

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC413078
Inspector	Katarina Djordjevic
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Castle Homes Care Limited
Registered person address	Castle Homes Care Ltd, The Manor House High Street, Rothwell KETTERING Northamptonshire NN14 6BQ
Responsible individual	Lee Aaron Jones
Registered manager	Kelly Ann Watson
Date of last inspection	10/12/2014

Inspection date	09/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

At the full inspection the home was judged as good; no requirements or recommendations were made. The staff team, ably led by the Registered Manager have continued in their commitment to improve the standard of care for young people. A number of new developments have been introduced since the last inspection which have benefited young people. As a result, the home is judged as having improved its effectiveness.

Young people continue to make good progress in all areas of their lives; they are very happy and settled at the home. This is because they have open and trusting relationships with staff, who are totally committed to improving young people's life opportunities. Collaborative working with parents, carers and relevant professionals enables staff to ensure young people's needs are met. An independent reviewing officer (IRO) commented that staff are excellent at communicating with parents and professionals and 'working together is prioritised' by the staff team.

Comments received (in the home's quality questionnaires) from a range of placing authority professionals are very positive about the care and support provided. One commissioning officer commented that the young person has made excellent progress since living at the home. A social worker commented: 'The quality of both the environment and the care provided matches and also exceeds that of other homes I have placed young people in.'

Young people take an active part in the running of the home and in planning their future lives. As a result, young people's self-esteem has improved and they are growing in confidence. An IRO commented that they 'feel that the care of the young person is of a high standard due to the fact that the home's staff have a good balance of listening to the young person and ensuring adult decisions that inform best interest decisions.'

Some young people whose behaviour has been extremely challenging in the past have made good progress in improving their behaviours. This is because they are clear about what is expected of them; the staff team works consistently in applying boundaries and young people are learning to understand about the impact their behaviours have on their lives as well as on the lives of others. Staff also work closely with other professionals such as the police in a restorative manner. For example, police visit young people to discuss issues such as bullying and the possible consequences of unacceptable behaviours. Additionally, staff keep other relevant professionals such as Youth Offending Team workers up to date of any behavioural incidents, which informs young people's work programmes. These improvements in behaviour mean young people are safer and are also able to take a more active part in the wider community.

Young people's safety also improves as they rarely go missing now. This also means they are not engaging in criminal activities or behaviours which affect their health, such as substance misuse.

Staff have increased their knowledge and awareness of child sexual exploitation. A senior member of the staff team has attended an external training course on child sexual exploitation run by an external organisation. The staff member has presented the training to the staff team which staff reported was very beneficial. This helps to further protect young people from the risk of harm and abuse.

Some young people's opportunities to engage in a range of activities based on individualised needs and interests have increased substantially. This is mainly due to their improved behaviour and increased confidence and social skills. Young people have been go-karting, to car boot sales, to golf driving ranges and to some of the social events for other young people living in children's homes organised by the registered provider. As a result, young people have also made friends who they have invited to the home. This is real progress for some young people. Young people who had a range of interests prior to moving into the home have been supported by staff in continuing to access various activities as well as trying new ones.

Young people continue to make good progress in their education; their attendance remains very good. This is significant progress for some young people and their achievements have recently been recognised and rewarded. This helps to increase young people's confidence and acts as a motivator to continue working hard.

The promotion of equality and diversity is a priority at the home. Day-to-day practice is based on meeting individualised needs and enabling young people to retain their own identity and understand and accept difference. This is possible as they receive care and guidance from a diverse staff group, with regards to their gender, race, ethnicity, backgrounds and experiences, which staff easily share with young people. Young people have celebrated a number of festivals since the last inspection including the Chinese New Year, Valentine's Day and the forthcoming St Patrick's

Day. This has involved young people researching and discussing information and topics relating to the different celebrations including culture and sexual attraction and orientation. One young person produced a power point presentation including providing Chinese music on the Chinese New Year for the young people's meeting which young people and staff enjoyed. The young person is very proud of this achievement.

Improving the lives of young people is embedded in the ethos and day-to-day practice of the home. The Registered Manager is a motivational leader and staff appreciate her support and direction. The commitment of the whole team is also evident in new developments introduced since the last inspection. Young people's placement plans and risk assessments have been reviewed and updated to make information more easily accessible. A bi-monthly individualised parents' newsletter has been introduced which helps to keep parents and carers informed about their child, including progress and activities the young person has undertaken. A new 'Well Done' book has been introduced which records all praises, recognising young people's achievements; this helps to improve young people's self-esteem and confidence.

A further development has been the production of the 'All about Me' document which is the young person's individualised placement plan that they can understand. Some young people have produced their own plans with the help of staff. This helps young people to feel central to their care and 'in control' as much as possible; they are also able to improve their information technology skills, which helps to prepare them for the future.

The Registered Manager has worked with another Registered Manager to prepare for the introduction of the new quality standards and regulations. They have produced a detailed presentation that they will be presenting to all the Registered Managers in the company and then their individual staff teams. This includes a monitoring template. This demonstrates the commitment of the Registered Manager to work with the regulator to safeguard and improve the lives of young people.

Quality assurance systems continue to be shared by the whole staff team. The Registered Manager carries out her checks as required and there is evidence that these inform future developments. For example, monitoring by the Registered Manager of an incident report form regarding bullying resulted in the police being involved in discussions with young people and bullying becoming a regular agenda item in the young people's meetings.

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for two young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The service is operated by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/12/2014	Full	good
15/10/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
28/05/2013	Full	good
03/01/2013	Interim	inadequate progress

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.