

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC411030
Inspector	Ceri Evans
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Meadows Care Limited
Registered person address	Egerton House Wardle Road ROCHDALE Lancashire OL12 9EN
Responsible individual	Niel David Shelmerdine
Registered manager	Vicky Allen
Date of last inspection	11/03/2014

Inspection date	23/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people enjoy excellent quality of care and live in a safe, stable and nurturing environment. They are very well cared for by a consistent and competent staff team who have extremely positive relationship with them. This promotes trust and respect, and helps young people develop good attachments. Parents and stakeholders comment highly about the quality of care. One professional stated 'the support offered to young people is amazing; staff are brilliant and are extremely proactive'. This further demonstrates the high standard of care young people receive.

Staff are dedicated to their role and demonstrate real commitment to ensuring that young people meet their full potential. They demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practices and work effectively with other professionals to ensure that young people receive optimum safety and protection at all times.

Young people benefit from effective management in the home. The manager is driven to develop the service and places the welfare and safety of young people at the heart of her practice. Good management oversight ensures that the majority of shortfalls are identified and acted upon. Nevertheless, areas for improvement have been identified as part of this inspection. These relate to record keeping and ensuring that Ofsted receive all notifications in relation to significant events.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately run and registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/03/2014	Interim	good progress
19/11/2013	Full	good
20/12/2012	Interim	good progress
19/07/2012	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
30 (2001)	ensure that if any of the events listed in column 1 of the table in Schedule 5 takes place, the registered person shall without delay notify the persons indicated in respect of the event in column 2 of the table (Regulation 30(1))	17/12/2014

Recommendations

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

- there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record

keeping and take action when needed. (NMS 22.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people benefit enormously from the supportive and nurturing care they receive from staff. Relationships are extremely positive with young people sharing good attachments with their care givers. One young person commented 'I get on with staff, this home is much better than the other homes I've lived in'. This demonstrates that young people are settled, happy and are growing in confidence.

Young people's schooling is highly valued by staff and engagement in daily education is expected and promoted. For example, staff ensure that firm routines are established from the onset of placement. This has had a significant impact on young people and they are now engaging in full time education. Consequently, they are more likely to achieve better prospects in adulthood and have a greater sense of achievement due to their education successes.

Young people have good access to a range of health services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services, drug and alcohol services and visits from the Looked After Children's Nurse. Staff provide young people with good information and advice on a range of health issues such as dangers of smoking, substance misuses and the importance of exercise and healthy eating. This ensures that young people's physical and psychological health needs are met.

Contact arrangements are safe, well organised and appropriately supervised by staff. Staff work closely with families to help build relationships and ensure that young people enjoy meaningful contact. For example, staff facilitate contact in young people's local areas and support families when they visit the home. As a result, young people enjoy improved relationships and have a positive sense of belonging and identity.

Young people are active participants in the home and the community. They engage in a range of leisure activities, such as singing lessons, playing football and day trips out to places of interest. Emphasis is placed on identifying purposeful activities which enable young people to develop greater confidence and social skills as well as enabling them to pursue their individual interest and talents.

Young people have a clear voice within the home and their views and opinions are actively encouraged by staff. They have a purposeful input and express their opinions about a range of topics such as, menu planning, activity choices, personalised rewards and making decisions about the décor of their bedrooms. Consequently, young people enjoy a greater control over their lives which has had a positive impact on their self-esteem.

The home has an effective life skills package which young people work through prior

to leaving the home to ensure they have the necessary skills to live independently. Young people learn how to cook, prepare meals, save money and budget. This means that they will be better equipped on an emotional and practical level when they leave care.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people benefit from living in a nurturing and supportive environment. They are cared for by staff who are highly motivated, enthusiastic and clearly committed to helping young people meet their full potential. Staff are warm, welcoming and display genuine affection. One young person stated 'I'd rate staff as outstanding, they are brilliant'. This further demonstrates that relationships are exceptionally strong and young people enjoy meaningful and trusting relationships with staff.

Care planning is undertaken in conjunction with parents, social workers and other key professionals. Staff work effectively as part of a multi-disciplinary team to ensure young people's holistic needs are met. Placement plans are individualised and provide an excellent overview of young people's needs, behaviours and known risk. The manager ensures that all plans are regularly reviewed and updated and any changes are communicated to the team. This demonstrates that safety and welfare of young people is given optimum priority.

Staff are consistent in supporting young people's education and maintain close liaison with education providers to ensure their needs are fully met. Staff have worked hard to help young people overcome barriers and engage in learning. For example, they have supported young people in the classroom and provide them with a range of extra-curricular learning opportunities within the home. As a result, young people are more confident and achieving improved outcomes.

Staff show a great interest in young people's progress and they are praised and rewarded for their achievements. For example, staff regularly complete 'achievement footprints' to illustrate young people's successes, which are proudly displayed around the home. This helps young people to understand that staff take an interest in what they do and want the very best for them.

Young people significantly influence the running of the home. They express their views and opinions in a variety of ways, such as regular key worker sessions, young people supervision and monthly meetings. As a result, young people feel valued, respected and listened to.

Young people benefit from living in a warm and comfortable home. The home is well decorated, pleasantly furnished and homely. It is conveniently located and close to community facilities such as shops and leisure facilities. The atmosphere is extremely welcoming and friendly.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people say they feel safe, secure and well cared for. They are protected from harm by a committed staff group who demonstrate a thorough understanding of the needs of young people. Staff are not overwhelmed when young people occasionally place themselves at risk and take immediate appropriate action to ensure their safety. Staff respond effectively to incidents and are attuned to warning signs, triggers or changes in behaviours that may indicate potential harm. For example, concerns in relation to missing from home and child sexual exploitation are acted upon immediately. This demonstrates the homes commitment to keeping young people safe.

The home has a comprehensive safeguarding policy which is fully implemented in practice by staff. Policies and procedures are held on a central database which can be accessed by staff on the office computer. The protection and safety of young people are regularly discussed in supervision, handovers, team meetings and individual sessions. As a result, staff are confident, skilful and demonstrate excellent knowledge of safeguarding practices which further protect young people from harm.

Young people are encouraged to self-regulate their emotions through reflection, project work and individual keyworker session. As a result, young people are more able to take responsibility and understand the impact negative behaviour can have upon themselves and others. Positive behaviour is rewarded and sanctions help young people learn that socially acceptable behaviour can lead to improved prospects. Young people confirm they have not been physically restrained at this home and comment that staff use de-escalation methods to help them modify their behaviour. This further demonstrates that staff give the safety and well-being of young people the highest priority at all times.

The home has excellent working relationships with the police, the missing from home coordinator and safeguarding agencies. External agencies confirmed that the home maintain regular contact with them and are pro-active in seeking advice when needed. One professional stated 'the home has excellent safeguarding practices; they are extremely pro-active and ensure relevant people are consulted with and kept informed'. This demonstrates a collaborative approach to safeguarding which further protects young people from harm.

The home has a stable staff team and safe recruitment systems ensure that staff are carefully selected and vetted prior to starting work. Visitors are checked and appropriately monitored. This helps prevent unsuitable people from having contact with vulnerable young people.

Young people live in a safe environment and are protected from hazards by effective health and safety procedures. Regular check and risk assessments are routinely

carries out. Young people and staff take part in regular fire drills to ensure they know how to safely evacuate the home in case of an emergency.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager achieved registration with Ofsted in 2011 and has been the Registered Manager of this home since April 2014. She holds the relevant qualification and has been employed by the provider for over 7 years. The manager demonstrated a strong commitment to young people in her care.

The Registered manager has high standards and aims to continually improve the service. No recommendations or requirements were made at the last inspection. However, the manager has continually driven the service forward to help improve outcomes for young people. For example, the manager has implemented '3D supervisions' whereby young people contribute their views about staff which is fed into supervisions and their annual appraisal. This means that young people have a greater say in the care they receive.

Young people benefit from being cared for by staff who are enthusiastic and committed to helping them succeed in life. The home is well resourced and employs a sufficient number of qualified, knowledgeable and motivated staff who are very supportive of young people. The manager ensures that the team are supported, supervised and attend training events which aids their development. Consequently, young people are cared for by skilled and competent staff.

The Registered Manager makes good use of monitoring and quality assurance systems which focus on improved outcomes for young people. Monthly reports provide a detailed overview of the homes progress and identify areas for improvement. Consultation and feedback forms have been developed to ensure that young people, parents and social workers influence the progress of the home. This demonstrates the managers' commitment to driving the service forward in order to help improve outcomes for young people.

The manager notifies the local authority and parents when significant events occur. However, there has been at least one incident when the manager failed to notify Ofsted of an incident. This hinders the regulator from effectively carrying out its safeguarding responsibilities to ensure that young people are protected from harm.

The quality of record keeping in the home is good. However, there have been some minor oversights. These relate to minor errors in the Statement of Purpose and two missing from home entries in the log book did not include the relevant details. These shortfalls have not impacted negatively on the welfare of young people.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.