person's independence plan, she has been to a friend's home to spend time with her and her family. It was identified that her friend's significantly older boyfriend was also spending time at the home when the young person was visiting. The young person felt confident enough to share this information with the home. The home contacted the mother of the young person's friend, who confirmed what the young person had said. Therefore, in conjunction with the young person's social worker, it was agreed that it was inappropriate for the young person to go to her friend's address anymore. However, the home acknowledges the importance of the young person developing and maintaining friendships, so arrangements are in place for the young person's friend to visit the home so that they can spend time together in a safe environment.

The risks to the young person have been reduced since she has lived at the home. This is due to the support and intervention by the registered manager and staff. Discussions regularly take place with the young person in relation to risks, the strategies in place to reduce risk levels and how the young person can keep herself safe. As a strategy to safeguard the young person, she has not had time out alone in the community until recently. Free time has now been introduced, in line with her independence plan, with clear expectations of what is expected of the young person to ensure that she continues to be safeguarded. The young person is provided with a mobile phone during this time so that she can maintain contact with staff, who remain in the same locality to respond quickly, should the need arise. Consequently, while the home is promoting the young person's independence, it ensures that appropriate safeguards are in place to allow this. However, risk assessments will need to be regularly reviewed and updated in relation to this.

Risk assessments are in place for the young person and are discussed regularly with the staff during team meetings. However, they do not clearly outline the current risks, risk levels and the strategies in place to manage the risks. Furthermore, risk assessments do not demonstrate that they are regularly reviewed and updated. For example, the information relating to the risks for contact for the young person at her friend's home is not recorded in her risk assessment. Furthermore, risks relating to internet use, free time, missing from home, child sexual exploitation, self-harmful behaviour and smoking have not been updated for almost a year. This does not demonstrate that robust risk assessments are in place to ensure that all staff working at the home are fully aware of the current risks and arrangements to manage and reduce them.

The staff regularly discuss safeguarding issues in team meetings to ensure a consistent approach to safeguarding practice. However, although the registered manager confirmed that all safeguarding training for staff is up to date, the records for mandatory

safeguarding training do not demonstrate this. This includes training on young people being missing from home and child sexual exploitation. This does not demonstrate that staff are fully equipped with the knowledge and skills to identify and respond to safeguarding concerns so that they can protect the young person effectively. This is a training issue, and there has been no negative impact on the young person's safety.

The home has a review report in place regarding the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home. This outlines all known risks in the community and how these are managed to safeguard the young person. The home has gathered information from safeguarding professionals such as the police to contribute to the review, but has not incorporated this into the current review report. The information from the police in the location review is historical information, dating back in excess of two years. Therefore, the location review does not provide a true and accurate reflection or evaluation of the important information available to them.

Behaviour management in the home is robust. The staff and young person clearly understand the expectations and consequences of inappropriate behaviour at the home. The clear and consistent boundaries and positive relationships between the staff and young person contribute to the positive behaviour of the young person at the home. The young person is regularly rewarded for positive behaviour, and this contributes to improvements in her behaviour. Since the last inspection, there has only been one consequence imposed for negative behaviour, and this was fair and reasonable. The young person was spoken to about the incident and apologised for her behaviour. There have been no incidents involving physical intervention or any room searches since the last inspection. This demonstrates robust behaviour management and positive behaviour at the home.

There is a risk assessment in place in relation to the young person accessing the internet. This is due to previous concerns in relation to the young person's inappropriate use of the internet. The risk assessment has not been updated for some time. However, the staff understand the risks that the use of the internet can pose for the young person, therefore the young person is fully supervised when she accesses the internet.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The home continues to be led and managed by a suitably experienced and qualified registered manager. The registered manager and staff are adapting to the changes that have been implemented since the company was taken over at the end of last year. The main changes are in relation to policies and procedures and recording systems at the home. Therefore, there were some shortfalls identified in the records and plans in the home during this transition. Furthermore, there are some shortfalls in training for staff and supervision for one member of staff. The registered manager acknowledges these shortfalls and advises that they will be addressed as a priority. The registered manager is now supported by a deputy manager who will support her to address the shortfalls identified.

The supervision of staff is generally up to date and is reflective of practice. However, there were no supervision records at the home for one member of staff who has recently moved from another of the company's homes. When this was discussed with the member of staff, she could only recall having one supervision session since she joined the company approximately seven months ago. Consequently, this member of staff has not received the appropriate level of supervision to support and develop her in her new role in the company. Furthermore, this significant shortfall is not in line with the company's induction and supervision policy.

The majority of the staff team are suitably qualified at national vocational qualifications level 3, or plans are in place for them to undertake their qualification. However, the training records of the registered manager and staff do not demonstrate regular opportunities to promote their continuous professional development. The training records indicate that some staff are not up to date with mandatory training, such as safeguarding, health and safety, crisis prevention, and equality and diversity. This does not demonstrate that staff are able to develop their knowledge and skills to influence their practice. However, the new company has a full staff training schedule for the coming year, and it is important that staff from this home have the opportunity to attend some of these training and development opportunities. This will support their continuous professional development, and have a positive impact on their professional practice and the quality of care that they provide to the young person.

Some of the records and plans in the home do not include relevant information relating to the young person's current situation. For example, the placement plan, contact plan and risk assessments do not always provide a comprehensive picture of the young person's current situation or clearly demonstrate her experiences and progress, and the support and guidance that she receives. Furthermore, there are shortfalls in the supervision of staff and staff training. The monitoring and review systems at the home have failed to identify these shortfalls. They need to be strengthened, as they have failed to identify the shortfalls identified during this inspection. Improvements will enable the manager to identify the home's strengths and weaknesses and take effective action to address any shortfalls in a timely way. The registered manager acknowledges that some shortfalls have occurred during the home's transition from one company to another. She has clear insight into how this is to be rectified, as a priority, by herself, with the support of the newly appointed deputy manager.

Regular team meetings take place and allow staff to discuss the young person's progress in detail. They reflect on their practice and identify good practice examples to share to ensure consistent good practice across the staff team. Team meetings now also include discussion on research completed by members of staff that can influence practice and meet the needs of the young person. For example, recent team meeting records demonstrate lengthy discussions on research in relation to transgender issues, which is a particular issue for the young person living at the home. The registered manager plans to have research discussions as a regular feature in future team meetings.

Partnership working is well established at the home. The records viewed and the discussions during the inspection demonstrate that this collaborative working contributes

to the experiences and progress of the young person. For example, the young person's education and health needs are met well due to the robust relationships that the home has with other professionals. Professionals compliment the home on its good levels of communication with them. An independent reviewing officer said: 'The home has always communicated well with me and provided comprehensive updates in reports for the review.' A social worker said: 'The staff at the home always make themselves available for meetings and visits. All information and updates are sent through to me in good time.' Consequently, the home has robust professional relationships with other professionals in order to ensure that the young person receives the most appropriate support to meet her needs.

The home's statement of purpose has recently been updated to include information relating to the change of ownership of the home and its policies and procedures. However, the statement of purpose is unclear in parts and does not clearly outline how the home provides individualised care to meet the quality standards for young people in its care, for example information relating to young people who are missing from the home or the policy in relation to young people who smoke. Furthermore, there are blank spaces where pictures of the home are yet to be included. This means that the home cannot provide an accurate and current statement of purpose document on request.

The young person and staff at the home speak very highly of the registered manager and feel supported by her. They have the utmost respect for the manager, and speak of her hard work and commitment to the home. A member of staff said: 'The home is run really well and the young person is the priority. We couldn't ask for a better manager, in fact she is a "leader", which is great. She gets respect from all of the staff and we don't like to let her down.' Furthermore, other professionals speak positively about the registered manager and her commitment to the young person. An independent reviewing office said, 'The manager, (Name of manager) and staff are extremely nurturing and have created a good living environment for the young person.' The positive comments made about the registered manager during this inspection demonstrate her passion and commitment to 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 difference 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: SC386810

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Crossway Services Limited

Registered provider address: Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Leeds LS5 3BT

Responsible individual: Amanda Quinn

Registered manager: Kathleen Mitchell

Inspector

Lisa Mulcahy, social care regulatory inspector

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