

Children's homes inspection – full

Inspection date	28 April 2016
Unique reference number	SC386810
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Crossway Services Limited
Registered person address	c/o Sinclair, 300 St. Marys Road, Garston, Liverpool L19 0NQ

Responsible individual	Pauline Croft
Registered manager	Kathleen Mitchell
Inspector	Pam Nuckley

Inspection date	28 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC386810

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The young person said that she had honest and trusting relationships with staff and described them as 'great'. She said, 'Staff listen to me and discuss things with me and I know I can talk to them about anything.' These excellent relationships have significantly improved her outcomes in education, health, behaviour and contact.
- When educational provisions have not met the young person's needs or have broken down, an alternative provision has been found quickly. The staff worked hard to find a provision that reflected her individual needs. As a result, her attendance has been 100%, and she has requested that any appointments are made out of school time so that she does not miss school.
- Staff have worked closely with the young person and health professionals to improve her health. She routinely attends health appointments and she is up to date with her immunisations. Staff are working closely with numerous health professionals to ensure that her sexual, mental and emotional health needs are met.
- A key strength of this home is how well staff continue to support the young person with an ongoing safeguarding incident and to ensure that all professionals involved are kept up to date. They continue to do work with the young person about keeping herself safe. This is reflected in the fact that the young person has not been reported missing for a significant period and that she can reflect on the concerns that adults have for her.
- The registered manager understands the strengths and weakness of the home and has a development plan in place to address any identified shortfalls. Improvements in recording, training opportunities and supporting staff have already been made.
- The manager and staff work closely with placing authorities and a range of professionals to ensure that the young person receives a tailored package of care. This is evident in the feedback gained from professionals as part of this inspection and in the improvements and achievements gained by the young person.

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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 persons 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
44: Independent person: visits and reports The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI. This is specifically in relation to sending it in a timely manner (Regulation 44(7)(a)).	30 June 2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides accommodation for one young person with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
8 December 2015	Full	Requires improvement
14 July 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21 January 2015	Full	Good
27 August 2014	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The young person said that she is settled, happy and safe at this home. She said jokingly, 'Staff are great and the only complaint I have is they hug and love me too much.' This shows that there is a warm and comfortable environment at this home. She continued to say, 'I can talk to them all, they listen and we have fun.' Staff said that their role is to make the young person feel wanted, supported and cared for and to get her through difficult times knowing that they will always be there for her. One member of staff said, 'There was a difficult period in December, but we have all worked closely together, and it great that she is now engaging better and is back to her old self.' The young person put the progress that she had made down to these strong relationships with staff. The young person said that she knows how to make a complaint but, that because of these good relationships, she has not needed to. The young person also has access to a range of independent people that she can talk to if necessary. These good arrangements ensure that she can raise any issue about her care. A key strength of this service is the multi-agency working with educational professionals to ensure that young people receive full-time education specific to their individual needs. The young person was initially attending mainstream school, but this broke down last summer. She then attended an alternative provision that catered for young people with learning difficulties, but staff could not manage her behaviour. The home worked closely with the virtual headteacher and a range of professionals to ensure that she was not out of school for a long period. An alternative school placement that could meet her learning and behaviour needs was found. She started at the beginning of the school year and has achieved full attendance. She said, 'I love it. I have made friends, and I have asked staff not to put appointments in within school time because I do not want to miss school.' A recent school report shows that she is engaging and progressing well. At a recent planning meeting, it was agreed that a cognitive assessment needed to be completed to assess her understanding. It was agreed that the school would undertake this as part of its academic assessments. This will ensure that schoolwork, conversations about being safe and general matters are discussed at an appropriate level with her. The young person said that she is offered a wide range of activities, which include going out to the cinema, watching DVDs or attending the drama club. She said, 'I have started drama club again and I have made friends. I have been to a pop concert with a friend as a reward for going to school, and it was great.' She also	

has contact with several members of her family, and staff try to include an activity with her sisters so that they can enjoy being out together. This shows that young people have a range of opportunities within the local and wider community.

The young person's health has significantly improved. She has recently had two out of three hepatitis injections, and a third is scheduled. The young person receives a controlled drug for an ongoing condition. There are robust recordings, storage and administration of this medication within the home. This is further strengthened through regular medication training for staff. A key strength of the home is its partnership working with a number of agencies to promote the young person's well-being. For example, it has accessed a number of independent services to support her health needs, including sexual, mental and emotional health. As a result, the young person is able to discuss and explore her identity within a safe environment.

The young person has supervised contact with several members of her family. Staff understand their roles and responsibilities in this area, because they have completed training, and her plans specifically outline what action staff need to take if an incident were to occur. In addition to this, any restrictions to unsuitable adults that have been identified by the local authority are now clearly highlighted within her plans. A parent said, 'Staff telephone me frequently and discuss arrangements for contact. We have just had a lovely day out and tea for her birthday. She also gets to see her older sister, and this means that they can keep in touch.' These good arrangements ensure that young people can maintain and build relationships with their families.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The young person said that she was safe at this home. Staff work closely with a range of safeguarding professionals to ensure that any incident is fully explored and shared. At the last inspection, a member of staff overlooked a potential safeguarding issue, which lead to a missed opportunity to take immediate action. The manager took quick action and completed a thorough investigation. As a result of this, the staff member completed additional safeguarding training. A safeguarding police officer said, 'This was a blip in what is normally a very strong home for protecting children. They work closely with us and share information, which helps us do our job effectively.' In addition to this, the home has shared soft	

intelligence about unusual activity going on next door. As a result, the police were able to take action, the tenants were moved on and the house has been refurbished and has been sold. These good arrangements ensure that young people are safe within the community.

The home is working closely with the child sexual exploitation team because the young person continues to put herself at risk by approaching strangers or by being good friends with people whom she has only recently met. The home and professionals are working hard to raise her understanding of these issues. As part of this, a cognitive assessment is being completed, so that they are clear about her level of understanding. The manager said, 'It is difficult to know at what level to discuss issues with her and whether she is able to retain the information discussed with her. Therefore, we have sought independent help in this area.' Because the young person has started to engage in therapy sessions, is not going missing and is in full-time education, her risk level has been reduced from high to medium.

Good risk assessments identify the vulnerability of the young person. They are clear about strategies to reduce risk and actions for staff to take. These assessments highlight how risks have been reduced for the young person. For example, the young person has not been reported missing from the home for a significant period. However, staff clearly demonstrated their understanding of effective and prompt reporting if an incident were to occur. This illustrates the progress that the young person has made over time. In addition to this, staff have undertaken additional training on sex and the law and pornography, to enhance their knowledge in these areas. This further safeguards young people.

Young people have not required physical intervention. However, staff have been fully trained in these areas to ensure that young people are fully protected. The young person's behaviour has significantly improved. This is due to a combination of excellent relationships, staff listening to the young person and her seeing positive outcomes for her efforts, with good rewards and incentive schemes in place. For example, the young person can earn trips to pop concerts, have extra activities with friends and personal items. Consequences for unacceptable behaviour are minimal but, when applied, the young person said that they are fair.

A stable staff team cares for the young person. This means that she has been able to make good, honest, open and positive relationships with them. The impact of this is that she has been able to share historical information and ongoing concerns that have had an impact on her welfare. There have been no new staff appointed but previous inspection of the home's recruitment process found that it was robust. This further protects young people from unsuitable adults.

The young person lives in a safe environment because staff ensure that all health and safety issues are addressed. Renewal certificates are in place for the safety equipment, and fire evacuations are completed regularly.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager was registered with Ofsted in 2006. She has appropriate childcare and management qualifications. She has experience of working with young people on a one-to-one basis and within group settings. She also manages another single-bed home. She ensures that she spends equal periods in each home. The manager uses her knowledge and experience well. She is a strong ambassador for young people and prioritises staff support. The home's statement of purpose reflects the service offered at this home. The staff team and manager understand the aims and objectives set out in the statement. Thus, young people are admitted, discharged and cared for in line with its ethos. Most staff are qualified in caring for young people. One member of staff is nearing completion of the award. Staff said that the supervision, training and development opportunities that they receive support them to give good, consistent care to the young person. One member of staff said, 'I am working closely with the manager because I wish to further my career and hopefully become a manager.' This shows that staff have the opportunity to develop in the home. Appraisals take place regularly, and the manager has improved the appraisal system by devising a form to capture the young person's views. She uses this effectively to demonstrate an all-round view of their development and practice. Staff meetings are held regularly and the young person's week, incidents, and progress are fully discussed. Any additional information from professionals is also shared. This allows staff to discuss openly, debate and make changes to the young person's care, routine and risk assessments. In addition to this, staff are able to reflect on their practice and to discuss changes in law or training. For example, staff will attend additional training and feed back to the group the information, whether the training was relevant to their role, or propose that all staff undertake it. An independent visitor monitors the home on a monthly basis. The reports have now improved because they evaluate and specify what record has been sampled. This means that they mostly reflect the findings on the quality of care within the home. When the report has not been as accurate, the manager has challenged the independent visitor. This shows that she uses this report effectively in her monitoring of the home. However, Ofsted has not received these reports in a timely way. For example, there has recently been a three-month gap between receiving these reports. This does not ensure that Ofsted has a good overview of the home between inspections. The home's development plan is constantly reviewed and amended as the service	

progresses. The manager makes good use of feedback from consultation with young people, staff and professionals to identify areas for improvement. For example, staff have been identified to oversee different aspects of the running of the home, such as an identified person for ensuring that good files are maintained. Through these good consultations, the young person has been involved in celebrating her birthday on three different occasions and in different places: at the home, with her mother and with her sister. She is currently discussing plans for the summer holiday.

The young person said that she fully understood her care plan and is confident that she can influence the plan. Records clearly reflect the plans for the young person and show the progress that she has made over time. They are updated regularly and sent to the relevant professionals. This ensures that all parties are aware of any recent changes to the plan.

The staff and manager work collaboratively and effectively with a range of professionals and other agencies. All the professionals spoken with as part of this inspection spoke positively about the home, especially about the progress that the young person had made. One professional said, 'All her needs are addressed within her care plan. She attends a specialist education provision and is doing well. She has regular contact with her family and I continue to endorse this placement as it affords her the opportunity to live within an approximation of a family setting. This placement meets her complex needs, and staff communicate with me well. The manager is always available for consultation.'

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, 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 children looked after 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 that 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 whom 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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