

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC452713
Inspector	David Kidner
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	Robert Yetzes
Registered manager	Jason Stuart Hitchins / Robert David Vaughan Jones
Date of last inspection	17/03/2014

Inspection date	23/07/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	satisfactory progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
-------------------	-------------

Children and young people make good progress from their starting points across all aspects of their welfare and development including their social, emotional and behavioural needs.

Comprehensive placement plans supported by detailed risk assessments are regularly reviewed to ensure they reflect the needs of children and young people. Staff demonstrate good awareness of children and young people's individual needs and the support they require.

The home provides a safe and supportive home to young people. Staff have a robust understanding of safe working practice and children and young people confirm that they feel safe. Children and young people confirm that staff always act in their best interests and that fair boundaries and expectations are consistently followed.

There are good relationships between the children and young people and the staff team. Children and young people speak highly of the staff team and the support that they receive.

There is a vacancy for the post of Registered Manager and the manager has made an application to Ofsted. However, the manager has a very good understanding of

the strengths and weaknesses of the home and completes regular audits of the quality of care, and takes appropriate action to address shortfalls.

Ofsted has received very positive comments from a placing authority who stated that they are very impressed with the care and support that home provides and they enjoy excellent working relationships with them.

Shortfalls identified at this inspection relate to the environment, the recording of restraints, the homes Statement of Purpose and ensuring that internal and external evaluations of the quality of care provided in the home are sent to Ofsted. Areas for further improvement include improving the recording of documentation in respect of behaviour management. It is considered that the breaches in regulations and areas for improvement do not have a significant impact on the quality of care and support provided at the home.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The service is operated by a private company and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
10/12/2013	Full	good
29/01/2013	Full	good

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
4 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI (Regulation 4 (2))	31/08/2014
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 that purpose and of which shall include the location and duration of the measure of restraint (Regulation 17B 3 (d) 4 (a))	31/08/2014
31 (2001)	ensure that all parts of the children's home used by children are kept clean and reasonably decorated and maintained (Regulation 31 (2) (e))	31/10/2014
33	ensure that the independent person shall produce a	31/08/2014

(2001)	written report about a visit (referred to in this regulation "the independent person's report") and provide a copy to HMCI (Regulation 33 (9) (a))	
34 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall supply HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted by him for the purposes of monitoring matters set out in Schedule 6 at least once in every three months (Regulation 34).	31/08/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure the home regular reviews incidents of challenging behaviour, examine trends or issues emerging from this, to enable staff to reflect and learn to inform their future practice (NMS3.21).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Children and young people make good progress in developing a positive self-view and self-esteem and have a good understanding of their background. They understand the importance of healthy lifestyles based on their level of understanding and their lifestyle and experiences, prior to being placed at the home.

Children and young people have a good understanding of key health risks and as a result of their actions and choices, and support from staff their risk taking behaviours have reduced significantly. Some young people are very complimentary of how the staff have supported them in this area and this has resulted in very positive outcomes for them.

Their educational achievements are good taking into account both their attainment and progress from their starting point at the time of placement. Supported by the staff team, some young people make decisions about further education, and some young people are able to make good decisions in respect of the continuation of their education.

Children and young people benefit greatly from contact with their families and persons who are important to them, based on their individual circumstances. Staff actively support and encourage contact.

Children and young people are actively involved in the local community and enjoy a wide range of leisure and recreational activities. They are encouraged to make choices and share their views and opinions. Staff are supportive to enable children and young people to communicate their needs effectively.

Some young people are supported by effective preparation for more independent living and transition into adult life. Young people have developed a wide range of independent living skills including cooking, cleaning, budgeting and the use of public transport. Young people confirm that staff are fully supportive in this area.

Quality of care **good**

Children and young people are supported by a staff team that put their needs at the forefront of the care and support they provide. Staff demonstrate an excellent awareness and understanding of their individual needs.

Staff are guided and supported by comprehensive placement plans that clearly identify the needs of young people, how their needs are to be met and targets for

the delivery of care. They are regularly reviewed and amended to reflect their changing needs. One young person stated 'I am completely different to what I was' and 'the home has made me who I am now.' The home ensures that regular updates of the care provided are sent to placing authorities. This ensures that placing authorities are regularly kept up to date of the care and support that is being provided. One placing authority commented that the home 'do what they say they are going to do' and 'goes above and beyond.' In addition, they confirmed that the home provides a high standard of care and that they cannot speak highly enough of the home.

Children and young people consider that staff are concerned about their welfare. Some young people confirm that staff take steps to ensure that they are safe and well, and that their welfare is important to the staff. Children and young people enjoy positive and constructive relationships with staff and are confident and comfortable in their discussions.

Children and young people are aware of what constitutes a healthy lifestyle and receive good support and education from staff in order to promote their health needs. Children and young people are aware of the importance of a healthy diet and staff are proactive in ensuring a healthy balance is promoted. Children and young people have access to a variety of healthcare professionals. Good records are kept of such visits and young people confirm that their privacy is promoted in this area. The home ensures that if required, children and young people have access to therapeutic services.

The home works positively with other agencies and professionals. Placing authorities speak very well of excellent communication between them and the home.

Children and young people know how to make a complaint and are aware of the complaints process and procedure. The home takes complaints seriously and keeps detailed records of complaints and the outcomes. Young people feel listened to and that staff act upon their views. One young person stated 'I get on well with all the staff'.

Children and young people are supported to access a wide range of leisure, social and recreational facilities in the wider community, and in the home. These include visits to the beach, parks, leisure facilities and local shops. As part of promoting more independent living, the home actively guides and support young people in planning of the use of public transport and ensure that young people feel confident and are able to contact staff if required when accessing public transport.

The home is located in a semi-rural location and has good access to a wide range of services both locally and further afield. It is set in large grounds offering plenty of space for relaxing and play. Young people enjoy the garden areas and one young person pointed out a number of fruit trees and shrubs and commented that they have picked the fruit and made jam.

Since the last inspection some improvements have been made to the environment. However, the home does not fully promote a homely and welcoming environment. Some parts of the environment require refurbishment and re-decoration and other areas require deep cleaning. There are some areas of the home that require maintenance but this does not negatively impact on the safety of the children and young people. Some hallways, landing areas and bathroom facilities are not aesthetically pleasing and would benefit from soft furnishings to promote a child friendly, and a welcoming environment. The manager has identified this as a weakness and forms part of the home's development plan. A number of these matters have been identified by the service and action is being taken to address these.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Children and young people state that they feel safe in the home and confirm that there are staff they can speak to if needed.

The service has robust policies and procedures for safeguarding children and staff demonstrate a good awareness of safeguarding practices and procedures. The home works in collaboration with placing authorities and other agencies, such as the police and the local safeguarding children's board in order to keep young people safe.

Placement plans and risk assessments identify risk areas and the steps to take to reduce the risk. Behaviour management strategies are devised as needed. These provide staff with guidance on how to respond and react to behaviours. The home maintains comprehensive records in respect of incidents, episodes of missing and the use of restraint. One young person stated 'the home has made me look at my behaviour and the way I look at things' and 'I used to be angry but they have helped me massively.'

The use of restraint has reduced and there is detailed recording of incidents where restraint has been used. However, it was noted that the home has not recorded one incident of the use of restraint in the home's volume kept for that purpose. This had been recorded in detail in other documentation. In addition, some records in the volume do not confirm the location and duration of the restraint, although this is recorded elsewhere. There is not sufficient evidence that the home reviews all incidents of challenging behaviour and examines trends or emerging themes to enable staff to learn or to inform future practice. Not all records viewed demonstrated that where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children and young people are encouraged to have their views recorded. However, these shortfalls do not place young people at risk of significant harm. Staff receive training in the use of the home's preferred method of de-escalation and restraint.

Staff are aware of the factors that may trigger young people going missing. However,

the incidences of children and young people going missing have reduced over time. If young people are reported missing the home takes significant steps to go searching for young people and make every effort to find them. The home ensures that detailed records are kept that details the action taken when children and young people that details the action taken. Young people state that staff advise them of the dangers of going missing and encourage them to return if they are absent without consent. However, this rarely occurs. One social worker stated that the 'levels of risk have reduced' and that 'the home keeps them safe.'

Children and young people do not report bullying as an issue. If there are difficulties or disagreements between young people these are recorded in detail and acted upon appropriately.

Children and young people live in a home that is physically safe. The home ensures that there is regular servicing of the home's utilities. Fire prevention is promoted and children and young people are regularly involved in fire drills.

Leadership and management

adequate

There is a vacancy for the post of Registered Manager and the manager has made an application to Ofsted and this process is being undertaken. Leaders and the managers have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and there is a development plan for the home.

The home has met one of the requirements made at the last inspection and as a result of this the review of the policy in the use of electronic devices on the doors has been completed. The manager stated that at present these devices are not in operation. The other requirement relates to the appointment of a Registered Manager; this process is underway. The recommendation that was made at the previous inspection has been partly met. This related to ensuring that the home's environment is well maintained and decorated.

There is a comprehensive Statement of Purpose that clearly describes the services that are provided and contains all the required information and is dated March 2014. However, Ofsted has not received a copy of the revised document.

The home notifies all significant events relating to the protection of young people to the appropriate authorities and agencies.

The home completes a three monthly review of the quality of care provided by the home but not all of these reports have been sent to Ofsted. However, the newly appointed manager is aware of the regulations pertaining to ensuring that these reports are sent to Ofsted. In addition, the home ensures that there is a regular audit of the home undertaken on a monthly basis by an independent visitor. Once again, Ofsted has not received these reports. However, these monitoring reports were

located in the home's files. The manager and a senior manager stated that they will investigate why these are not being received by Ofsted.

Children and young people are supported by a staff team that receives regular support and supervision. Staff speak very highly of the support that they receive from the manager. The home ensures that there is adequate, well trained and experienced staff on duty at all times.

The home maintains a training matrix to record the training that has been undertaken. Staff have received training in child protection, child sexual exploitation, de-escalation and restraint, fire awareness, attachment disorders, self-harm, first aid, food hygiene and medicines. This ensures that staff receive the appropriate training and skills to perform their role.

The home provides a safe environment for young people.

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.