

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	08/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC390156
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Pilgrims Corner Limited
Registered provider address	Suite 5, The Links, HERNE BAY, Kent, CT6 7GQ

Responsible individual	Sarah Norman
Registered manager	Wayne Ross
Inspector	Melissa McMillan

Inspection date	08/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
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	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC390156

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are very well settled; they are making good progress in their education, social relationships and behaviour.
- Staff are committed, experienced and skilled in caring for young people.
- Opportunities are provided for young people to experience enriching activities, and to expand their circle of friends.
- Young people have a real voice in the running of the home.
- Young people are happy and safe at the home.
- The manager has a good oversight of the service.
- Recruitment systems and the safeguard policy need review and improvement.

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
The registered persons must verify so far as reasonably practicable the reason why the employment or position ended for a person who has previously worked in a position involving work with children or vulnerable adults. (Schedule (2) Regulations (26)(28)(3))	08/01/2017
The registered persons must obtain two written references, including a reference from the person's most recent employer, if any. (Schedule (2) Regulations (26)(28)(3))	08/01/2017
The registered persons must obtain a full employment history, together with a satisfactory explanation of any gaps in employment, in writing. (Schedule (2) Regulations (26)(28)(3))	08/01/2017
The registered person must keep under review and, as necessary, revise the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 34 (6))	08/01/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered persons are required to develop and keep under review a statement of purpose (regulation 16 and schedule 1) and ensure that it is an accurate reflection of the services offered. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.5)
- The registered persons must ensure that the children's guide helps young people to understand how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.22).

- The registered persons must ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a young person is in any way at risk of harm. This includes ensuring that training is provided in safeguarding young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered persons must ensure that the policy on protection of children from abuse and neglect should include arrangements to counter risks of self-harm and suicide. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.19)
- The registered persons must ensure that the supervision of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This includes providing regular supervision as detailed in the home's workforce development plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 13.1)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to accommodate two young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a small local provider who has other similar homes in the vicinity. This provider also has a school, which young people may attend.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2016	Full	Good
22/09/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/12/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people live in a homely environment where nurturing and supportive staff provide them with consistency, structure and routine. Young people are very well settled, and are making good progress in their education, social relationships and behaviour. Relationships between young people and staff are founded on mutual respect and trust, which provides them with a secure base. Interactions are supportive and responsive, and humour and banter are enjoyed by all. Young people have been carefully matched and, as a result, have developed friendships, enabling them to develop their social skills and increase their social network. Young people gain from living in an environment where education is valued. Young people are well motivated to attend school and college. They have excellent attendance, and are progressing well in their chosen subjects. Close liaison and communication between the home and educational establishments ensure that young people's development needs are well coordinated and met. Staff are committed, experienced and skilled in caring for young people. Their knowledge of young people enables them to support them to increase their ability to manage their feelings and frustrations constructively. As a result, there has been a significant reduction in incidents of risk-taking and challenging behaviour since the previous inspection. Young people are making considerable improvement in their daily living and self-care skills, such as cooking meals, cleaning and helping with laundry. Staff assess young people's competency in keeping themselves safe, and, as a result, they are now accessing the community independently and using public transport. One young person has recently gained employment after successfully completing work experience. This is helping him to develop his confidence, and develop his skills for adulthood. Opportunities are provided for young people to experience enriching activities and to expand their circle of friends. Young people increase their self-confidence and self-esteem through positive experiences, taking increased responsibility for themselves. This has enabled them to have the confidence to join clubs such as the Army Cadets. Young people have a real voice in the running of the home. The registered manager ensures that young people's views are heard, through routine	

conversations and young people's meetings. Young people also sit on the interview panel for new members of staff. This means that young people are at the centre of the running of the home.

Staff promote young people's health needs to a good standard. Young people attend all their routine health checks, and have access to specialist health professionals such as therapists and a children looked after nurse. This means that they receive good practical and emotional support, and advice about issues such as sexual health and dealing with their anger and anxieties.

Young people receive sensitive guidance and support in maintaining contact with their families. This enables young people to maintain and improve family relationships safely and with confidence.

The home is comfortable and well maintained. Young people are able to personalise their bedrooms, giving them a sense of identity and belonging in the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Young people are happy and safe. They are confident that they have people in the home to confide in, should they have a concern. There have been no complaints since the previous inspection. Young people feel able to say what they think, and say that staff listen to them. Effective risk management keeps young people safe. Risk assessments ensure that staff are aware of the actions they need to take to minimise risks to young people. Young people are encouraged to take age-appropriate risks, allowing them to take responsibility for themselves, which increases their confidence and develops their own sense of safety. Young people receive consistent messages from staff, which are supported by close management oversight and good communication between staff. As a result, young people develop behaviour that is more positive. There has been a significant reduction in incidents of challenging behaviour since the previous inspection. Staff have developed positive relationships and mutual respect with young people. This enables staff to use de-escalation techniques successfully if young people become agitated. As a result, there have been no incidents of physical intervention for over a year. Staff seldom impose sanctions, and those that are imposed are fair and proportionate.	

The location risk assessment carefully considers the risk that the environment presents to each individual, and how these risks can be minimised. Staff work proactively with other professionals, including the police and designated officer, to ensure that strategies to keep young people safe are effective.

Staff are very alert to any potential risks, and actively engage with young people to encourage them to let staff know if they have any concerns. Any issues of a child-protection nature are managed appropriately, with effective multi-agency working ensuring that young people are safe. However, the home's safeguarding policy does not reflect the good practice. It is not clear in the policy who staff should report concerns to. It does not promote rapid reporting to the local authority designated officer of any safeguarding concerns, and does not clearly explain that their guidance should be sought before starting any investigation. It does not emphasise the need to report past abuse, or provide guidance on supporting young people who experience self-harm or may be thinking about committing suicide.

There has been one missing incident since the previous inspection. Staff responded immediately, and were proactive in attempting to find the young person. Each young person has an individualised protocol in place to follow in the event they should go missing. Staff worked with the young person to identify the reasons why they left the home without permission, and how they can prevent this from happening in the future.

The home's recruitment procedures do not ensure that only safe and appropriate adults work with young people. They have not ensured that references have been obtained from previous employers, explored gaps in employment histories, or verified the reasons why prospective employees left previous employment with children or vulnerable adults, as required by regulation. A requirement was made in regard to verification at the previous inspection and this remains in place. Further requirements have been made in regard to the organisation's safer recruitment practices.

Health and safety measures protect young people and staff from the risk of harm. All checks are up to date, appropriate fire-safety measures are in place, and risk assessments identify potential hazards and risk-reduction processes.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has been registered with Ofsted in respect of this service since August 2016. He holds a level 5 qualification in leadership and management, and has a wealth of experience in working with children looked after. The manager has	

good links with young people's educational settings, health professionals and placing social workers. This ensures that appropriate support is in place to assist young people to maximise their potential.

The home's monitoring systems enable the manager to evaluate and evidence young people's progress over time, and assess the quality of support provided to young people. These systems are used to good effect to maximise young people's progress.

The manager has a good oversight of the service. Since starting in post, he has evaluated all aspects of the service, and is aware of the areas that require improvement. Monthly reports from an external visitor also contribute to the development of the service.

Staff are equipped with the necessary mandatory training, such as first aid and food hygiene, in order to meet young people's basic needs. Some staff have yet to complete safeguarding training; the manager has arranged for this to take place. All staff who are required to have the level 3 diploma have completed this or are in the process of completing it. Supervision provides staff with the chance to review and reflect on young people's progress and needs. However, not all staff have had regular supervision. This hinders the manager's ability to evaluate their performance and improve practice.

A constructive staff environment is promoted, and the staff feel supported. A new member of staff expressed being happy with the level of support provided by managers. The manager has recently changed the format of team meetings, ensuring that actions to improve the quality of care are completed. Young people provide written feedback on staff to inform staff annual appraisals, demonstrating the manager's commitment to ensuring that young people are listened to and feel valued.

The home's statement of purpose and children's guide are thorough, outlining how the service provides and cares for young people. They include essential policies and procedures of the homes within the organisation, and specify the credentials of the leadership and management team. However, in places the statement of purpose refers to different homes, and contains many inaccuracies. The children's guide does not inform young people on how to contact the children's commissioner to promote their rights or raise concerns.

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 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 that 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 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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