

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC423617
Inspector	Carole Moore
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Susan Rai
Date of last inspection	04/03/2014

Inspection date	20/06/2014
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Previous inspection	inadequate progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	Following an interim inspection on 4 March 2014, Ofsted issued a compliance notice for: Failure under Regulation 27 - ensure all persons employed receive appropriate supervision. Ofsted carried out a monitoring visit on 14 April 2014 and found the registered provider had taken sufficient action to meet this regulatory shortfall.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people receive good quality care and support and make good overall progress. The enthusiasm and commitment from the staff promote positive outcomes for young people, supported by personalised placement planning.

Young people are positive about this home and feel secure in their placements as a result of the structure and boundaries in place. The strength of relationships between young people and staff contribute to their feeling of being safe. Staff know the young people well and understand their individual care needs.

Young people are able to form some good quality relationships with the manager and staff members. They recognise that the team care about them and have

aspirations for them to succeed and do their best. This has resulted in particularly good outcomes in education.

The leadership and management are strong. The manager draws upon monitoring systems to further improve practice. These include the views of young people, their parents and professionals. The manager promotes professional development for the team and communicates high expectations; this results in a competent workforce.

As a result of this inspection, four recommendations have been raised. These shortfalls relate to; evaluating the training programme, ensuring robust recruitment by recording reasons for gaps in employment history, ensuring young people are consulted about staff appraisals and ensuring the development plan involves staff and young people and is a working tool.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It aims to develop and prepare young people for a return to family, foster care or independent living. The home is operated by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/03/2014	Interim	inadequate progress
04/04/2013	Full	good
11/10/2012	Interim	good progress
03/05/2012	Full	adequate

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure the learning and development programme is evaluated for effectiveness at least annually. (NMS 18.2)
- ensure the registered person has a written development plan, reviewed annually for the future of the home, in respect of a working document detailing the home's operation and resource. (NMS 15.2)
- ensure the registered person can demonstrate, including from written and electronic records, that it consistently follows good recruitment practice, particularly in relation to written verification of gaps in work history. (NMS 16.2)
- ensure that the views of children are taken into account in staff appraisals. (NMS 19.6)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress while living in this children's home. Those who have experienced considerable disruption in their lives benefit from a period of stability. Young people's individuality is recognised, and their academic, emotional and physical needs are well supported. Their emotional and social behaviour is improving. Young people form some good relationships with staff which enable them to find the confidence to talk to staff and share any worries or concerns they may have. Young people are fully aware of the complaints procedure and are more than able to raise any issues about the home or the way they are cared for.

Individual health needs are assessed and met. All young people are registered with community based health services to access day-to-day support. This ensures that no health difficulties are going undetected. Young people are also able to access the child and mental health services (CAMHS) to address any emotional health difficulties. Young people eat healthily and take exercise and they usually follow the advice of staff so that they live healthy life styles.

Young people respond positively to education provision and benefit from the good support that is offered. They are making significant progress considering their previous experiences with education. A headteacher said, 'He is a very different child, 100% attendance and he was awarded student of the week.'

Young people are encouraged to keep good levels of contact with family and friends. All young people's contact arrangements are fully detailed and agreed in their care plans. The safety of young people and their welfare is always promoted. Young people benefit from direct face-to-face visits and telephone calls. As a result, this helps to maintain continuity of all relationships in young people's lives in order to maintain their identity.

Staff encourage young people to enjoy their leisure time. Activities are individualised and good use is made of community resources to allow young people to have as many experiences as possible. Young people's activity plans are age appropriate and responsive to their likes and dislikes, such as attending church, football, eating out and going to the cinema and youth clubs. Within the home environment young people systematically develop their confidence by having access to a variety of resources and opportunities to share their leisure time with staff.

Young people develop independence. According to their age and ability, young people undertake domestic chores to contribute to the running of the home such as keeping their bedroom tidy and helping in the kitchen. These life skills prepare them for the transition into adulthood and to live independently.

Quality of care

good

The staff provide a very nurturing environment for the young people living in the home. They develop and maintain positive and constructive relationships with them. The staff know the young people well and constantly assess their progress through a variety of means, such as daily handovers, supervision and keyworker sessions. This detailed knowledge of the young people ensures they receive very good individual support and guidance.

Young people receive full staff support to attend and achieve in their education. Staff talk proudly of the impressive steps made by young people in relation to their educational attendance and personal achievements. Feedback from head teachers has congratulated staff on their commitment to the young people with regard to the importance of education.

Young people benefit from good health care that focuses on meeting their overall health needs. Health care objectives are constantly reviewed to ensure young people have access to various medical professionals. Young people are provided with a variety of activities that encourage physical exercise and a well-balanced and healthy diet. This ensures young people receive appropriate and continuous personalised support in relation to their health and well-being.

The Registered Manager pays particular attention to planning and coordinating young people's support to ensure that positive progress is achieved. Risks are assessed regularly and reflected in written information that staff use to guide the way they work each day. Consequently, staff are able to adapt and change the way they work quickly to ensure risks are managed effectively. The home is good at tailoring the service to ensure it carefully meets individual needs. There are good examples of key work sessions supporting young people in addressing bullying and inappropriate language.

Young people routinely enjoy a good range of activities, and dedicated staff time enables them to access some good opportunities in the community. Young people's cultural background and personal identity are positively addressed in both daily living and care planning and their rights are respected and promoted.

Keeping children and young people safe

good

Young people receive high levels of supervision in order to maintain their overall safety and well-being. Care and individual management plans are of good quality, identifying risks and protective factors for individual young people. These are known by staff so that risks are addressed as part of daily living with each young person. As a result, young people are taking fewer risks and are learning how to keep

themselves safe.

Staff promote positive behaviour and support young people to make choices and take responsibility for their actions. The training that staff receive on responding to challenging behaviour is based on redirection and purposeful intervention to calm a situation. This means that the use of physical intervention is rare; it is only used when felt necessary to ensure safety. One social worker said, 'It has really felt that the staff adjust their approach to suit each young person that they have placed with them, this ensures they are working with the young people most effectively whilst still implementing boundaries and keeping them safe.' Staff are encouraged to positively reward young people for their behaviour on a daily basis to ensure young people experience positive comments about their day. This results in confidence building and raising self-esteem.

The home has a clear safeguarding policy and the staff receive regular safeguarding training. This includes raising staff awareness on child sexual exploitation as well as internet safety. The manager ensures that all the relevant agencies are informed of any safeguarding issues. Effective professional relationships ensure that strategies and plans are developed in the event of any concerns being identified. This means that young people are fully supported and protected.

Some young people do on occasions go missing, thus increasing their vulnerability. Staff are familiar with the steps to take when such events occur and work closely with the placing authorities and the police to promote their safety and encourage young people to return to the home swiftly. When young people do return, they are encouraged to discuss with staff or their social worker the circumstances of their absence and to consider the risks associated with their behaviour. This further safeguards young people from harm.

Young people benefit from the home being physically safe and secure. The environment is maintained well and regular safety checks ensure that equipment and utilities work safely. Fire prevention equipment is in place and serviced according to professional guidance. Internal fire drills and fire equipment checks are regularly undertaken to ensure everyone can respond appropriately in an emergency.

Young people's safety is promoted by a further range of effective measures. These include the appropriate vetting of staff. However the manager does not currently verify in writing the gaps in work history. Young people understand the rules of the home and they feel that the staff are very fair and reasonable when it comes to helping them with their behaviour. Young people receive lots of rewards and praise and the use of consequences is minimal.

Leadership and management

good

The leadership and management of this home are good. The manager has two years' experience of managing this children's home and holds appropriate qualifications in management. She is extremely committed to improving outcomes for the young people placed. She is developing the staff team through regular supervision, team meetings and access to a good training programme. Staff, young people and social workers report that the manager is approachable and supportive, with comments such as: 'Communication is key'; and 'I have been very impressed with the home and the care that they offer.'

The manager and the team are implementing the new legislation and discussing these developments at team meetings. The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed and the manager has started to consider the location of the home and identify any risks. The children's guide is of a good quality and provides young people with information that is important for them to know and understand. The home has a development plan in place. However the development plan is not a working document as such and would benefit from clearer aims and objectives and indicate when these have been achieved.

At the last inspection the home failed to meet a requirement in relation to supervision not being appropriately addressed. This has been rectified and all staff receive supervision at the appropriate times, and there is a clear record detailing the time and date and length of each supervision. There is a clear commitment to providing extra supervision to new staff during induction. The Registered Manager is also accessing good professional supervision. All staff have their performance appraised annually. However, young people are as yet not consulted as part of this appraisal. The staff disciplinary procedure has been reviewed and regulation 34 reports are being sent into Ofsted at the appropriate times.

There is a positive commitment to professional development, with staff regularly updating their core training to refresh their knowledge and understanding. This ensures they possess the competences and skills to meet young people's diverse needs. However the learning and development programme is not currently evaluated for its effectiveness on an annual basis.

The Registered Manager ensures that the staffing levels are sufficient in the home and adapts the rota in order to meet the individual needs of the young people. There is a deputy manager post currently vacant but the home is actively recruiting. The home has a diverse staff group that uses individual staff experiences to develop young people's knowledge. The strength of the home is the enthusiastic, competent and consistent staff team led by a manager who is totally committed to putting the best interests of the young people at the heart of their work, enabling them to provide good care and support.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.