

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	20/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC414516
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Blue Mountain Homes Limited
Registered provider address	Flat 17, Leeland Mansions, Leeland Road, London W13 9HE

Responsible individual	Pradeep Manaktala
Registered manager	Douglas Harrison
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford

Inspection date	20/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in effectiveness
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	Good

SC414516

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people develop their awareness of safety and become safer than they were before coming to the home.
- Young people's episodes of going missing reduce and they learn about how to protect themselves.
- There are particularly good working relationships with other professionals, for example the police.
- Staff make every effort to make sure that young people are as well-prepared as they can be for leaving care.
- Education has a high priority and each young person is very well encouraged in their interests, education and chosen vocation. This prepares young people well for adulthood.
- Staff have an extremely good knowledge of the community and use this well to keep young people safe. Staff develop positive links for young people to use now and in the future.
- Newly admitted young people experience a very positive transition into the home. In their first days of being at the home, they quickly overcome anxiety about their placement move.

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and next steps for learning. This is with regard to understanding the child's educational history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.11)
- Ensure that staff have the skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate that a child is in any way at risk of harm. This is with regard to staff's knowledge about the risks of young people being radicalised. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and registered to care for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
24/11/2015	Full	Good
24/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/11/2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people progress well because staff are caring, innovative and creative. Staff know and use the local community well. Staff's knowledge and connections assist young people in finding suitable friendships, work and leisure activities. Young people are helped to develop their interests and to realise what they are good at. Consequently, they improve their life chances. Staff help young people to overcome challenges and work hard to support them with their education and life choices. One young person has been assisted in developing a very positive work ethic. Staff recently supported them to ask their employer for another chance after making a mistake. Young people are fully assisted to reflect on and learn from their mistakes, optimising their learning of how to behave in the workplace. Young people soon have a clear idea about what they want to achieve in life and how to start on the job ladder. One young person has been assisted to set up his own business using staff's links with the community. He has now secured the use of an office and other equipment to assist him in the development of this business. Young people's comments include: 'staff have helped to prepare me' and 'I am looking forward to the future'. Young people are always encouraged in their education, which is bespoke. This means that they make good progress with their chosen subjects. However, there are examples of where there is very little information available regarding young people's educational history. This means that staff do not always understand the young person's learning journey in order to maximise support to move forward. Young people lead a healthy lifestyle. They are encouraged to eat healthy food and to exercise. Risks to health such as taking drugs and smoking are reduced soon after admission. When young people move in, they settle quickly. Staff make every effort to spend time to get to know them. Very positive relationships are forged, which enable young people to talk about their problems, worries and to make sense of why they are living in the home. This is especially the case when they have had to move from another children's home quickly or had a lot of placement changes. Staffing levels are high to ensure good support and attention in the early days. Young people quickly learn that they are wanted at the home and to feel secure in the knowledge that staff respect them and want them to do well. One young person said, 'I love it here, I am so much more relaxed.' There is an ethos of respect in the home. Staff and management believe in incentives rather than sanctions. This ethos works well. Young people make good	

progress because of this approach. They learn about strategies to develop their behaviour, do better in education and have more opportunities.

Young people only leave the home when they are not making consistent progress or when they are ready to leave because of their age. The manager and staff are fully committed to ensuring that young people develop the skills that they need to be able to manage in a more independent environment. Young people are well-prepared for their move because staff spend time with them planning this. Support to young people is very positive in this area and young people learn about how to be independent, safe and resilient.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are safe because staff are well-trained in aspects of safeguarding. They can easily identify young people's safeguarding needs. Staff know what they need to do to protect individuals and are good at balancing the safeguarding needs of the group. Behavioural needs are well-considered at the point of referral and are well-managed. Staff are good at de-escalating more difficult behaviour and there is a low level of physical interventions. The high staff ratio allows for one-to-one work and care is highly individual. Young people have opportunities to make progress in relation to their safety because they are closely guided by staff. There is an ethos of respect so that young people learn to respect themselves and others. Their sense of safety emerges and they develop the skills that they need in order to keep themselves safe now and in the future. The strong community links mean that staff know any potential problem areas and about unsuitable people in the community. Staff know young people's whereabouts and what they are doing. Staff help young people to make good, informed decisions about their developing safety. Young people's episodes of going missing reduce significantly. One young person reported 'I go missing much less and I am not in as much trouble', which is very positive given their history. Young people's episodes of going missing are very closely monitored and staff work with other professionals well to develop strategies to keep them safe. Each time a young person is missing, there is a very proactive response from staff. Young people are always asked where they have been on their return. Staff create opportunities to encourage them to reflect on the situation for their learning in the future. Close one-to-one working gives young people opportunities to talk about their safety. The police are very happy with the way that the area missing person protocol is implemented and report very positive relationships with staff and young people. Staff have a good understanding of the risks of child sexual exploitation. They have been trained and know what the signs are. Therefore, they can assist young people to learn about how to protect themselves from any dangers that they may	

encounter. Young people soon learn about the dangers of taking drugs and associating with unsuitable people. Young people become safer and more protected from such risks.

While staff are well-trained and conversant with the home's procedures on most aspects of safety, the procedures are not clear regarding action that should be taken if there is a concern about a child being radicalised. Given the vulnerability of young people, the profile of radicalisation should be raised to ensure that staff know what to look out for and can guide and protect young people appropriately.

Staff recruitment is well-managed and young people are not exposed to unsuitable adults in their home because of the close scrutiny of all new staff. The safety of the building is also well-managed and the arrangements for fire protection, gas safety and risk assessments remain a priority to ensure that all who use the building are safe.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager holds the level 4 qualification in leadership and management. This is an appropriate qualification, which ensures that he has the suitable skills to manage the home. He also has previous experience in working with young people in a management position. The requirement set at the last inspection regarding education has been met. Education is now fully considered at an early stage after admission to prevent any unnecessary drift. The four recommendations set at the last inspection are also met. Improvements have been made to educational planning when young people are newly admitted. The process for staff supervision has improved to ensure that any safeguarding issues are appropriately handled and recorded. Young people's risk assessments are also improved and the going missing procedure now ensures that lessons can be learned from each incident to make the young person safer should this happen again. The registered manager is liked by young people and there is a high level of respect in the home. This means that young people are more likely to listen to him during his regular involvement in their care. He is assisted by a capable deputy manager and a well-established staff team. The continuing development of the staff team ensures that its members are well trained to deliver good-quality care to young people. All staff members' performance is well-monitored and staff have regular opportunities to contribute to the development of the home, team meetings and to the culture of progression. There are good working relationships between the home and other professionals such as social workers and the police. One professional illustrated this point by saying, 'We work together really well and working relationships are good.' The	

manager ensures that other professionals get to know the most up-to-date information so that they can make good-quality decisions about young people's safety and progress. He also makes sure that Ofsted is informed about significant events in the home in line with the regulations. This allows the regulator to monitor the home's performance.

The manager's monitoring allows for patterns and trends to be established. The organisation's monitoring consists of a regular monthly visit to the home by an independent person. These visits are robust. Any identified shortfalls are promptly put right by the manager.

The home continues to operate in accordance with its statement of purpose and the manager ensures that, where any changes are made to the way that the home is run or to the staff team, that the document is appropriately updated. This ensures that young people, placing authorities and parents know what to expect from the home.

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 that 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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

© Crown copyright 2016