

SC390156

Registered provider: Pilgrims Corner Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

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

Inspection dates: 31 July to 1 August 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 15 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: declined in effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people are settled and make good progress.
- Staff know young people well and support them to develop.

- Young people are being prepared well for adult life.
- Managers and staff take action to safeguard young people and report any concerns to the relevant professionals.
- The manager has a good oversight of the service and is driving improvement.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Staff have not completed their mandatory training, or specific training to meet young people's individual needs.
- Staff have not followed procedures thoroughly when young people go missing.
- Sanction records do not contain all the required information.
- The statement of purpose does not accurately reflect the service currently provided.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
08/11/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Full	Good
22/09/2015	Interim	Sustained 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
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that staff: (2) (a) (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.	15/09/2017
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered persons must (2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.	15/09/2017
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16 (3) (a))	15/09/2017
The registered person must ensure that— (a) within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— (iii) the date, time and location of the use of the measure; (iv) a description of the measure and its duration; (vi) the name of the person who used the measure ("the user"), and of any other person present when the measure was used; (vii) the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and (b) within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")— (i) has spoken to the user about the measure; and (ii) has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and (c) within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3) (a) (iii) (iv) (vi) (vii) (b) (i) (ii) (c))	15/09/2017

Recommendations

- The registered persons must ensure that appropriate forms of contact should be promoted and facilitated for each child, including where appropriate visits to the child in the home; visits by the child to relatives and/or friends; letters, emails and texts; use of social media and other forms of contact via the internet. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.18)
- Children's home staff should take reasonable precautions and make informed professional judgements based on the individual child's needs and developmental-stage. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.7) In particular, do not lock spoons and forks away unless it is required by a young person's risk assessment.
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) In particular, ensure that risk assessments provide accurate information and do not unnecessarily compromise young people's privacy.
- The registered person must ensure that there is a workforce plan in place, which contains the information required by guidance. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.8)
- A child's bedroom should only be searched if the child has been informed or asked for their permission. Immediate searching may be necessary where there are reasonable grounds for believing that there is a risk to the child's or another person's safety or well-being. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.20)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The stable and supportive environment provided ensures that young people feel safe and settled, enabling them to sustain progress in all aspects of their lives.

Relationships between young people and staff are founded on mutual respect and trust; they enjoy exchanging humour and banter. Staff and young people work as a team to carry out tasks around the home, such as meal preparation and washing up. Consequently, young people feel valued, develop their confidence and benefit from the support staff offer.

Consistent support from the staff enables young people to trust staff and become accepting of their advice and guidance. Key-work sessions are used effectively to talk through pertinent issues and worries that a young person may have, as well as to reinforce boundaries and expectations. Young people are learning to reflect on their choices and behaviours, and as a result there has been a reduction in young people's risk-taking behaviours, including going missing and alcohol and substance misuse.

Young people are engaged in education. One young person has achieved a qualification in hospitality and is now considering other courses to enhance his future employment opportunities. In their free time, young people access a range of activities and staff promote young people's hobbies and interests. As a result, young people are able to try new things and widen their social experiences.

Planning for young people's transition to adulthood is a focus of the home. Staff recognise the importance of equipping young people with the skills they need to live independently. Young people are learning how to budget, access public transport and perform chores, such as cooking and laundry, by themselves. The manager is in the process of completing assessments on young people's skills and abilities to ensure that young people's targets are effective, and to prepare them for when they leave the home.

Staff promote young people's health needs to a good standard and recognise the importance of their emotional well-being. When necessary, staff have ensured that young people have access to specialist health services. Staff work closely with external professionals to meet young people's physical and emotional needs.

Young people receive sensitive guidance and support in maintaining contact with people who are important to them. This allows them to benefit from ongoing support from their family and friends as they reach independence.

Access to the internet is not readily available to young people. Currently, they must ask to use the computer in the staff's office, which may already be in use by staff. This prevents young people from accessing the internet for their studies and does not provide young people with privacy, when appropriate, to access emails or keep in contact with family or friends.

Current practice in the home is to lock away all cutlery, including forks and spoons. This practice is not required by young people's risk assessments and is not reflective of a homely environment.

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

Good safeguarding practice, underpinned by well-trained, knowledgeable staff and clear policies to follow, safeguards young people. The manager uses supervision to assess staff's understanding of their responsibilities regarding keeping the young people safe. Child protection concerns are shared with relevant professionals, including the designated officer, and records are rigorous, demonstrating that concerns have been effectively addressed to protect young people.

Clear procedures are in place to protect young people when they are online. Risk assessments identify the dangers that young people face when using the internet and social media. Staff work to the protocols in place to minimise the risks to young people. Staff regularly discuss the risks posed by the internet and social media with young

people, and this helps them to learn to keep themselves safe online.

Incidents of young people going missing from home have reduced since the previous inspection. When a missing incident occurs staff respond effectively; they search for the young person and inform the police. However, in some instances staff have not alerted police in the timeframe specified within the young person's individual protocols. Staff have also mistakenly recorded missing incidents as unauthorised absences. This hinders the manager's ability to analyse the effectiveness of the home's missing person procedures and the actions taken to safeguard the young people.

The effective risk management policy keeps young people safe, and it allows them to take appropriate levels of responsibility for themselves. It increases their confidence, and aids the development of their own sense of safety and understanding of danger. However, a minority of risk management strategies were insufficiently thought through. For example, one risk assessment advised staff to monitor all of a young person's phone calls. Discussions with the manager advised that this was not the case. As a result, staff may have unintentionally invaded the young person's privacy when it was not necessary.

Young people are beginning to reflect on the reasons for their behaviours, and develop more appropriate coping strategies. This has resulted in a reduction in young people's violent and aggressive outbursts. Generally, staff are able to defuse incidents before they escalate and, as a result, there has not been an incident requiring a physical intervention for over a year, and the use of sanctions is limited. Records of sanctions do not contain all the information required, such as staff debriefs, how long the sanction is in place for or the amount that should be paid for damages. These omissions reduce the manager's ability to monitor staff's accurate use of behaviour management strategies and assess whether these are safe and effective.

Room searches are regularly carried out. However, the reason for and outcome of these searches are not recorded. This hinders the manager's monitoring of the use of room searches, and whether they are being carried out appropriately.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The new manager has been in post since March 2017. She manages this home and its sister home next door. The manager has yet to submit an application to Ofsted to become registered manager. She is in the process of completing the required level 5 diploma.

Since coming into post, the manager has introduced new monitoring systems which have provided her with a good oversight of the home. She has a good knowledge of the young people and works closely with their placing authorities, challenging them when necessary to ensure that young people's needs are met.

Effective oversight of all aspects of the service has enabled the manager to identify the home's strengths and weaknesses. She has introduced new quality assurance tools and a development plan, which have been effective in driving improvement in the quality of

care provided. Monthly reports from an external visitor contribute to maintaining the good quality of care.

There has been one new member of staff employed since the previous inspection. A review of their file identified that recruitment procedures are sound, and pre-employment checks and verifications help to ensure that suitable staff are employed in the home.

The manager has taken action to ensure that staff have regular and effective supervision that supports their practice and professional development. Team meetings also provide effective support and are used as an arena to discuss individual young people and their needs and goals.

Previously, staff worked across two homes. The manager has taken action to ensure that members of staff are now allocated to just one home. These new arrangements have ensured that young people receive consistent support from staff who know them well.

The manager did not have a workforce development plan for the home, and one was not provided during the inspection. Consequently, the inspector was unable to evaluate if the organisation's workforce training strategy covers the information required by guidance.

Staff have not had the required training to ensure that they have the necessary up-to-date knowledge and skills to care for young people. Staff have not completed all their mandatory training and have not received training in areas such as substance misuse or sexually harmful behaviours, to inform their practice when supporting young people with these particular needs. The absence of sufficient training restricts the staff's ability to safeguard the young people and promote their well-being. Systems have been introduced to monitor staff's training, but these are yet to be embedded in order to improve practice.

The statement of purpose provides inaccurate information on many aspects of the service. As a result, young people, their families and professionals cannot be certain of precisely what the service provides.

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 differences 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: SC390156

Provision sub-type: 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: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Melissa McMillan, social care inspector

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