

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	01/10/2015
Unique reference number	SC475748
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Lisa Claire Nobbs
Inspector	Ms Line

Previous Inspection date	10/03/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained 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

SC475748

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Strong leadership ensures this home is organised and effectively managed.
- Commitment and drive from the Registered Manager sets the culture for the home which is aspirational, supportive, resilient and caring.
- Young people are provided with placement stability, and receive good standards of care from an enthusiastic, experienced and competent staff team.
- Relationships between staff and young people are largely positive and reciprocal.
- All young people make progress from their starting points, and for some this is exceptional. Where they experience difficulties staff provide support and encouragement to help them overcome these.
- Most young people engage positively in school or further education, attendance is excellent, and attainment levels improve.
- Young people's physical and emotional needs are well met, with access to specialist services where required.
- Activities and opportunities are plentiful enabling young people to have new experiences, develop skills and confidence, and make friendships.
- A key strength is how staff plan and prepare young people for independence. Leaders and managers advocate for young people to ensure the timing of their transition to independent living is in line with their wishes and needs.
- Staff work inclusively with birth families and this has a positive impact on the lives of young people.
- Staff work hard to manage young people's complex needs including some risky behaviour. Supervision and vigilance helps to keep young people safe.
- Leaders and managers respond promptly to safeguarding concerns ensuring that young people's safety and welfare are protected.
- Restorative practice enables young people to learn their behaviour impacts on themselves and others.
- Managers and staff work collaboratively with partner agencies who report high levels of satisfaction with the service.

To continue to improve the home needs to:

- Clarify fire safety arrangements in respect of the top floor of the home which accommodates offices and the staff sleep-in room, and ensure a fire evacuation plan is in place.
- Address gaps in training, and ensure monitoring activity is used to improve the accuracy of some records when they are updated.
- Update the location risk assessment to reflect environmental hazards within the locality.
- Take account of young people's views about how staff support them during periods of challenging behaviour to ensure they are sufficiently reassured.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must – 13(2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child; (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided, specifically to ensure the content of updated risk assessments is accurate.	09/11/2015
Ensure the registered person complies with the requirements of the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (a) and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees) in respect of the home (Regulation 25(2)(b)).	09/11/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff listen to the child and take account of their views, wishes and feelings when planning and undertaking their care, specifically when supporting young people with episodes of challenging behaviour (The guide to the quality standards, page 21 paragraph 4.5).
- Ensure the registered person reviews the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home 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 (The guide to the quality standards page 64, paragraph 15.1).

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a re-registration of an existing children's home, due to a change of company name, all other matters remain the same (previous URN SC390201). This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for seven children with learning difficulties as well as children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2015	CH – Interim	sustained effectiveness
11/12/2014	CH – Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people are developing positive and trusted relationships with staff. Staff spend time with young people, and are interested in their well-being. Those spoken to during the inspection demonstrated a good understanding of young people's strengths, progress, risks, and needs. Consequently, young people are well supported, they are learning about reciprocity, and are investing in relationships with adults caring for them. One young person says 'the staff are the best' thing about this children's home, and others say that staff 'care'. Young people experience stable placements and are well cared for. This enables them to make good progress against their starting points. For example, young people develop in confidence, become more independent, develop their own identities, improve their social skills, and learn to make better choices about and moderate some aspects of their behaviour. One young person commented: 'I used to be shy and now I am more confident', and a grandparent said 'X is doing marvellous, he has come on in leaps and bounds'. Young people are clear about how to make a complaint. They can identify trusted adults inside and outside of the home they feel confident to speak with about any worries they may have. Information is readily available about children's rights and	

advocacy services, and a welcome booklet provides a guide to the home as well as details about who to contact for independent support. Young people report they are confident in having their say, and that for the most part they feel listened to. There is an innovative example of seeking a young person's views prior to their review. This tapped into their love of Manchester United, sparked his interest and willingness to participate. This meant his views were clearly accounted for in the meeting. Staff fully consult with all young people about what activities they want to do, what meals they want on the menu, and what improvements they want to make to the home environment.

An enthusiastic staff team ensures there are always opportunities to engage young people in different activities and opportunities. One young person describes living here as 'exciting, interesting, and enjoyable'. Participation in a range of leisure activities and social events is common place including, football, rugby, music concerts, drumming lessons, 'comic con' events, and magic cards. One young person is particularly excited about her new hamster and is delighted to be able to have a pet. This means individual needs are well catered for and young people have ordinary experiences in line with their peers. Furthermore, such opportunities enable them to learn new skills, build confidence, and develop friendships outside of the home.

Staff place great value on education and most young people are engaged positively with school or college. Attendance is excellent, and as a result attainment levels improve. One education report reflects a young person's improved attitude to learning and states: 'He has developed a real passion for school work' and is 'exceeding his targets.' Young people develop aspirations for their future, for example, one young person is working towards university next year, and another wants to go to college before joining the army. One young person has not accessed college after leaving school in July. Staff are supporting him regarding this, and he is actively seeking employment. Expectations are clear and this culture engenders a good work ethic in young people.

Staff support and encourage young people to develop skills which will assist their transition to adult life. This includes them assisting in food shopping, cooking, and helping around the home, as well as learning to budget and travel independently. Young people know how to shop on the internet, and enjoy receiving parcels containing clothes they have ordered on-line. In line with their age and development young people are encouraged to gain part-time jobs. One young person currently works in an older people's home to supplement her college bursary and gain valuable experience. As a result, independence is promoted and planned for, and young people are well prepared for their next steps.

Young people are in good health and benefit from effective and consistent health care. All are registered with appropriate medical practitioners and attend both routine and specialist appointments. Access to the organisations therapist and psychology services ensures their emotional needs are addressed and their well-

being improves. As a result, the holistic health needs of young people are promoted.

Staff work closely with placing authorities and birth families to promote contact that is positive, safe, and enjoyable. Staff facilitate contact both within and outside the home, and well organised plans ensure young people remain in touch with people who are important to them.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The overall arrangements to protect and safeguard young people are good. Young people say they feel safe and cared for. Managers and staff are clear that safeguarding is everybody's responsibility. They demonstrate a full understanding of their role, responsibilities and duties to promote young people's welfare and keep them safe. Consequently, any safeguarding concerns are responded to promptly and robustly, and information is shared with partner agencies. Effective communication and swift action protects young people from harm. Good staffing levels ensure young people receive the support and supervision they need to keep safe. Risks are identified and understood, and agreed strategies are in place to manage and minimise behaviour which causes concern. Key work sessions enable staff to raise their awareness of the dangers and vulnerabilities they face. Young people discuss issues and coping strategies that help them to keep safe, and they are provided with opportunities to reflect on their behaviour and learn from this. Young people are empowered to take age appropriate risks necessary for their continual development. Young people are entrusted to travel independently, to spend time with their friends and participate in different activities in the community. Clear boundaries are in place and staff keep in touch with young people when they are away from the home, to check on their welfare. As a result, young people are enabled to have appropriate freedoms without compromising their safety. This helps to build confidence and resilience. Individual support plans are in place. They are designed to minimise the risks of situations escalating and outline strategies to follow when incidents do occur. There are occasions when situations escalate and physical intervention is necessary. Young people say they understand why they are restrained, and that this is to keep them safe. Young people always have the opportunity to talk through incidents with someone not involved and these are well recorded. Some young people highlighted to the inspector that staff sometimes shout when they are supporting them through periods of crisis. One said: 'I have told them I don't	

like it, and I don't think it is right'. Consequently, young people are not always reassured by staff raising their voices when responding to episodes of challenging behaviour. This is an area identified for improvement to ensure their views are accounted for in this aspect of their care.

Young people are encouraged to behave appropriately and do not identify bullying as an issue. Methods such as rewards and incentives as well as consequences encourage young people to take responsibility for their behaviour. Young people report that consequences are fair, and they recognise that when they do something wrong they have to rebuild trust. For example, when they go missing their consequence is a period of increased supervision, and a staged reintroduction to independence. Young people accept this and understand it is because staff care about their welfare and want them to be safe. Restorative approaches help young people to reflect on and learn from concerning or risky behaviours.

Most young people do not go missing, and those that do, do not go missing often. Each child has a specific risk management plan highlighting their individual needs and vulnerabilities should they go missing, and these are shared with the police. The systems for following local protocols are in place, and are adhered to when incidents do occur. Records indicate that staff work hard to ensure their safe return.

Routine health and safety checks are carried out around the home and staff and young people participate in regular fire drills. This inspection identified there is no evacuation plan that highlights all emergency exits in the home, and the manager is unclear about any specific fire safety arrangements pertaining to the top floor of the home which accommodates the staff sleep-in room and offices. The location risk assessment does not account for all environmental factors within the locality of the home. For example, proximity to coastal areas. This lack of attention to all health and safety matters means strategies are not in place to minimise all risks to fully protect staff and young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2014 as part of this homes registration process. She holds a social work qualification, is working towards the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and is due to complete this imminently. The home is well organised and managed in young people's best interests. The manager demonstrates strong leadership which is recognised by staff, young people, and professionals alike. As a result, there is a clear ethos in the home	

based on high expectations and aspirational care.

The Registered Manager is committed and passionate about her own role, and advocates strongly for young people. She is proactive in ensuring young people receive care in line with their agreed plan, and that this is reviewed regularly in conjunction with them and the placing authority. This means that progress is clearly tracked, and where young people need additional support this is identified and addressed. Arrangements are already being made for two young people to remain beyond their 18th birthday to enable them to finish their college placements. One young person wishes to stay for the summer, and for staff to support her move to university. It is clear the manager champions young people's needs, and that plans are in place to support their natural progression on from the home at a time that is right for them.

Positive feedback from professionals evidences that staff are able to build effective partnerships with different agencies. This ensures that young people's welfare and safety is promoted. Communication is described as 'brilliant', and there is a respect for the commitment and care provided to young people. A social worker for a young person new to the home is clear about why she chose this service; 'What impressed me is the stability it has afforded other young people there, and I want this longevity for X'.

Staff confirm they are well supported and receive supervision regularly; they have an appraisal annually which supports their development. Staff morale is high and those spoken to as part of the inspection describe being happy in their work. Staff retention is good, providing stability and consistency for young people.

Internal and external monitoring takes place regularly to ensure good standards are maintained. A lack of attention to detail means that a recommendation from one quality assurance review has not yet been implemented into a young person's support plan, and although individual risk assessments have been updated they contain some inaccuracies. Given that in practice staff work hard to minimise and manage risk, this is a recording issue and to date has not impacted negatively on the welfare of young people.

Staff have access to a range of training and development opportunities and use these to inform their practice and support of young people. This inspection identified some gaps, for example only four staff have completed e-safety training, and sexually harmful behaviour training is not part of the workforce development plan. This means staff are not wholly equipped with up to date knowledge and skills to fully meet the individual needs of some young people.

Appropriate systems are in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant persons of significant events that occur. Consequently, people are kept well informed, and this means that young people's welfare is promoted.

No requirements or recommendations were made at the last inspection. Two requirements and two recommendations have been raised in this inspection to address shortfalls, and secure improvement where needed.

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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