

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	02/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC452713
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Greenfields Adolescent Development Limited
Registered person address	5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, POTTERS BAR, Hertfordshire, EN6 1AG

Responsible individual	Mark O'Donnell
Registered manager	Currently vacant
Inspector	Paul Clark

Inspection date	02/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	declined in 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

SC452713

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Placement plans contain effective risk assessments of behaviour which contribute to a young person's behaviour management plan. Even for young people placed in an emergency, the home quickly makes placement plans for young people which are based on rigorous assessments of need. These are informed by placing authority's care plans and the home's rigorous assessments of young people's health and educational needs.
- Individual young people's emotional health and well-being is supported by early referral to a therapeutic agency who undertake an assessment and direct work with a young person if necessary. The therapeutic agency also provides clinical supervision to the team around the young people.
- The agency has an educational provision which young people can attend after their educational needs have been assessed. Care staff are available to support young people in the classroom and this helps to maintain school attendance and educational achievement.
- High staffing levels by day and during the night means that young people have individualised care both in the home and in their educational setting.
- The home ensures that the support for young people on admission to the home is of a high level. A key worker explains the aims and objectives of the home and assists the young person to contribute to their placement plan and risk assessments. There is a generous 'settling-in' allowance which ensures that young people's initial physical needs are well met and that they can have some say over their living environment.

The home can improve the quality of care by:

- Ensuring that there are suitable facilities, equipment and resources available for learning in place.
- The manager of the home achieving the appropriate qualification within three years of appointment.
- Undertaking an annual review of the locality risk assessment to take account of the proximity of the busy main road.

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

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Specifically, the proximity of the busy main road. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64 paragraph 15.1)
- The home must make available suitable facilities, equipment and resources for learning. Specifically, young people should have access to a desk, chair and reading light. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29 paragraph 5.18)
- Ensure that the manager working in the children's home must have the qualification in regulation 28(2) within the relevant timescales listed in regulation 28(3). (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 53 paragraph 10.12)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The service is operated by a private company which is part of the CareTech group; a national social care agency. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/12/2014	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
23/07/2014	CH - Full	Good
17/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress
10/12/2013	CH - Full	Good
29/01/2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are good. Each young person has an allocated key worker. Key workers demonstrate a clear knowledge of an individual young person's needs. They meet with the young person regularly to ascertain their feelings about their care and ask them if they have any issues they wish to raise. Young people are given written information about the home and staff help them to understand the written Children's Guide to the home. One young person commented, "W (his key worker) went through all of the rules in the guide with me when I moved in, and how to make complaints." In addition to meeting with their key worker, young people are able to express their views about their care at regular house meetings where they can make decisions and choices about day to day living in the home. Decisions about the care provided are made early on in placement and a 'settling-in' allowance is provided; young people have a choice in the way that this is spent. This makes young people feel welcome and provides them with a sense of belonging. One young person commented, "We both like different food so they (the staff) do that for us. He (another young person placed) likes mountain biking and I like to trampoline, so we do that separately with members of staff. It was great when we moved in because we can spend £150 on anything we like for our room. I've just bought a TV." Additionally, a placing social worker commented, "My first impression is that the home provides excellent care. The young person was received by the home brilliantly and has really settled well. They really have gone the extra mile in assessing their needs." All of this practice helps young people to settle in well and helps them to feel welcome. The home quickly ensures that a young person's existing educational arrangements are fully supported. The home contacts a young person's school and makes sure that transport arrangements are put in place. For one young person whose school placement was in danger of failing because of their behaviour, the home offered a	

member of the home's care staff team to be present in the classroom to support the young person's learning. This helps to maintain a young person's education. Care staff attend Personal Education Plan meetings at the school and this means that they are a part of the joint planning on educational support for a young person. Staff contribute advice on how Pupil Premiums can be best spent to support a young person's education. Where a young person's school placement has broken down the home is able to offer full time education at the agency's own school provision. Together with support from care staff in the classroom this has meant that for one young person recently placed in the home, education attendance has not been interrupted and gives them the best chance of achieving educationally in the long term. Education in the home could be improved by the provision of study resources, such as a desk, chair and reading light in each young person's bedroom.

Young people's health needs are quickly assessed and met. For the young people currently placed, registration with a general practitioner, optician and dentist was achieved within 48 hours and routine check-ups take place in a timely manner. Where the home have concerns about a young person's emotional well-being the home have a contractual arrangement with a therapeutic agency to which a young person can be referred. One placing authority social worker commented,

"They were handpicked for their access to therapeutic services and this already has been set up. It has been a settling experience for him. They have a good understanding of his needs."

The therapeutic agency also attends the home's team meetings and give clinical supervision about the young people placed in the home.

All of these measures help to promote the good health of young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The way that children and young people are helped and protected by the home is good. This could be further improved by the home ensuring that locality risk assessments are reviewed annually, and the assessment should clearly indicate the degree of individual risks. The home has recently conducted a health and safety review of the home including electrical appliance and fire safety checks. All staff have received training in fire safety and evacuation drills have recently been carried out. This helps to ensure that young people live in a safe physical	

environment.

The staff of the home conduct early and thorough risk assessments of the risk behaviours of individual young people, including the potential to self-harm, and the potential to go missing. These risk assessments are written into a placement plan which each member of staff reads, and which they demonstrate a good knowledge of. These assessments are also written into young people's case files. This helps to reduce problematic behaviour which may affect the lives of young people living in the home. A system is in place to ensure that risk assessments are periodically reviewed. There has only been one incident where a young person has needed to be physically restrained and subsequently sanctioned since the two young people currently living in the home have been placed. Effective recording of the incident and restraint has been carried out and staff and young person involved were debriefed following the incident. This acknowledges the event and gives guidance to young people about appropriate conduct and behaviour. Young people feel that the sanctions applied in the home are fair and proportionate.

Young people confirm that a key worker goes through the children's guide with them and explains the way that they can complain. The young people are aware that they may also raise any concerns about their safety or care at the regular house meetings, or with their placing social workers, or at their care plan review meetings. One young person has raised a concern to a staff member about the way they have been restrained by a teacher at their local education authority school and the home has reported this to the local authority designated officer (LADO) and made appropriate notification to the regulatory body. An investigation is currently being conducted into this matter. The home has effective links with the LADO who reports that there are no current or recent safeguarding concerns about the home.

The home has identified that one young person has not had contact with their birth family for over a year. The home has raised this with the placing authority and requested an independent visitor be arranged for the young person, who will offer a source of external friendship and support outside of the home. This gives young people access to a trusted adult and is an example of good practice.

The home was closed for review and reorganisation following the last inspection of the home in December 2014 and was reopened in November 2015. The home has a clearly written policy in place which guides staff on the action to be taken should a young person go missing from the home. There have been no incidents of a young person going missing from the home since it has reopened. The home is currently liaising with the local police.

Examination of staff personnel files indicates that appropriate vetting arrangements are in place before staff appointments are made and this prevents unsuitable people from being recruited. All staff receive training on safeguarding children, and dealing with bullying during their induction period and this training is periodically

updated. Staff interviewed during the inspection demonstrated a clear understanding of the safeguarding procedures to be followed and this helps to ensure the safety and wellbeing of young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers is good. During the period of the home's closure, following the resignation and deregistration of the previous Registered Manager, no manager was appointed. The person currently managing the home is an experienced manager in residential child care who has made formal application to the regulatory body to be Registered Manager. Leadership and management arrangements will be further improved by the registration of a manager, and that manager having the appropriate qualification. The manager and staff contingent have moved in total from a nearby home which was owned by the agency and which has now closed. The staff team are an experienced and stable group, the majority of whom have an appropriate professional qualification, or are undertaking this award. Staff induction and training includes all core areas of the residential worker's role and this training is regularly updated. Annual personal development reviews of staff identify their training and development needs. Staff report that they receive direct supervision from the manager at least monthly and that they meet as a team at least monthly. They also report that they feel well supervised and supported by the home manager and the other managers within the organisation. Good training and supervision together with the high staffing numbers per young person helps to ensure that young people receive good quality care. Care planning is robust and early placement planning based on assessments of need and risk assessment is in place. There is evidence that the manager has actively and robustly chased placing authorities for full information and documentation on young people who have been placed in an emergency. This enables the home to provide the right care and support for young people, and to ensure that, among other needs, young people's education and therapeutic care needs are swiftly met. Effective monitoring of the quality of the home is achieved by the monthly visit and reporting of an independent visitor. Recommendations in the report have been applied in the home. Additionally, the manager makes quarterly reviews of the quality of care which take into account the views of young people and all other stakeholders, and which identifies areas of service development for the future.	

The home notify the regulatory body and all other appropriate professionals about any significant event occurring. Placing social workers report that the home communicates well with them and that robust action is taken by the home to address all issues of concern. Working proactively and positively with other agencies helps to promote the best possible care for young people.

The requirements from the previous inspection have been met in full, and the home now; regularly updates and reviews the statement of purpose, a copy of which is sent to HMCI; sends copies of the monthly Regulation 44 reports to HMCI; sends copies of the monthly Regulation 45 reports to HMCI; has a record book of restraints which gives a full description of events as required; sends notifications of required events to the regulatory body in a timely way.

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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