

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	24&25/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC414516
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Blue Mountain Homes Ltd
Registered person address	17 Leeland Mansions, Leeland Road, London, W13 9HB

Responsible individual	Pradeep Manaktala
Registered manager	Douglas Harrison
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford

Inspection date	24/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained 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:

- Staffing is extremely stable and this offers excellent consistency to young people.
- Young people feel happy and settled. This allows for good progress to be made.
- Staff know young people very well, understand their needs and know what they need to do to ensure their progress.
- Young people like the staff a lot and have very positive relationships with them.
- Young people feel very able to talk to staff about their problems and worries.
- Young people live in a home that is pleasant, well maintained and with a very homely feel.
- Support around personal interests and activities is well organised around young people's individual needs and choices.
- Professionals and parents speak very highly of the progress that young people make. In particular, progress is good in education, behaviour and also with relationships with family.
- Where young people have been missing, they are protected because staff take the right action. They phone the police when they should and do not stop trying to look for, and contact, young people until they return.
- Education is well organised and young people are able to reach their potential given their starting point. Staff are quick to ensure that young people are always in some form of education or vocational training.
- There are shortfalls, but the impact on young people is minimal and does not detract from the good outcomes and quality of care. Shortfalls include recording which is not always of a good quality, including the records of restraint. Medicines in the home are not always fully recorded. There has been one significant event which has not been sent to Ofsted in line with the regulations, although this is an isolated incident.

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
Ensure that medicine prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed and that a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (2)(b)(c))	22/12/2015
Ensure that HMCI is notified if a child is suspected of being involved in sexual exploitation. (Regulation 40 (4)(a))	22/12/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home, information is taken into account provided by the independent return interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that staff are familiar with and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Ensure that records of restraint enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The aim is to provide settled care to young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/11/2014	Full	Good
12/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
21/08/2013	Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people make good progress in a number of areas during their time at the home. One young person said 'it's a dead good house'. Staff are very caring and genuinely seem to want to make a positive difference to young people's lives. Professionals report that staff 'go the extra mile' and 'are inventive'. Young people feel that their relationships with staff are very positive and their comments include 'they listen, 'I can't fault them' and 'I feel that they care'. Young people make significant improvements with their behaviour. They learn about how to self-regulate their anxieties and feelings, because staff support them to do this. One young person said: 'I used to kick off every day and I have not kicked off like that here', acknowledging their good progress in this area. Regular and good quality key working and informal support from staff ensures that there is always someone for young people to talk to when they have a worry. Their emotional wellbeing has a high priority and they feel that they are able to talk to staff about anything. One young person said 'they really do sit down with me' and 'I know they care'. Young people discuss all aspects of their life with staff, including their health issues. Staff ensure young people get the help they need. Some records do not always provide evidence of this high level of support. Should young people wish to look back on their records in the future, they will not be able to see the full details of the effectiveness of the support. This issue relates to recording and does not detract from the high level of support that young people receive. Where young people are prescribed medicines, the records are not always clear in showing when these have been refused. A full picture of what medicine each child has taken and when, is not always available. Staff would not be able to effectively share this with medical professionals should this be needed. The positive relationships with staff enable young people to receive the right support to encourage them in many other areas of their life, for example, education is always a top priority. Young people are encouraged to develop their skills in line with their interests. Preparation for independence runs in parallel with this and parents are particularly happy with this saying 'preparation for independence is good.' When young people leave the home, they are well prepared and very often know about which vocation or further education they wish to pursue.	

Where there are barriers to young people achieving well in education, staff are extremely proactive in ensuring that these are removed as soon as possible. Social workers comment that staff's work is 'amazing' in this regard. There is a recent example of a new education provision being provided extremely quickly after a placement breakdown. Staff work hard to ensure that young people continue to be motivated, keeping education as a top priority. All young people reported that their education is going well. This means young people make as much progress as possible according to their needs and starting point.

The home is a very pleasant place to live and young people like the rural and picturesque setting. One young person said they found the house and location 'the best'. Young people are fully able to access the local area and still have access to city facilities. For example, they can go shopping, to the cinema and regularly meet their friends. There are good resources for outings and activities. For example, one to one staffing levels and three available cars ensure that each young person's personal, educational and social needs can be fully met. In addition, staff support young people well to stay in touch with and to see their friends and relatives. Staff work well with placing authorities on any arrangements for young people who are living out of their own community or area. They arrange for young people to visit their family and friends. This ensures that appropriate relationships are developed for when they leave care. One professional was particularly happy with this work saying that staff had been 'amazing'.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people feel safe and are safe in this home. There is a positive feeling from them about their own safety and security. Where they have been missing, staff always look for them and effectively safeguard their welfare by making sure that the appropriate authorities are informed. The police are particularly happy with staff actions when young people are missing. Their comments include 'I can't fault them' and we are 'very happy' with staff actions. Where young people have been missing, they are always welcomed back to the home. Staff try to find out where they have been and to establish information about safety. The high level of work in this area is not always recorded. For example, staff say that a lot of effort goes into working with the young person on their return. They say they try to find out where they have been in order to work with the police and establish key safety information. However, this work is sometimes not evidenced. Where return interviews have taken place, the manager does not always establish the information from these. As a result, opportunities to	

further protect young people could be missed in the future. Detailed risk assessments cover all elements of risk very well. The documents change in line with the young people's changing and complex needs. Staff always know the risk reduction strategies and routinely follow the assessments to minimise risk.

Staff talk to the young people about keeping safe. Young people learn about aspects of their safety, such as how to protect themselves from sexual exploitation and from domestic violence. Young people report that staff are good at using resources such as DVD's and videos from the internet to highlight risks. In addition, young people look at world topics in their young people's meetings, which further highlights some of the dangers in society. Young people's meetings also allow them to have their say about the running of the home. They choose their own activities, food and the décor in the home ensuring that they have a voice.

There are times when restraint has been used, although these instances are few and far between. The records show that these are a last resort and conducted to keep young people safe. Young people say that restraints are 'not often', and 'staff walk away', rather than conduct a restraint in the first instance. The records do show the general method of intervention used, but do not contain a full and detailed description of what happened and when. This has not impacted on young people but the monitoring of restraints is hampered because the full information is not present. If there were to be a safeguarding investigation into a restraint, the records do not contain a sufficient level of detail to ascertain the full picture.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been registered since the home opened several years ago. He holds the National Vocational Qualification level 4 in Leadership and Management of Health and Social Care. The registered manager has ensured that the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection are met. There have been improvements to the building, which is well maintained and re-decorated throughout. Details about allegations against staff are routinely kept on their personnel file, which presents a clear audit trail of the event, the investigation and the outcome. There have also been improvements to young people's independence planning, which is more detailed and individual. Lastly, the staff induction procedure is now more robust and detailed. Young people's best interests are always at the centre of the management of the home and the young people regularly discuss their care with the registered	

manager. He is reported by other professionals to be a 'hands on manager'. He can therefore effectively monitor the care to make sure it is of a good quality. He also monitors the home's records to ensure that he knows what has happened and when. However, there are some records which do not reflect the high quality of work taking place and which fall short of the required standard, such as the restraint records and records for when a young person has returned to the home after being missing. This may impact on the monitoring in the future because there are times when the records do not reflect the extent of the actual work taking place.

Joint working with other agencies is very good and there are several positive comments from professionals about this including, 'they are good at multi-agency working' and 'they really try to channel information'. This joint work ensures that relevant professionals have information at the earliest opportunity to safeguard young people and ensures the momentum of progress.

The formal notification of significant events is made to the appropriate authorities so that young people's welfare is effectively safeguarded. However, there has been an isolated incident where Ofsted were not informed of an allegation about sexual exploitation. The matter was dealt with effectively otherwise, which ensured the young person's safety and welfare. Ofsted are unable to regulate appropriately if the required information is not sent through. Therefore this needs to be addressed so that it does not impact on young people in the future.

The home's statement of purpose is clear in that young people should be able to experience settled care. The home does achieve this and young people feel particularly happy with how they have settled at the home saying 'it's a really positive placement' and 'I feel so comfortable here'.

The staff team is extremely stable ensuring very good consistency for young people. Very trusting and positive relationships are forged so that young people experience a very settled placement, where they can make good progress.

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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