

SC392549

Registered provider: Duty of Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a private organisation and is registered for the care and accommodation of up to three children and/or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 June 2018

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

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

Date of last inspection: 10 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/10/2017	Full	Good
07/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	Good
22/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home, so they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

In particular, safeguarding should be a stand-alone agenda item recorded consistently in each supervision and in every team meeting.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people build trusted and secure relationships with the adults who look after them. Each young person is supported to develop skills and strategies to manage their own conflicts and difficulties. The staff team knows the young people well. This enables the staff team to respond to the individual needs of the young people in an effective way. This is further strengthened by detailed placement plans and risk assessments, which identify clear strategies to support the young people.

Young people are able to develop an appropriate sense of permanence and belonging. One young person will remain living in the home beyond his 18th birthday. He will be appropriately supported to move on in a planned and sensitive way. When young people leave the home, they continue to remain in contact. This demonstrates that young people value the relationships they have with the staff team.

Young people are supported to actively participate in day-to-day decisions about their lives. They are supported to move their care planning on in readiness for independent living. Nurturing responses make the young people feel safe and secure. They are open with the staff team about any concerns or anxieties. This enables situations to be resolved swiftly and offers reassurance to the young people.

There is evidence of consultation with the young people. There is a secure postbox in the kitchen for young people to make comments. There are regular house meetings to consult with the young people. Key-worker sessions are effective and are supported by individual placement plans. They detail the direct work undertaken with young people and reflect their views. Additionally, they evidence how young people are supported to make better choices.

Young people know how to complain if they need to. There have been two complaints since the last inspection. This demonstrates that young people feel confident that their

views will be listened to and acted upon.

Young people attend school or other educational provisions and attendance is good. Education attainment is well celebrated and supported by the staff. There is effective liaison with educational professionals. The manager advocates well on behalf of the young people to ensure that exclusions are not imposed on young people when behaviors have been disruptive. One young person currently struggling in school is provided with additional support. A member of the staff team is currently supporting him during the school day to help maintain his placement.

Activities within the local community are accessed and well planned. Additionally, the staff team plans trips with the young people as a group and on an individual basis. This enables the young people to spend quality time with the adults who care for them.

The staff team works well with other agencies to ensure that the holistic care needs of young people are met. They understand the importance of following 'Working Together' protocols. Professionals who have provided feedback are highly complimentary about the standards of care afforded to the young people. Additionally, a parent said, '[Name] is like a second mother to [name]. They have turned his life around.'

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

Highly effective planning for the behaviours of young people inside and outside the home manages and mitigates risk of harm. Even when young people have overnight-staying contacts away from the home, the staff team continues to monitor the welfare of young people. This ensures that consistency of safe care is provided.

Risks are well understood and are significantly reduced. This is because of the proactive and creative safeguarding practice in place. Young people have not been missing from the home since 2014. The manager ensures that the staff team does not become complacent in its practice and has introduced 'bite-sized' information and discussion sessions within team meetings. One of those sessions included the missing from home protocol.

Practice in the home is underpinned by a nurturing parenting model. The manager and staff team regularly consult with a consultant clinical psychologist to consider ways of responding to behaviours linked to attachment, trauma and anxieties. Group supervisions and consultations allow the staff team to be reflective and consider creative and alternative ways to respond to the young people's needs in a therapeutic way. Such strategies are effective at keeping young people safe, both physically and emotionally. The model of practice is not yet fully embedded but is developing. It has been effective and is making a difference to the lives of the young people.

The use of the internet is well monitored. Each young person has an individual risk assessment that identifies strategies to keep them safe while online. Young people understand the reasons for the staff team monitoring their use of the internet. This creates transparency and trust between the young people and the adults that care for

them.

Safeguarding is discussed in supervisions and team meetings. This is not consistently recorded. Adding safeguarding as a stand-alone agenda item to every meeting and supervision session would strengthen the home's safeguarding culture further.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The manager is appropriately qualified for the position. She is effective at implementing the home's statement of purpose. She is supported in her role by a staff team with varying skills and knowledge.

The manager demonstrates qualities of leadership, such as being inspirational, confident and ambitious for the young people in her care. She is highly influential in achieving positive outcomes for the young people. She is not afraid to challenge other professionals when decision-making is not always in the best interests of the young people. For example, she is currently challenging the decision for one young person to be transferred from a mainstream school into an alternative educational provision.

The manager leads by example and creates a culture of high aspiration and positivity. She is astute and able to tackle a range of issues assertively. For example, when there have been staffing issues, a supportive response is given. This is balanced with clear boundaries and expectations. The management of staffing issues has prevented any adverse impact on the young people.

The manager encourages the staff team to be creative and to think of ways to enhance the lives and experiences of young people. Rewards and incentives are effective and help young people make progress. One young person benefited from a holiday overseas. This opportunity allowed him to spend quality time with a member of staff. Another young person received driving lessons for his achievements.

The manager is innovative in her approach to taking improvements forward. She has embraced the nurturing parenting model and intends to further develop this by introducing the model within staff supervisions to strengthen and improve practice.

The manager has an excellent insight into the home's strengths and areas of development. She is already thinking of ways to improve life-story work and develop other areas of practice. For example, the home's recording system is complex. It is complicated by an excess of paperwork. This could be simplified without losing its substance or evidence. The manager is confident in her abilities to develop a more effective system that works for 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 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: SC392549

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: Duty of Care Limited

Registered provider address: 13 Front Street, Staindrop, Darlington, County Durham
DL2 3LZ

Responsible individual: David Heartfield

Registered manager: Susan Kells

Inspector

Jacqueline Tate, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: eepurl.com/iTrDn.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2018