

Inspection report for children's home

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|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| <b>Unique reference number</b> | SC441717           |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Jacqueline Malcolm |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Full               |
| <b>Provision subtype</b>       | Children's home    |

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|----------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Registered person</b>         | Partners in Care                                                     |
| <b>Registered person address</b> | Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane Kirkstall Leeds<br>West Yorkshire LS5 3BT |
| <b>Responsible individual</b>    | Luiz Miguel Guilherme                                                |
| <b>Registered manager</b>        | POST VACANT                                                          |
| <b>Date of last inspection</b>   | 17/01/2014                                                           |

|                        |            |
|------------------------|------------|
| <b>Inspection date</b> | 01/08/2014 |
|------------------------|------------|

|                                          |               |
|------------------------------------------|---------------|
| Previous inspection                      | good progress |
| Enforcement action since last inspection | none          |

|                                        |                 |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------|
| <b>This inspection</b>                 |                 |
| <b>Overall effectiveness</b>           | <b>adequate</b> |
| Outcomes for children and young people | good            |
| Quality of care                        | good            |
| Keeping children and young people safe | adequate        |
| Leadership and management              | adequate        |

## Overall effectiveness

|                   |                 |
|-------------------|-----------------|
| Judgement outcome | <b>adequate</b> |
|-------------------|-----------------|

Young people have settled well into home life. They have developed strong, respectful relationships with staff, which help young people thrive, feel safe and valued. This is despite the recent departure of the Registered Manager who resigned their position in July 2014. The deputy manager has been promoted to the manager's position and is in the process of making an application for registration with Ofsted.

Young people's diverse needs are supported by comprehensive and detailed placement plans which are reviewed to reflect their changing needs. All young people have an educational placement and they are actively encouraged to attend by staff who place a high value on their educational attendance and attainment. Young people show a renewed commitment to overcome barriers in order to maximise their school attendance and meet their goals and aspirations. They fully understand the benefits of living a healthy lifestyle and their holistic health needs are identified and met. Staff work in partnership with other services to meet the range of young people's health needs, including risky behaviours that some young people may present. This promotes consistency of care.

Parents and family are happy with the services that the home delivers to young people. A parent said, 'I feel my son is well looked after'. Most staff are supported,

motivated and have positive views about the young people they care for. This helps the staff team remain committed to improving young people's outcomes, despite some of the challenges faced by them.

Although the identified shortfalls have undermined some good practices, the home does have capacity to improve. Areas for action include ensuring that: all staff are regularly supervised; risk assessments are updated and behaviour management plans are implemented for all young people; sanctions are fair, proportionate and the records fully comply with the regulations; restraint include the views of young people and are properly monitored and scrutinised; HMCI is updated when the Statement of Purpose is reviewed; internal and external monitoring practices are sufficiently rigorous to quickly identify shortfalls to drive improvement.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The children's home is privately owned. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for four young people who experience behavioural and emotional difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 17/01/2014      | Interim         | good progress        |
| 15/08/2013      | Full            | good                 |
| 05/02/2013      | Interim         | good progress        |
| 26/10/2012      | Full            | adequate             |

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

### 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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

| Reg.       | Requirement                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Due date   |
|------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| 5 (2001)   | ensure that HMCI is notified of any revision to the Statement of Purpose and is received within 28 days (Regulation 5 (a) and (b))                                                                                                                                                    | 30/09/2014 |
| 17B (2001) | ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose of which shall include points (a) to (i). In relation to the recording of sanctions (Regulation 17(B)(a-i)) | 29/08/2014 |
| 27 (2001)  | ensure that all persons employed receive appropriate supervision (Regulation 27(4)(a))                                                                                                                                                                                                | 29/08/2014 |
| 34         | ensure a robust system for monitoring and                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | 30/09/2014 |

|        |                                                                             |  |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| (2001) | improving the quality of care set out in Schedule 6.<br>(Regulation 34 (1)) |  |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

## Recommendations

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

- ensure that visits to the home carried out under Regulation 33 include closer scrutiny of how the person making the visits will wish to be satisfied that the home has an effective approach to behaviour management. Visits should routinely examine records of restraint to check that the home provides stable, safe and secure care (Statutory Guidance paragraph 3.12)
- ensure that sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children (NMS 3.8)
- ensure that all children and staff are given an opportunity to discuss incidents of restraint they have been involved in, witnessed or been affected by, with a relevant adult. In relation to obtaining young people's comments following restraint (NMS 3.17)
- ensure the registered person takes action to address any issues of concern that they identify or which is raised with them. Specifically provide an up to date risk assessment and behaviour management plan. (NMS 21.9)

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people's outcomes progressively improve because they are happy and settled at this home. Their healthy attachments with staff provide young people with strong adult role models that they relate well to and respect. This helps young people feel safe in their home environment and sufficiently settled to move forward with their life plans.

Young people's regular contact with family, friends and significant others immensely satisfies their identity and heritage needs. This keeps them well connected to important people in their lives.

Young people know about living a healthy lifestyle. For example, they understand what constitutes a healthy, balanced diet. Smoking, drug taking and using alcohol are not detected as issues that interest young people. This improves their health outcomes and reduces the chances of them contracting health related conditions. Young people's attendance at routine health appointments ensures that they obtain the required treatment to improve their health. Some young people's engagement with professionals from psychology services helps them to address issues impacting on their mental health.

All young people have an educational placement, whether this is school or home based. They show good potential in attaining their individual educational goals. Young people who have experienced difficulties with their educational attendance have taken on board the support and guidance offered to them by staff and other professionals. As a result, young people express positive views about fully re-engaging in their educational plans and are making preparations for the new school term. This motivated attitude enhances young people's opportunities to improve their life chances in the world of work and further education through their increased attendance.

Young people enjoy a range of social activities that stimulate their interests and past-times. For example, going to the cinema, attending football matches, socialising with friends, playing indoor games and taking holidays to fun places. Young people's engagement in activities broadens their outlook on life, improves their social skills and fully integrates them into community life and wider society.

Young people have acquired good independence skills which emotionally and physically prepare them for adult life. They demonstrate sound budgeting skills and know how to shop, prepare meals, clean, travel independently and make choices. These activities strengthen young people's ability to cope independently as they mature into adult life.

## **Quality of care**

**good**

High quality individualised placement plans clearly detail how young people's individual needs will be met. This includes issues in relation to young people's personal identity, which promotes their equal rights and diversity needs.

Young people are valued by a competent and caring staff team who place them at the centre of their practice. Staff demonstrate their commitment to the young people in their strong and engaging interactions with them. A staff member commented that 'the staff work well together in providing the best possible care for the young people'. Excellent relationships forged between young people and staff nurture mutual respect and supports caring, warm and trusting interactions. Young people approach staff with confidence, which enables them to discuss any concerns or worries. Staff utilise their positive relationships with young people by talking to them about their negative behaviours. This helps young people to understand the impact of their behaviour on others and realise there are consequence to their actions. Young people develop socially acceptable mannerisms and reduce negative behaviours over time as a result of the support they receive in this area.

Young people's wishes and feelings significantly influence the running of the home. As a result of consultation with young people, some have moved bedrooms and all young people have personalised their rooms to suit their unique tastes. Young people also have a say in how they plan their week and make good use of key work sessions and young people's meetings to express their views. Good support and guidance enables young people to attend their statutory reviews and feel consulted in the process. This without exception confirms to young people that their views are listened to, respected and acted on. A young person confirmed that if something cannot be done they are helped to understand the reason. This generates an open and honest dialogue. Young people know how to complain and when they have raised an issue, it has been dealt with to their satisfaction.

Young people benefit immensely from a nurturing environment where their education is valued and promoted. The staff team has worked diligently to secure education placements and has a good track record of ensuring that all young people are educated in a manner that meets their learning and aspirational needs. This is evident in the recent success in the home securing an education placement off site for a young person and the commitment shown by young people to fully re-engage in education. This clearly demonstrates how the home positively address challenges and barriers to young people's educational progress and achievement.

Effective practices and communication with health professionals ensure that young people's specific holistic health needs are promptly met.

Young people live in a clean, well decorated and homely environment that is

maintained to a high quality standard. In consultation with young people, new curtains and pictures have been purchased, which enhances the newly decorated walls. The external grounds have been improved and plans are in place to make the pathway at the front of the house safer. Young people enjoy good personal and communal space in the home. Good transport routes enable young people to access a range of local and community facilities, which counters any potential feelings of isolation.

### **Keeping children and young people safe    adequate**

Although young people are better able to manage their challenging behaviours through their strong relationships with staff, not all of them have a behaviour management plan. This makes it unclear how staff manage their behaviours. Coupled with this issue, not all behaviour management strategies are consistently applied which has led to the imposition of unfair sanctions, more than one sanction at the same time and some have proved to be ineffective. This does not help young people to take responsibility for their behaviour in the spirit of fairness and proportionality. The records in relation to sanctions do not comply with the children's homes regulations. This does not provide a clear audit trail that protects individual young people's information. Young people rarely experience restraint, which is evident by the two recorded restraints. However on one occasion the manager has not signed to confirm their satisfaction with the restraint and has not queried the reason why young people have not made comment about the incident. A further concern is the independent visitor has reported that there have been no physical interventions on the two occasions when they have in fact taken place. This does not drive robust management oversight of behaviour management practices to ensure the home continues to provide stable safe and secure care to young people.

Young people confirm they feel safe living at this home and their strong relationships with staff provide a responsible adult to talk to if they felt unsafe. Staff training in safeguarding young people ensures that they can detect the risks associated with abuse, child sexual exploitation, accidents and bullying. Staff are well informed about the risks associated with young people's vulnerabilities. Where appropriate staff work in partnership with other professionals to minimise the occasions when young people engage in risky and extremely harmful behaviours. However, not all young people's risk assessments include all of the risks that may impact on their safety. This is specifically on the rare occasions that young people have attempted to exit the premises by their bedroom window.

The no tolerance attitude to bullying ensures that young people live in an environment that does not intimidate them. Staff are alert to young people's potential to bully each other and take action when this is brought to their attention or is observed. An incident of bullying was addressed to a young person's satisfaction and was discussed at the young people's meeting. Young people confirm that when they have felt bullied that staff have been responsive, which results in few incidents.

Overall, young people benefit from good supervision, which reduces incidents of them going missing from care. On the occasions when young people have gone missing or absented themselves from the home, they are protected by staff who search for them, follow the appropriate protocols and work in partnership with the police and other social care professionals to secure their prompt and safe return home.

Staff recruitment procedures ensure that young people are cared for by people who are vetted as suitable to care for them. Young people live in a physically secure environment. This is supported by staff who undertake regular health and safety checks of fire, electrical and gas equipment. This practice keeps everyone safe.

### **Leadership and management**

### **adequate**

Leadership and management is adequate. The Registered Manager resigned her position in July 2014 having only been registered as the homes manager since January 2014. The home is currently managed by the deputy manager who is in the process of applying to register with Ofsted. The manager has achieved a level four award in caring for children and young people and level four manager's residential child care. They are well known and respected by the young people and ably supported by the staff team and senior manager to ensure young people receive continuity of care.

The staff team work well together and gain support from each other and the various mechanisms in place. For example team meetings, daily handovers and staff supervision. However, not all staff have received regular formal supervision and in at least one instance, supervision had not taken place for nine months. This does not enable staff to reflect on and improve their work practices so that they can consistently deliver high quality care to young people.

There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection. A development plan in place is under review to ensure it continues to meet the current needs of the service. Internal and independent external management monitoring although regularly undertaken has lacked sufficient rigour and scrutiny. For example, monitoring has missed opportunities to improve behaviour management practices, ensure up to date risk assessments and regular staff supervision. This has significantly weakened opportunities to quickly drive improvement in the home for young people's benefit.

Young people are cared for by an appropriate number of consistent core staff, which promotes young people's positive attachments. Changes in the staff team have impacted on the young people, but the support offered to them by existing team members has helped them to understand the reasons for their departure. New staff have bonded well with young people and agency staff recruited to the home to cover

staff shortages during night-time hours have got the young people's approval. An agency staff member said 'I think the members of staff are working tirelessly to improve the welfare of the young people and they also have a good team spirit which makes the job easier for agency staff like me'. Most staff have attained a relevant childcare qualification and receive training to ensure they continue to meet young people's changing needs. New staff have been inducted into their role and expect to be appropriately qualified by next year. Staff are trained in areas, such as attachment theory, bereavement and loss and self-harm. This improves staff members understanding of young people's diverse needs.

The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed to ensure it complies with the new regulations. However, it is out of date with respect to staffing arrangements and it has not been sent to Ofsted. This does not enable the regulator to see how the home intends to care for young people and improve their outcomes. Young people's records are secured in a safe place in the home and the contents majorly contribute to the young people's life and future plans.

## 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.