

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	14/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC399586
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	First 4 Care Limited
Registered person address	313 Goodison Boulevard, DONCASTER, South Yorkshire, DN4 6TP

Responsible individual	Carolann Dodds
Registered manager	Vacant Post
Inspector	Nicola McEvinney

Inspection date	14/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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	Requires improvement

SC399586

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The young people continue to make significant progress in all areas of their lives.
- The young people are cared for by committed staff who have a good understanding of their highly individualised needs where they are thriving.
- One young person continues to develop their independence skills and travels independently to college.
- One young person's language skills has significantly improved enabling them to communicate effectively with staff.
- Both young people have excellent school or college attendance. One of them has exceeded their educational targets.

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 person may only employ an individual to work at the home if full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(3)(d)(Schedule 2. 3)) In Particular, Two written references, including a reference from the person's most recent employer	31/01/2016
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))	31/01/2016
The registered person must give notice in writing to HMCI, as soon as is reasonably practicable to do so, if a person other than the registered person carries on or manages the children's home or if a person ceases to carry on or manage the home. (Regulation 49(a)(b))	31/12/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home is registered to provide care for two children with learning difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/11/2014	Full	Adequate
28/02/2014	Interim	Good progress
16/04/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The boys have made significant progress; this has been made possible by the effective support and nurturing care provided by a committed staff team. A parent said, 'The support given to (name) at (name of home) is excellent.' Each of the boys have very differing needs. Staff ensure that their care plans and daily routines are in good detail to ensure that they are provided with individualised care. The level of detail in these plans and routines ensure that they have a consistency to their care which provides stability. The boys enjoy warm nurturing relationships with the staff. One of them said, 'Things are good here, there is always someone I can talk to, I trust them.' It is very apparent that the boys also get on well with one another. For example, on arrival back from college the first port of call was to go and speak to the other boy in a warm and affectionate manner. Staff likened their relationship to, 'They are like brothers.' The boys continue to make good progress with their education. One school reported that he is exceeding his expected targets. School report that he will move around the classroom and is becoming more attentive. His vocabulary is increasing and he has the ability to approach staff and make his wishes known. He previously would spend a lot of time in his room playing on his computer. An iPad was sourced for him and he now uses this in the company of staff and interacts well whilst using this equipment. However, the time spent on his iPad is time limited to ensure that he participates in other activities in the home. The other young person continues to do well at college, he also has a work experience placement which helps to develop his social skills further. At college he was involved in making a video of a conference and was given an award for his participation. His understanding and knowledge of technology has impressed the staff team who on occasion will seek his advice. This impacts positively on his self-esteem and enhances his life opportunities. The boys' health needs are well met and there is clear progress in how their health needs are managed. Epilepsy protocols advise staff about what action to take in the event of one of them having a seizure. Advice was sought from the specialist epilepsy nurse who recommended equipment to support the young person at night. This ensures appropriate action is taken if necessary. This young person is now managing his own personal hygiene which promotes his dignity. He has a limited diet but staff work hard in trying to introduce new foods. He now will eat away from the home and they have replaced a high sugar content drink with a low	

calorific one. This is quite an achievement and promotes his health. The other young person now self-medicates his daytime medication. This enhances his independence which impacts on his self-confidence.

Staff work hard to ascertain the wishes and feelings of both the boys. Whilst one is quite vocal and is confident in sharing his views; the other has limited verbal speech but is able to make staff aware of his wishes. He moves around the home with confidence approaching staff to ask for what he wants. Parents are very involved in the care of their children and there is good liaison. One of the boys chose his bedroom wallpaper and is involved in menu planning.

The boys enjoy living in this well-maintained home providing a homely environment. It is very child friendly with easy access to their toys. One of the boys who would not tolerate anything but fixed furniture and bare walls in their bedroom now has a colourful, age appropriate wall-papered bedroom with some items around his room. Both boys enjoy a range of activities, some together and some apart. For example, they go trampolining, visits to the coast, the circus, regular walks, and visits to a local park. They have visited London and other closer city museums. Staff record a daily diary for each of the boys. This is a useful record of how they have spent their time in the home and is particularly important should they or their family wish to access their records in later life. Needs relating to religion are respected and the home celebrates Eid as well as Christmas.

The use of public transport has made a significant positive impact on the social development of one of the boys. He travels independently to college which also promotes his confidence. He maintains his personal space, makes his bed and will also vacuum the upstairs of the home. These are all skills that he will need in adulthood which are being learnt in a safe and nurturing environment.

Parents feel reassured by the regular contact they have with the home. One of the boys is having a shared care arrangement and therefore there is frequent contact with his parent. The father of the other young person is phoned on a daily basis to update on the progress of his son.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement
Both the boys are safe. One verbalises that he feels safe and a parent states, 'I have no issues with regards to safeguarding at all and (name's) welfare is promoted in varying ways.' However, the lack of robust recruitment practices has the potential to compromise this safety. Nonetheless telephone enquiries assures the suitability of the most recent recruit.	

Staff have a good awareness of safeguarding issues and also matters relating to young people's emerging sexual development. Staff are vigilant in only allowing age appropriate computer games and films to be accessed. Neither of the boys go missing and there are no child sexual exploitation (CSE) concerns. However, staff have been booked on CSE training to further enhance their knowledge.

The boys are safeguarded by the adherence to detailed risk assessments. These identify potential dangers with strategies to support staff to minimise the risk.

The boys' behaviours are well managed whilst in the home. They respond to the consistent boundaries that are imposed, which provides for a happy and stable environment. A number of sanctions are recorded but in the main these relate to behaviours that are presented during home visits where parents impose a sanction.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
There has been some significant changes to the management of the home over recent months. The Registered Manager left the home in September and a new manager commenced working on the first day of this inspection. However, Ofsted was not notified of the departure of the Registered Manager or the recruitment of a new manager as required by regulation. The new manager has extensive management experience working with children and is appropriately qualified. She is yet to register with Ofsted. She brings with her a wealth of knowledge and experience to the home. Despite no manager being in post the deputy has fulfilled the leadership role. The staff have continued to put the boys at the centre of their practice providing a good standard of care where they have both progressed. A parent stated, '(name of deputy) in particular is an amazing asset to the home and ensures (name) is safe and well at all times.' The boys benefit from being cared for a stable core staff team. The deputy has continued to provide effective supervision to the staff team who have good training opportunities. All have either attained the level 3 diploma or are near to completion. This ensures that the boys are cared for by staff who are suitably trained. The previous Registered Manager had effective monitoring systems in place. There is good consultation with stakeholders who consider that the home provides a	

good standard of care. The Regulation 44 visitor undertakes an in-depth monitoring of the systems and home's records, but does not always consult with parents. Neither does she state her opinion as to whether the boys are safeguarded and their welfare is promoted, as required by regulation.

The newly appointed manager has yet to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the home from which she can formulate a development plan. The Statement of Purpose is a comprehensive document which clearly sets out what services the home has to offer.

The home enjoys effective working relationships with other professionals. For example, the epilepsy nurse offers support and guidance. The home produces regular updates for social workers to ensure they are kept informed of the progress of the boys. They benefit from the good relationships that staff have with their parents who on occasion will request staff to help manage some of the challenging behaviours presented whilst on home visits. The staff have been in the forefront in effecting change in some of the developments and progress made by their children. The staff liaise closely with social workers to support parents to implement these developments when the children are in their care.

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 looked after children 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 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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