

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC472139
Inspector	Maire Atherton
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Amegreen Children's Services Limited
Registered person address	2 Granary Court Fair Oak Green, Stratfield Saye READING RG7 2DL
Responsible individual	Gary James Carlin
Registered manager	Linda Gaye Bursnall
Date of last inspection	14/01/2015

Inspection date	26/03/2015
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Previous inspection	sustained effectiveness
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	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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There were no young people living in the home at the time of this inspection. The last resident moved out one month before this visit. Staff have been redeployed until such time as a new young person is admitted. The accommodation has been refurbished. Routine checks and maintenance are on-going so the home will be ready when required.

The manager effectively leads the skilled core staff team. Staff are well equipped for their role by a high standard of training and support that promotes reflection and continual development. This in turn enables them to work with children and young people to secure good outcomes.

The record of physical intervention is not maintained as required by the regulations. Internal monitoring and the development plan for the home are insufficiently evaluative. The location risk assessment is missing some details. These are the subjects of two requirements and a recommendation.

In the main young people made good progress whilst living in the home which supported their moves in accordance with their wishes and care plans.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a private provider and is registered to provide care and accommodation for two young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or learning difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2015	Interim	sustained effectiveness
04/11/2013	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
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline a written record is made which, for restraints, must include the information required (Regulation 17B(3)(a)-(i) and (4)(a)(b))	17/05/2015
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for (a) monitoring the matters in schedule 6 at least once every three months and (b) improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. (Regulation 34(1)(a)(b))	30/06/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take

account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop the location risk assessment to evidence the consideration given to the adjacent road and fields (NMS 10.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

The majority of young people made good progress in their time in the home. Most moved on in accordance with their expressed wishes which informed their care plans. Whilst living in the home they were supported to re-engage very well with education, some achieving 100 percent attendance. Young people's health improved as they attended routine and specialist appointments and ate a balanced diet. They joined clubs in the local community, for example drama, football and judo. They learned to express their feelings and anxieties positively and so felt ready to move to a bigger group to further develop sharing and negotiating skills to support continued progress and development.

For those who had unplanned endings their time in the home highlighted the specialist resources they required.

Quality of care **good**

Staff enable young people to have a voice in the running of the home. Their views are obtained through regular house meetings and action is taken, where possible, to meet their requests. There are no formal complaints from young people, low level grumbles are responded to as they arise. Young people contribute to their care plans and are well supported to express their hopes and wishes, for example one young person moved to another home in the organisation at his request.

Staff effectively promote the health care needs of young people. Their routine healthcare needs are well met. Staff have established good links with local healthcare professionals. Staff demonstrate in-depth knowledge and understanding of particular health issues, underpinned by regular specialist training. The organisation has good access to therapeutic support for young people and guidance for staff, when requested, to meet emerging needs.

Staff are pro-active in establishing and maintaining relationships with education providers. They work in partnership with good information sharing to support young people in their education. For example where issues are identified with a particular subject they put in support structures, such as additional tuition.

Staff are knowledgeable about the local area and previous residents have made good use of a wide range of clubs and activities, football and drama to name but two.

Staff know how to effectively promote the personal identity of young people and reflect this in care planning. The manager considers needs arising from identity when

matching a young person with a keyworker.

The home is in a rural location and the manager has risk assessed this. In discussion the manager outlined the consideration given to the adjacent road and fields but this is not included in the written document. The house has been redecorated and new carpet has been laid. The bathroom flooring has been lifted and work is underway to lay new flooring. There is ample communal space for two young people which provides warm, comfortable and homely accommodation furnished to a good standard.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Staff have a good understanding of what they need to do to safeguard young people, underpinned by a robust training programme. Recent staff training has covered areas such as self-harm, drug misuse, and safe internet use. The manager has booked training in child sexual exploitation to further develop their awareness so they can better protect young people.

Staff are familiar with and know how to implement the child protection policy. Young people very rarely went missing or left the house without permission. When this did happen staff knew where the young people were and actively engaged with them to try and get them to return of their own volition. Staff have developed good links with the local Police Community Support Officers that supports their own safeguarding of young people.

Staff see the establishment of good relationships with young people as the basis for behaviour management. As a result behaviour management is robust and proportionate. Staff are trained in a recognised behaviour management method. They place a strong emphasis on rewards, using sanctions and physical interventions infrequently. The records relating to the use of physical intervention are thorough when cross referenced, but are not maintained as required by regulation.

Robust recruitment policies and procedures are implemented in practice to ensure that staff employed are suitable to work with young people.

Any complaints or allegations are well-managed in accordance with the published policies and procedures. Staff have easy online access to these documents which are clear and easy to search.

Health and safety in the home is robust. Routine checks, servicing and maintenance are undertaken as required to provide young people with a safe and secure environment.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post for two years and is suitably qualified and experienced. She has considerable experience in working with young people and is also a senior accredited counsellor. She is also registered in respect of another home a short distance away.

The manager has a reflective style that encourages learning and development in staff, with the aim of securing improvements to the service. This is seen in the learning from the only complaint received. The reflection by the manager is well evidenced in the quarterly reports and annual development plan for the home but these documents lack robust evaluation. The management team are reviewing their monitoring to provide for this, for example sharing the clear aims and objectives with staff. Effective monitoring by the independent visitor is used by the manager to inform practice in the home, sharing what is good and responding positively to any actions set.

There was one recommendation arising from the last inspection, this related to admissions to the home. The management have analysed the two admissions to the home that resulted in unplanned endings. In one case the admission process was very thorough, actively involving the young person and the social worker, and the outcome could not have been foreseen. In the second case clear learning points have been identified in respect of emergency admissions. However the arrival of the young person with just some of their belongings in a carrier bag, without their medication was outside the control of the home and the subsequent behaviour could not have been predicted. The management have raised concerns with the placing authority about this. Other young people have left the home positively in accordance with their care plans. A social worker commented on, 'the care and commitment you give to X every day and how much I have valued the ethos of warmth, family and individuality.'

The most recent revision of the statement of purpose was sent to Ofsted during the course of the inspection. This is being further revised in the light of the new regulations, as is the young people's guide.

The staff team have been redeployed to other homes run by the organisation. There is sufficient capacity to enable the staff team to return to this home when the need arises. Staff describe the support they receive through regular supervision and team meetings as good. Staff say that joint team meetings with the other home run by the manager are a useful way to gain different perspectives on how to work with young people and achieve consistency. Staff are equipped to fulfil their role and develop professionally by the robust and responsive training provided. The majority of staff have either completed or are enrolled on the level 3 diploma. There are plans in place to ensure that all eligible staff are enrolled, although some are outside the required time scale.

Records are well-maintained and stored securely.

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.