

SC414516

Registered provider: Blue Mountain Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation to three young people who have emotional, behavioural and social difficulties. The manager was registered with Ofsted for this home in June 2010. He is suitably qualified and experienced.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 23 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2019	Full	Outstanding
23/05/2017	Full	Outstanding
05/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/09/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

There is a clear child-centred ethos at this home. As a result of this, young people make excellent progress. They enjoy very strong and enriching relationships with staff. As a result, young people feel valued and cherished.

Young people make very good progress in their education. The on-site school is integrated into the home so that there is a joint learning approach. This means that young people not only achieve academically, but also develop independence skills for when they leave care. They develop greatly improved self-esteem as a result of living at this home. Young people have received awards for their achievements. They speak confidently and with pride about their very significant progress and achievements.

The location of the home lends itself well to learning in the outdoors. Young people enjoy camping, walking and bushcraft. When activities cannot be provided by the home, staff work very well with local activity providers to ensure that the young people get to enjoy new and exciting activities. Young people have had training in first aid and health awareness. This gives them valuable life skills and also empowers them to help and support their peers.

Young people's health improves when they move into the home, often significantly. When young people have complex health needs, staff are given specific training. The home works closely and effectively with health specialists and with young people's families to ensure that all healthcare needs are met.

Young people are given very effective support to feel part of the community and to contribute to the community. Young people have taken part in fundraising for charities. They have also given their support to communities that have been affected by environmental issues. This process of giving back to the community gives young people a sense of self-worth.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: outstanding

Young people become safer as a result of living at this home. They rarely go missing and potentially harmful incidents are very uncommon. This has been achieved because the staff team members are consistent and understand the needs of each.

Young people's behaviour improves significantly over time. As they settle into the home, incidents reduce markedly. This is helped by clear risk assessments and excellent relationships between staff and young people. Key-work sessions take place after all incidents. This means that young people can talk about concerns, get emotional support and develop strategies to manage their emotional responses.

Staff are confident in their safeguarding responsibilities. They know what to do if they are concerned about a young person. Staff are very strong advocates for the young people.

The manager has robust recruitment practices. The manager only recruits staff of the highest calibre who have been very carefully vetted. There is a very low turnover of staff. The manager does not rely on agency staff. The consistency of care is a key factor in the home's ability to keep young people safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a good leader. Staff respond very well to his empowering management style. They feel supported and listened to. The manager encourages staff to develop by giving them additional responsibilities.

The staff are a real strength in this home. They are all extremely motivated and enjoy coming to work. Their practice is child centred, and morale is very high. They have high aspirations for the young people. They are encouraged to develop their own interests with the young people. This includes photography, growing vegetables, creating models and various outdoor pursuits.

The staff's ongoing learning is a key priority for the manager. Apart from mandatory training, staff have undertaken specialist health-related training to support young people. Staff greatly value the learning and development opportunities available to them.

The manager works effectively with stakeholders, ensuring that young people have an effective team around them. The relationship with the on-site school is strong and enables young people to achieve well. Communication is also good with all other agencies. Health and social care professionals are confident in this home's ability to improve the life chances of each young person.

The manager has not ensured that all areas of the home are maintained to a high standard. Wear and tear has not been addressed quickly enough. Young people are not being supported well to keep their bedrooms clean and tidy. Regular room checks have not been effective. This shortfall means that some minor health and safety concerns have been missed. However, the rest of the home is, for the most part, full of character, warm and homely.

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

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that each child's day to day health and well-being needs are met. Staff should work to make the children's home an environment that supports children's physical, mental and emotional health, in line with the approach set out in the statement of purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC414516

Provision sub-type: 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

Simon Hunter, Social Care Inspector

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