

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	05/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC423442
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Care Management Solutions Limited
Registered provider address	2 Ravens Lodge, Huddersfield Road, Dewsbury, West Yorkshire WF13 3EE

Responsible individual	Gary Kent
Registered manager	David Ayres
Inspector	Pauline Yates

Inspection date	05/01/2017
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	Inadequate
There are serious failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC423442

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is inadequate because:

- Young people do not receive enough support from staff to reduce the risk of sexual vulnerability.
- Staff have a poor understanding of the emotional and psychological factors that contribute to young people putting themselves at risk. Some young people experience key working sessions that blame them for their vulnerability and poor emotional health.
- There has been significant delay in referral to specialist services, such as medical professionals and child and adolescent mental health services. As a result young people have experienced continuing poor mental health.
- There has been insufficient challenge to other agencies when care planning has been ineffective. There are no formal monitoring systems for young people undertaking independence plans. This has meant that some young people who were unable to cope with this step remained on the plan leading to weight loss and an unhealthy diet.
- Not all staff have been trained in safeguarding practices and in some cases their understanding of emotional vulnerability is weak. Key pieces of work with some young people are incomplete because staff do not know how to make this meaningful to them.
- There are significant gaps in the management oversight of care that is offered to young people. In addition, supervision and appraisal of staff performance do not meet the relevant regulations or the company's own policies.
- Behaviour management strategies do not motivate young people to change. Strategies are focussed on monetary sanctions and are, on occasion, unreasonable.
- Ofsted has not been advised of significant incidents and the recording of physical restraint does not meet regulations.

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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12. In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular reference to staff responding in a timely and sensitive manner to the emotional and sexual vulnerability of young people, the registered person must ensure- (a) that staff- (ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare *	24/02/2017
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b)(c).	28/02/2017
13. (1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that- (a) helps children to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to- (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home; (g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on- (ii) feedback and experiences of children, including complaints received (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	28/02/2017

The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which cover the matters listed in Schedule 1 (Regulation 16 (1) *	28/02/2017
11. (2) In particular, the standards in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure- (a) that staff- (ix) understand how children's previous experiences and present emotions can be communicated through behaviour and have the competence and skills to interpret these and develop positive relationships with children; (x) are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same. *	24/02/2017
The following measures may not be used to discipline any child: (f) imposing a financial penalty, other than a requirement for the payment of a reasonable sum (which may be by instalments) by way of reparation (Regulation 19 (2)).	28/02/2017
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of the measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes- (ii) details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; (v) details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; (vii) the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; (viii) and a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; Within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")- (i) has spoken to the user about the measure and (ii) has signed the record to confirm it is accurate and (iii) within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person, or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(b)(c)	28/02/2017
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant	28/02/2017

person without delay if- an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious (Regulation 40(4)(b)(e))	
The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff (Regulation 45 (b))	28/02/2017
10. In order to meet the health and well-being standard, with particular reference to timely referral to the children looked after nurse and specialist mental health support, the registered person must ensure that staff- (2)(a)(ii) understand the child's health and well-being needs and the options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding (iii) take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; (iv) understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being; (c) that each child had access to such dental, medical, nursing and psychological advice, treatment and other services as the child may require.	28/02/2017
In meeting the quality standard, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff- (a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; (b) seek to secure input and services required to meet each child's needs	28/02/17

* These requirements are subject to statutory requirement notice.

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page

62, paragraph 14.4).

- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2).
- Staff should understand factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. Staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies in line with the child's relevant plans ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13).
- For children's home to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9). In particular, that areas of damp within the home are professionally addressed, areas of damaged plasterwork and paint work are repaired and repainted, that the young people's upstairs shower room is replaced or refurbished, that the ceiling in the young people's bathroom is recovered and that young people's bedrooms are repaired in a timely manner to ensure they are not unnecessarily out of these rooms for lengthy periods of time.
- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the homes workforce plan.
- The homes records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Children and their parents should be supported to understand the nature of the records kept by the home and how to access them ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5). With particular reference to placement plans being clear on objectives and progress made by young people, and that these are presented in a way that are suitable for young people to understand and contribute to.
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5). With particular reference to assessments being updated in a timely manner and staff providing evidence of having read those assessments by way of a signature.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned and run children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/12/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/06/2015	Full	Good
02/02/2015	Full	Adequate
26/06/2014	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
Some young people's experiences in the home is too variable and they do not consistently receive support to promote their emotional growth or strengthen their resilience. Staff have a poor understanding of the complex needs of some young people. All young people living at the home have regular contact with family and friends. The quality of this contact has improved for some young people. Some young people have made progress in managing their anger in more socially acceptable ways. One young person commented: 'I've changed quite a lot; I don't kick off any more and I'm not as bad as I use to be. Back then I didn't have a connection with my dad. We have bonded a lot better.' Another young person commenting about her keyworkers stated, 'It's really good here. They talk to me about keeping safe, independence, cooking and eating,' adding, 'I want more help and support.' The response to young people's distress and challenging behaviour is not always appropriate or helpful. For example, when one young person expressed feelings of depression and low mood, the response of staff was to attach blame and question the validity of these feelings. Young people have not received specialist help and support as soon as they have needed it. In some cases young people have been advised to make their own arrangements to secure medical support. An independent reviewing officer commented 'X is very amiable in presentation; she wants to please. Compared to X's previous life this has been much more settled and stable. It has come to light that due to moving towards semi-independence that possibly that she isn't doing as well. I believe that there has been work around child sexual exploitation and vulnerability. It remains an ongoing issue and isn't going to go away.' Staff support is not always effective. Staff sometimes lack the skills, knowledge and understanding to fully support young people and progress key pieces of work with them. For example, a significant piece of work identified, to strengthen a young person's emotional resilience, remains incomplete. This is outstanding 12 months after it was agreed at a young person's review. This is as a result of staff being unable to appropriately explore the issues with the young person and staff themselves not understanding the concepts used. There has been no management review or plan developed to progress this piece of work. In addition, managers have not identified training for staff as a result of the shortfall in skills and knowledge base. As a result, young people's needs are not fully met.	

The support provided for young people as they prepare for independence is not always effective. On occasion, staff have persisted with plans for independence that are clearly having a significant detrimental impact on young people's health, and despite young people saying that they cannot manage. Staff have not revised, amended or ceased this programme of work, nor sought an urgent review of these plans with the social worker. As a result, young people have had poor experiences of learning the necessary skills that will support their transition into adulthood and their physical wellbeing has been compromised.

Young people are not always consulted with regard to significant changes in management of their behaviour. For example, young people's views were not sought with regard to the daily fines that could result from bedroom inspections.

The home is in need of repair. The young person's shower room is currently not in use due to requiring a complete refurbishment.

Young people's bedrooms have not been maintained to a good standard and require repair and repainting to restore this. There are areas of damp in the home causing plaster and paint to flake from the walls. The ceiling in the young people's bathroom is affected by the moisture in the room. As a result, paper is sagging from the ceiling. The manager is aware of these issues and states there are plans to address this work.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
Staff impose daily financial sanctions on young people and monetary reparation that has, at times, exceeded proportionate amounts. Managing behaviour through positive reinforcement is not embedded staff practice. For example, bedrooms are inspected each morning by staff and, if these are found to not meet expectations, young people can have up to two pounds per day removed from their pocket money. One young person's clothing allowance was used to purchase a replacement wardrobe after damage was caused. As a result, young people are not supported to manage their own behaviour and develop self-management skills. There is weak management oversight of these sanctions and no system to review their effectiveness. Behaviours that pose a risk to some young people's welfare and safety have not diminished. They remain sexually vulnerable to their peers and wider sexual exploitation. Staff have a limited understanding of young people's emotional vulnerability and the motivating factors driving their unsafe behaviour.	

Advice and the language used by staff to support one young person's behaviour is negative and unhelpful. These responses blame the young person for their own social isolation, peer exploitation and the subsequent wider social repercussions of these behaviours. As a result, there has been no significant change in these behaviours and young people's safety and welfare remains compromised.

There has been only one recorded incidence of physical restraint since May 2016. This incident however is not appropriately recorded. Staff practice cannot be monitored effectively and it is challenging to assess whether young people's behaviour is safely managed. An account leading up to incidents and justification of the measure are not recorded. Staff are not debriefed and there is no oversight from a designated person that the record is correct and that young people have not been spoken to.

Incidents recorded by staff do not have management oversight that addresses learning and practice issues. As a result, young people do not benefit from staff improving their responses. Risk assessments are not updated in a timely manner and are not signed by staff.

Not all serious incidents have been notified to Ofsted. This reduces the regulatory body's oversight of the home and timely intervention.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
Management oversight of the home is weak. Tools developed to provide monthly indicators on the quality of care and to ensure young people are looked after safely are not currently being used. There is no overview available that provides information on staff training or skills development. In addition not all staff have received training on safeguarding practice. As a result, managers have limited understanding of staff training needs in order to meet the complex needs of young people. The manager was registered to manage the home in June 2016. He is suitably qualified and has experience in the residential care of children and young people. Young people are sometimes unable to cope with independence programmes. This has, on occasion, resulted in unintended weight loss and has impacted negatively on their emotional health and well-being. An urgent review of relevant care plans did not take place, nor the involvement of health care specialists. Some young people on the programme did not eat enough to maintain good health. Internal monitoring systems failed to identify and escalate this to the placing authority to	

ensure young people's wellbeing. This lack of effective oversight leaves young people at potential risk of harm to their health and development.

On those occasions when young people have individually expressed feelings of depression and low mood, the response from staff has not been appropriate. In addition, there has been a significant delay in staffing making referrals to specialist services.

Supervision is not carried out in line with the statement of purpose or company guidelines. Members of staff new to the team do not receive appropriate formal support and there are also large gaps for more experienced members of staff. Supervision that does take place, is not sampled or tracked by the manager to ensure that staff receive sufficient, good quality support or challenge. Issues that have arisen from staff practice towards each other is not recorded and there is no record in respect of learning or outcomes. Staff have not yet received annual appraisals of their performance.

Care offered to young people does not always take into account their views about the home. In addition, there is no systematic process for gathering the views of parents. This limits managerial insight into the areas of development for the home and current shortfalls.

The limited management oversight and auditing has resulted in some documentation being poorly completed by staff. Sections that review progress for young people are left blank. As a result, the evaluation that underpins making necessary changes to care provided to young people is weakened. In addition, inappropriate responses to young people's needs, as recorded in key-working documents, remain unchallenged by the manager. Focused pieces of work identified for young people lack identifiable progress, planning or review.

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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