

SC411030

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for three children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home forms part of a large social care company.

Inspection date: 24 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 20 June 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, two young people have left the home. One young person benefited from a thorough transition to a foster care placement and has settled in well. The other young person moved on following a significant increase in risk-taking behaviour. Staff endeavoured to keep him and the other young people safe and worked in partnership with the police, social workers and specialist services to maintain the young person's safety. However, despite the best efforts of staff, the manager identified that they were no longer meeting the young person's needs and an alternative provision was identified.

Currently, the young people at the home are settled and making positive progress. One young person has been admitted since the last full inspection. Good consideration has been given to the admission and matching process. Young people share good relationships with each other and staff, and speak positively about their experiences in the home.

Education attendance and attainment for the young people has improved. Young people are making good progress and are on the right track to achieve successful outcomes. The registered manager and the staff team continue to have regular meetings and, in some instances, daily communication with education provisions to support young people. Most young people, to their credit, are ambitious and want to do well. One young person said: 'Staff have helped me with my education and things are going well. I'm now going in every day and I'm working towards going back into mainstream school.'

Young people are well supported to maintain contact with those who are significant to them. Staff support young people with their contact arrangements and maintain and develop appropriate friendship groups. As a result, young people continue to benefit from increased contact with important people in their lives.

In response to a previous recommendation, the registered manager has improved the quality of information within risk assessments, which are now clear, detailed and regularly updated. Staff are completely aware of potential risks and understand how to prevent them. Changes in behaviour and emerging risks are quickly identified and routinely shared among the staff team and other professionals. This effective collaboration and risk management helps to maintain young people's safety.

Following the departure of some young people, episodes of going missing from home have decreased. There is generally a robust approach to managing missing from home episodes. Records show that staff follow young people, sometimes for considerable periods of time, and try and persuade them to return. When they lose sight of the young people, staff consistently notify the police in accordance with agreed reporting protocols. Staff make every effort to understand and break this pattern of behaviour. For most young people, this has been successful. One young person said: 'I just don't feel the need to go missing anymore. I'm not getting in trouble and I know staff care for me. I'm just a lot happier now.'

Young people benefit from clear and consistent behaviour management strategies. Young people are encouraged to behave in a manner that is acceptable and safe for them and others. Incidents of challenging behaviour are now becoming less frequent because staff are managing young people's stresses well.

Staff are supportive and are skilful in supporting the young people to develop their self-esteem. They encourage young people to try new things and develop interests. Current pastimes include going to the gym, boxing and trampolining. Young people improve their confidence, talents and social skills from the positive social lives that they lead.

This is an effectively managed home. The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced and provides the home with visible leadership, which promotes good quality of care and positive outcomes for young people. He maintains a thorough oversight of care practices and has an understanding of the individual needs of the young people accommodated in the home. The registered manager has an in-depth understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and makes good use of his development plan, which is being effectively implemented. This enables him to develop the service for the benefit of young people.

The registered manager ensures that the suspicion of unsafe practice is investigated

promptly, fairly and supports both the young person and member of staff involved. Since the full inspection, one internal safeguarding investigation has been carried out. The registered manager liaised appropriately with the designated officer and placing social workers to ensure that the matter was thoroughly addressed. However, the registered manager has not utilised the investigation process to identify development needs and thoroughly evaluate where improvements could be made. Additionally, the investigation records lack clarity in relation to the outcome. This does not assist reflection and aid future learning.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/06/2017	Full	Good
16/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement
04/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- The home's record of the event must include a description of the action taken and outcome of any resulting investigation. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.14). This is with particular reference to the internal investigation records. These must provide an account of the investigation and clearly identify the outcomes, and include an overall evaluation from the investigating officer.

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.

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.

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: SC411030

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Meadows Care Ltd

Registered provider address: Meadows Care Ltd, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale OL12 9EN

Responsible individual: Karen Brandon

Registered manager: Daniel Blackburn

Inspector

Ceri Evans, social care inspector

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