

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC390156
Inspector	Chris Golbourn
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Pilgrims Corner Limited
Registered person address	Suite 5 The Links HERNE BAY Kent CT6 7GQ

Responsible individual	Sarah Norman
Registered manager	Post vacant/ Acting Manager - Lesley Patricia Dunne
Date of last inspection	06/03/2014

Inspection date	17/12/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This private children's home provides care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is another children's home within the organisation located next door, the acting manager also has responsibility for this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
22/11/2013	Full	good
18/12/2012	Interim	good progress
23/04/2012	Full	adequate

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 promote and make proper provision for the welfare of children accommodated there; and make proper provision for the care, education, supervision and, where appropriate, treatment, of children accommodated there (Regulation 11.1 (a-b))	09/02/2015
25 (2001)	ensure the registered person has a sufficient number of suitably qualified, competent and experienced persons working at the home. Regulation 25	09/02/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. Avoidable hazards are removed as is consistent with a domestic setting. Risk reduction does not lead to an institutional feel. This is in relation to areas of dampness visible on walls in the lounge and kitchen areas (NMS.10.3)
- ensure that the views, wishes and feelings of children and those significant to them are taken into account in monitoring staff and in developing the home. This is in relation to the current staff changes and developments within the home (NMS 1.7)
- ensure that all new staff undertake the Children's Workforce Development Council's induction standards, commencing within 7 working days of starting their employment and being completed within 6 months. This is in relation to the engagement of a number of new staff within the home (NMS 18.3)
- ensure all staff have access to support and advice, and are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. This is in relation to the ensuring staff receive supervision in line with the frequency outlined in the homes policy. (NMS 19.4)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Children and young people are able to develop good relationships with the adults who care for them. The support they receive from staff allows them to recognise their individual points of origin and to reflect on their behaviours and choices. The health needs of the children and young people are well met and promoted to a good standard.

All routine health appointments are in the main kept and if one is missed this is closely followed up. They are also given good access to specialist health care services such as CAHMS, if required. The staff in the home work well in partnership with external agencies to promote good care for the children and young people. As a result the children and young people receive good emotional and practical support from staff within the home and external agencies.

Most children and young people living the home attend the organisations independent school, and considering their individual starting points, improvements in attendance and engagement in education are good and they make positive progress.

Children and young people also receive positive support in sustaining contact with their families, one young person has now returned home to the care of extended family members and this transition was supported by the staff.

Young people are supported to develop their own life and independent living skills under the guidance of staff, being involved in purchasing food, preparing meals, budgeting, and where appropriate independent travel in the community. Through this approach, young people are enabled to develop their self-esteem, with raised levels of confidence, and to begin to understand the complexities of independent living and adulthood.

Quality of care **good**

Children and young people benefit from a staff team who are genuinely interested in them as individuals and develop appropriate warm and caring relationships with them. Young People who have moved on from the home seek to remain in contact with staff. This is a good indication that the quality of care that young people received when living in the home has had a lasting positive impact on them.

Children and young people are given good opportunities to voice their views and opinions on the running of the home with regular meetings and choices made around menus, personalisation of their room and activities. Children and young people are

also actively encouraged to share their views on their care plans, through key work sessions. Support offered to each child or young person is of a good standard and takes into account their views, wishes and feelings.

Children and young people are supported by staff to attend all their routine health appointments, as well as those with specialist health professionals, such as CAMHS and psychiatrists. As a result, their health needs are promoted to a good standard. In particular their emotional well-being is promoted very well.

Through the organisations independent school, children and young people achieve excellent levels of attendance. This is particularly noticeable considering their starting points when joining the home. The working practices between the home and the school are good, with daily liaison and communication focussed on the individual child or young person.

Children and young people are supported by members of staff to take part in numerous activities in the community. For example, they are supported to attend youth clubs, horse riding and swimming. This enables and encourages young people to be a part of their wider community. Members of staff have also taken children and young people on holidays. This gives them an opportunity to experience positive enriching activities, with chances to expand their network of friends.

Overall the home is well maintained and decorated to a good standard. There are some minor repairs required and a delay in action on these by the landlord of the premises is being addressed by the organisation through the acting manager and the responsible individual. Children and young people are encouraged to personalise their rooms with pictures and posters. This encourages them to have an investment in their home. The home provides a good quality environment with large gardens to the front and rear of the premises. This allows the children and young people to play actively outside the home under appropriate supervision. As a result they do not feel restricted or confined.

Keeping children and young people safe good

The home overall has rigorous systems, policies and procedures in place for staff to follow if young people go missing or are absent without permission. The safeguarding and child protection policy has been recently reviewed and re-written to deal with children at risk of child sexual exploitation; and to establish clear links to the children going missing policy.

Records show that staff work in partnership with local statutory agencies, particularly the police, to ensure there is a free flow of information and that young people are kept safe and remain safe. Although there were no children or young people in residence at the time of this inspection, key worker records clearly show the impact of debrief work with children and young people. As a result of this incidents of going

missing, and incidents of poor behaviours and restraints, have over time decreased.

The views, wishes and feelings of young people have also been recorded and signed by them, showing that they have engaged in this process and had a voice in their care and safety.

When incidents have occurred, they are well recorded in logs, with clear details of the event and the responses and actions made by staff at the time. The records show that staff work in partnership with police and health services following such incidents, through risk management meetings and further development of care plans to meet the young person's changing needs.

Staff employ good behaviour management techniques, through the use of praise and rewards. This approach helps young people to develop more self-control and learn more constructive ways of dealing with negative behaviour or stressful situations. Staff analyse which rewards and incentives work best to encourage young people to modify their behaviour. This flexibility enables young people to fully understand the implications of their behaviours and how they can also access rewards for positive change. This means that staff have a positive impact on behaviour management of young people most of the time and adopt the most effective methods.

Individual risk assessments and care plans reflect the personalised approach for each young person. This enables young people to reflect on their behaviour and the impact which it has on themselves and others. Staff also use this to review individual risk assessments and to inform care planning.

Staff use restraint, or holding young people only as a last resort and when absolutely necessary. The records of restraint are clear and concisely recorded. Appropriate medical and emotional debrief for young people and staff alike takes part as a post incident procedure and is appropriately recorded.

Staff manage young people's use of the internet and social media through the reward of additional time for the safe and responsible use of mobile telephones and social media. Direct contact young people have with friends, relatives and family members, via the home's telephone and during face to face visits, is satisfactorily, but not always directly, supervised.

Health and safety requirements are met. Checks of equipment are regularly carried out, with regular fire alarm tests which are not always announced in advance. Fire risk assessments are complete. This ensures that young people and staff are aware of procedures and kept safe.

There are very clear recruitment policies and procedures in place which are strictly adhered to. Written references received by the home in relation to prospective employees are checked verbally for their authenticity and any gaps in employment are discussed at the interview stage. Staff who are employed continue to be constantly monitored in their probationary period, and if found to be unsuitable are

dismissed. These systems help to safeguard the welfare of young people.

All staff in the home at the current time have been trained in child protection and safeguarding matters, this is now being further extended to specifically cover the risks of child sexual exploitation. New staff will be trained within appropriate time frames of their commencement of employment.

Leadership and management

good

The records show that team meetings are held on a weekly basis. These meetings reflect upon practice and the assessment of how children and young people benefit from their placement. This ensures that there is no complacency and that the young people's needs are reviewed and considered continuously by management and staff.

There is a robust and embedded monitoring process by the responsible individual, the acting manager and senior members of staff which reviews all areas set out in Regulation 34. These reviews assess the quality of care and recording and identify shortfalls and how they are to be rectified. Monitoring visits by an independent visitor also inform this and ensures that the home maintains good standards of care. These visits include meetings with the young people so that they voice their feelings and opinions. Reports written following the visits point out any shortfalls. The acting manager write specific and measurable action plans to tackle any shortfalls identified, these are then addressed through the wider organisation. This ensures accountability for a continuous cycle of improvement in practice and is promoting good outcomes for children and young people.

There is a comprehensive training matrix in place which has been recently re-developed by the responsible individual. Staff attend a variety of training, which is kept up-to-date and relevant to the needs of children and young people. As a result the staff are supported and enabled to develop their skills and knowledge.

The practice of staff members is also reviewed during annual appraisals and during monthly supervisions. Staff speak positively about the good level of day to day support they receive from managers and the quality of their supervision. Records of supervision are of good quality and contain details of staff performance and how they are delivering care for the young people. As a result of the support they receive, regular meetings and quality assurance processes, the staff team work cohesively and reflect upon their practice and how they can improve outcomes for the young people.

The wider organisation and the home are undergoing a recruitment drive at the current time. This is to ensure that staffing numbers can be increased to meet the needs of particularly vulnerable children and young people. This recruitment process is secure and stringently implemented. Underperformance or failure to reach the required standards is not tolerated by senior management.

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.