

## Children's homes – Interim inspection

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|------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b>             | <b>14/02/2017</b>                                    |
| <b>Unique reference number</b>     | <b>SC399586</b>                                      |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>          | <b>Interim</b>                                       |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>           | <b>Children's home</b>                               |
| <b>Registered provider</b>         | <b>First 4 Care</b>                                  |
| <b>Registered provider address</b> | <b>313 Goodison Boulevard,<br/>Doncaster DN4 6TP</b> |

|                               |                        |
|-------------------------------|------------------------|
| <b>Responsible individual</b> | <b>Carolann Dodds</b>  |
| <b>Registered manager</b>     | <b>Samantha Miller</b> |
| <b>Inspector</b>              | <b>Tina Ruffles</b>    |

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| <b>Inspection date</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            | <b>14/02/2017</b> |
| <b>Previous inspection judgement</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | <b>Good</b>       |
| <b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | <b>None</b>       |
| <b>This inspection</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |                   |
| <p><b>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</b></p> <p>This home was judged <b>good</b> at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has <b>sustained effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>Young people continue to make progress. They are settled and have good relationships with staff. Those who do not adapt well to change benefit from consistent and predictable care. This provides stability and they feel safe. Staff identify when young people are low in mood due to their in-depth knowledge and understanding of them. Close working with clinical professionals provides a prompt response. This stops a further deterioration in young people's emotional well-being. Although staff know young people well and understand their requests, those with limited speech would benefit from staff using communication tools. Development of this form of communication would enable young people to express fully their views, wishes and feelings about their care.</p> <p>Staff meet young people's health needs by carefully preparing them for appointments. Young people's confidence increases, leading to reduced anxieties. They consent to accessing medical and dental treatment. Immunisations are up to date to ensure that young people are protected from diseases. Young people consult with medical professionals, and medication is reduced as they learn to self-regulate their behaviours. This helps with concentration levels, particularly with one young person who is learning to drive. Staff encourage young people to self-medicate to give them more control over their lives, but reminders are sometimes necessary, particularly for early morning medication.</p> <p>Young people have good attendance at school and college, and meet their educational targets. They benefit from the interaction with peers to improve their social skills. Young people travel independently to and from college. Staff support them to gain the skills needed, and young people experience the same freedom as their peers. This raises their self-esteem and they benefit from an increased level of responsibility. Young people learn self-protection skills and then have the confidence to deal with emergencies such as a friend feeling unwell on the journey home.</p> <p>Staff provide safe structures to keep young people safe. They do not go missing and are not at risk of sexual exploitation. Staff know young people's vulnerabilities, which are clearly outlined in their individual risk assessments. Negative behaviour</p> |                   |

has reduced and staff have good de-escalation skills, knowing what strategies to use with young people. Consequences are clear and consistent as any deviation results in confusion for young people.

Staff monitor and restrict young people's use of the internet and the time they spend on computer games to provide them with a healthy balance. This also provides protection from online abuse. This measure was introduced as staff noted that young people were failing to eat, becoming aggressive and experiencing sleep disturbance. Staff now take young people out and involve them in physical activities in the community. This provides many health benefits; young people become fit and active and have new enjoyable experiences.

Staff have developed good relationships with family members who visit young people at the home. Parents feel involved in their children's lives. Parents provide staff with important information about young people's cultural needs, particularly as they get older and their needs change. Staff offer support during contact if a young person's behaviour deteriorates. Family members can change contact arrangements if they have other commitments. Staff's flexibility allows contact sessions to be rearranged so that young people do not get distressed through missing contact sessions with their families.

The home's points reward system encourages young people to work on their daily living tasks. Their participation leads to an increase in knowledge needed to live independently. Young people feel more confident in applying newly learned skills, and gain an understanding of community-based services. They also benefit from the reward of going with staff to theatre productions of their choice. Staff recognise that this work is a vital part of the transition involved in moving young people to adult services. However, a delay in planning by the placing authority has not been challenged. This leaves some young people without a carefully planned move and leads to them experiencing unnecessary anxiety and frustration.

The registered manager has taken a planned absence. Prior to leaving, she met the requirement and some of the recommendations from the last inspection. As the period of absence will be over 90 days, an interim manager was in post by the time the absence began. This allowed for a significant period of mentoring resulting in a proper transition from one manager to another. The interim manager has only been in post for a few weeks, so is slowly taking over the role of managing the home, including the monitoring of care plans. Some of these reviewed plans need signing by the manager and staff to indicate that they have read and understood the changes. This will ensure consistent practice.

There have been improvements to the main areas of the home to provide comfortable living conditions for young people. However, it has taken many months for a bedroom to be redecorated and this work is still not complete. Damage in the home is not promptly repaired. This does not create a homely environment for young people.

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two children or young people who have a diagnosable learning disability or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is operated by a private company.

## Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement    |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 09/08/2016      | Full            | Good                    |
| 15/03/2016      | Interim         | Sustained effectiveness |
| 14/12/2015      | Full            | Good                    |
| 09/03/2015      | Interim         | Improved effectiveness  |

## 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 within the given timescales.

| Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | Due date   |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| <p>5: Engaging with the wider system standard</p> <p>In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, in respect of the delay in young people's pathway planning:<br/>(5)(c) If the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans.</p> | 15/03/2017 |
| <p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard with particular reference to decorating a young person's bedroom and completing repairs in a timely way, the registered person must:<br/>(2)(c) Ensure that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed and furnished so as<br/>(i) to meet the needs of each child.</p>                                                                                                                       | 15/03/2017 |

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Children who cannot or choose not to verbalise, have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings heard and respected in the same way as other children. There may be children whose abilities and understanding are such that regulations 7(2)(a)(iv), (b)(i) and (c) will need interpretation according to their individual circumstances in consultation with their social worker. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24)
- All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's

homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

## **What the inspection judgements mean**

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

## **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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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