

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	22/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC402385
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Simon Dyke
Inspector	Suzanne Young

Inspection date	22/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
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	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC402385

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff are sensitive to the needs of young people and work hard to develop respectful relationships with them.
- Staff listen to young people and take their views into account.
- Young people are supported well in education. The majority of young people have sat GCSE's and are progressing well with their learning.
- Staff promote positive behaviour which has resulted in young people's behaviour significantly improving and levels of risk-taking decreasing.
- Staff rarely physical restrain young people.
- Staff work well with young people to promote independence and develop the skills and confidence they need in adulthood.
- Young people's living accommodation is spacious, warm and comfortable.
- There are some shortfalls with regard to leadership and management of the home. The home does not have effective management support when the registered manager is not available.
- Staff do not effectively challenge other professionals to ensure all young people have up to date information available to them.
- Management monitoring is not effective as patterns and trends in young people's behaviour are not identified in order to improve the quality of care.
- Staff have not been actively supported by the organisation to obtain the required professional qualifications required to care for young people.
- Young people's meetings and key worker sessions are not taking place regularly.
- The children's guide is not age-appropriate and is not specific to the home.
- Young people do not know how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner for advice and assistance about their rights and entitlements.

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
5. Engaging with the wider system to ensure each child's needs are met standard. In order to engage with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met the registered person must ensure that staff:- (c) challenge the placing authority to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; (d) develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.	08/09/2015
7. The children's views, wishes and feeling standard In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard the registered person must ensure that staff:- (1) (b) Engage with them; and (c) take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters children's care and welfare and their lives.	08/09/2015
13. The leadership and management standard. In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must ensure that staff:- (2)(c) have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of the care provided in the home.	08/09/2015

Recommendations

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

Ensure that young people are informed of how to contact the Office of the Children's Commissioner for advice and assistance about their rights and entitlements (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 23, paragraph 4.19)

Ensure the children's guide is age appropriate and help young people understand the day to day routines and Statement of Purpose of the home (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 24, paragraph 4.21 & 4.22)

Ensure there are clear lines of accountability when the manager is absent. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 54, paragraph 10.20)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home accommodates up to five young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. It is run by a private company.

The home's Statement of Purpose indicates that the age range will be between 14 and 19 years of age.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/09/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
23/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
22/07/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people are able to identify members of staff with whom they can build secure relationships. As a result, they are able to develop a sense of belonging. They know who they can turn to and how to complain. Staff are sensitive to the needs of young people and work hard to develop respectful relationships with them. They spend time with them and encourage them to take part in activities in the local community. This includes shopping, going to the cinema and playing pool. Over recent months this has had a positive effect on young people's self-esteem and confidence. One placing social worker commented, 'staff have a good insight into her needs which is making the placement a success.' Young people actively participate in day-to-day decisions about their lives. Staff listen to young people and take their views into account. For instance, staff are supporting one young person in her wish for a dog and have helped her to put together a proposal to senior management. Formal consultation with young people, however, is not taking place as regular as it should because key worker sessions and young people's house meetings are not taking place on a regular basis. All young people currently living in the home are above statutory school age. The majority attend the company's own school. During recent months their attendance at school has improved considerably and two young people have recently sat GCSE's. One young person has been supported with an independent teacher three days a week at her own request. All young people are encouraged to develop the skills they will need when living independently in adulthood. The home has a structured independent skills programme which staff work through with young people depending on their age and ability. Staff encourage young people to have effective and positive relationships with their family and friends. They support young people in having regular contact with their families by regularly transporting them to and from contact. Young people's living accommodation is spacious and appropriate. A programme of redecoration is currently in place although completion has been slow due to the lack of available maintenance staff. The décor inside and outside of the home has recently been repainted and looks bright and comfortable. The kitchen was damaged several months ago and a new one is on order. The home feels warm	

and reflects young people personalities. Young people can personalise their own bedrooms and have significantly contributed to the refurbishment of furnishings and decor of the communal areas in the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Over the last few months there has been a significant improvement in young people's behaviour. Young people do not run away and they do not regularly engage in drug or alcohol misuse. When concerns arise regarding young people's welfare, staff act appropriately to safeguard them. Incidents involving the police have significantly decreased over this period. This is largely because the dynamics of the young people within the home have changed. Young people feel safe living in the home. They are aware of how to make complaints and can identify members of staff to talk to if they have any concerns. Staff promote positive behaviour. They help young people to learn strategies to enable them to manage their emotions. One placing social worker stated, 'the staff have good knowledge of young people's behaviour,' As a result, young people's behaviour has significantly improved since arriving at the home. Those who previously engaged in risk-taking and aggressive behaviour have not continued to do so. This means staff rarely physically restrain young people. The manager has worked hard to ensure that all risk assessments and behaviour management plans are regularly updated and reviewed. This ensures any risks associated with young people's behaviours are well known by the manager and staff. The home is physically safe and secure. This is because regular environment and health and safety checks are completed. Fire evacuations take place regularly so all staff and young people know how to keep themselves safe if there were to be a fire. There is a careful rigorous selection process for all new staff working in the home to ensure they are suitable to work with young people. Visitors are supervised and monitored appropriately to ensure young people are safeguarded.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
The home is led by an experienced registered manager who has managed the home since 2012. He is in the process of completing his level five qualification in care management. The home is adequately resourced and the staff team is relatively stable. Young people generally experience continuity and consistency of care although on one team there has been several changes in members of staff over the last year. Since the last inspection the home experienced a period where young people were unsettled and caused significant damage to the home. The registered manager was off work ill during this time and staff struggled to cope with young people's behaviour. The home does not have a deputy manager. Other managers from the organisation provide temporary management cover while the manager is away from work. During the registered manager's prolonged absence processes and procedures were not followed resulting in young people's placement plans and risk assessments not being regularly updated. The independent visitor and the organisation's quality assurance processes promptly identified shortfalls and put actions in place to improve the working of the home. The manager since returning to the home has worked hard to rectify these shortfalls. The manager and staff acknowledge this was a difficult time but feel things have much improved. Staff feel well supported by the registered manager and a regular programme of supervision is in place. One member of staff commented, 'I enjoy working at the home.' Another stated, 'good support, Simon is an approachable guy.' Not all members of staff, however, are adequately qualified to the required level. Over the last 12 months two members of staff have had difficulties accessing the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare. This has recently been rectified and all staff have now been enrolled on this course. A programme of training for staff has also been implemented which enhances mandatory training and helps ensure the staff team deliver good quality of care to young people. Young people's needs are at the heart of the home's practice. However, monitoring their progress to identify patterns and trends in behaviour to improve the quality of care in the home is not yet robust. The manager has recently developed a new system of auditing to enable him to effectively evaluate care and identify strengths and areas of improvement. The manager and staff work in partnership and communicate regularly with placing social workers and families. This is not always effective as they do not challenge young people's social workers to ensure young people's 'looked after' review minutes are promptly sent to the home. As a result, staff may not be fully aware changes regarding young people's care plans. Similarly, the manager has a location risk assessment for the home that has not been developed in consultation with	

police or other professionals in the area to determine crime statistics and areas of risk. As a result, this is not wholly effective.

The home has a statement of purpose which accurately sets out the home's operation and ethos. Young people have access to a children's guide called a 'welcome pack'. This however is not age-appropriate and is not specific to the home. As a result, young people do not fully know what to expect from the home. Young people are also not made aware of how to contact the Office of Children's Commissioner for advice and assistance about their rights and entitlements.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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

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