

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	20/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC478152
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Phoenix Childcare Ltd
Registered provider address	Phoenix Learning And Care Ltd, Rolle Quay, Barnstaple, Devon EX31 1JE

Responsible individual	Mark Parker
Registered manager	Karen Burley
Inspector	Tina Maddison

Inspection date	20/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	One compliance notice was issued at the full inspection of 06 July 2016. The compliance notice was found to be fully met at the monitoring visit of 8 August 2016.
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC478152

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Risks are robustly identified, understood and managed. Young people are kept safe through comprehensive management of risks and by staff who are vigilant and well trained.
- Young people succeed in reducing risk-taking behaviours with the support of staff. Incidents of young people going missing and being restrained have reduced. Young people learn how to keep themselves safe.
- Transitions into the home and when young people move on from the home are well managed. There is effective communication between the staff at the home and other involved professionals and agencies, such as the police and safeguarding agencies.
- The acting manager provides strong direction and leadership. The staff are well led and supported. Staff morale is now high in the home, and there is a stable and consistent staff team in place.
- The home is well decorated, warm and homely. Young people are involved in choosing the decor of the home. Photographs of young people and the staff are displayed in the home, along with personal possessions. This gives the young people a sense of 'ownership'.
- All of the young people living in the home are engaged in education and are making progress, or have secured employment through effective support from the staff. This is very good progress from their starting points when they were admitted to the home.
- Relationships between the young people and the staff are trusting and nurturing. The young people feel safe enough to disclose details of any past traumas, which are robustly dealt with by staff. On-site therapists work with the young people to help them to understand past traumas and make progress.
- The views and requests of young people are documented at house meetings. The resulting actions from these requests are not carried over to the next meeting, so the young people are not able to clearly see if their requests have been acted on, or, if not why not.
- Young people's specific healthcare needs are not always comprehensively documented, so that trends and patterns can be identified and evaluated, which would inform future treatment plans.

What does the 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:

- Ensure that young people are able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. In particular, if the young people make a request during a house meeting, the response to this request must be recorded at the following meeting. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards,' page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- Ensure that children are helped to manage long-term conditions and, when necessary, meet specific individual healthcare needs arising from complex needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.12)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four young people who have experienced child sexual exploitation. It is operated by a private company that also operates a school nearby.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
6 July 2016	Full Inspection	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The young people benefit from living in a house that provides a calm and nurturing environment. Staff are well trained, skilled and able to meet the young people's identified care needs. The young people make progress in all areas of their lives. They are engaged in a time-limited therapeutic placement for young people who have been subject to child sexual exploitation. Qualified therapists inform the young person's individual placement plan, which focuses on raising self-esteem and helping the young people to understand how they became involved in risk-taking behaviours and how to keep themselves safe in future. The young people are now noticeably taking pride in their appearance, are able to speak about their past traumatic experiences and are reducing their risk-taking behaviours. This progress means that the young people are able to move on to other placements or home as part of their plan. Transitions out of the home are carefully and sensitively managed and fully involve the young person in the planning process. Staff succeed in re-building contact between young people and their families and supervise contact, often travelling long distances with the young people. Communication between the staff and families is very good, and this effective communication means that young people do not get mixed messages and they are not able to manipulate contact arrangements. The manager and staff have been proactive in supporting the young people to obtain employment, engage in full-time education and make progress. One young person has succeeded in gaining full-time employment locally, which is going well. She was supported by the staff to write a CV and attend an interview. Another young person now has an individually tailored education plan and receives their education in a specially adapted outbuilding in the grounds of the home. This room is well decorated and contains posters and equipment that support good education. The young person is making progress towards sitting examinations next summer and has asked for tuition in the German language, which is currently being facilitated by the manager. Healthcare needs are met at the home, and young people benefit from eating a healthy diet and are encouraged by the staff to engage in regular exercise. One young person has lost weight and is now of a healthy body weight and taking pride in their appearance. Support with any mental healthcare needs is available from the company psychologists who undertake regular therapeutic sessions with the young people and the staff. One young person who was self-harming prior to being admitted to the home has now completely stopped these behaviours as a result of support from staff and appropriate therapeutic intervention. One young person has specific healthcare needs that staff are successfully supporting them with. Detailed	

documented monitoring of this condition, which would allow the staff to evaluate triggers or patterns and enable them to provide the best possible treatment for this young person, is not taking place.

The staff work with the young people to decorate the home to their tastes. The young people said that they like their bedrooms, which are personalised with their possessions and photographs. The house is well maintained and domestic in appearance. The young people benefit from having access to outdoor spaces and a games and craft room.

Families and placing social workers commented very positively about the quality of care offered at the home and about the progress that their young person has made. One social worker said, 'My young person's behaviour has stabilised at the home. I have no complaints. She loves the staff. I would place there again, definitely.' A relative of one young person said, 'My sister used to try stupid stuff, but she has been perfect since she has been at the home. She has really come on. The staff are lovely. She has been safe there.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The young people living in the home now benefit from very comprehensive and detailed risk assessments. These documents give guidance to staff, detailing how they are to keep the young people safe. The manager shares risk assessments with other professionals in order to gain their expertise and advice and to further inform these documents. This ensures that, for young people who are at high risk of child sexual exploitation, all control measures are in place to keep them safe when, for example, they visit shopping centres or places of interest outside of the home. The young people living at the home said that they feel safe living there and are confident that staff will keep them safe. They could name a member of staff whom they feel safe to speak with if they are concerned about anything. Incidents of missing from home, restraint and risk-taking behaviour are much reduced. Safeguarding incidents, such as when the young people disclose past trauma, are competently managed and passed on to the police and relevant safeguarding authorities, such as the local authority designated officer. The young people are now fully involved in any searches of their rooms. They sign a form to say that they have given consent, or can express their views if they	

disagree with the search, but the search is deemed necessary because of an identified safeguarding risk. The room-search policy and procedure have been updated, and staff are familiar with the procedure for room searches.

Staff recruitment procedures are robust and comprehensive, to ensure that only suitable persons are employed at the home. Candidates have to provide evidence of any gaps in their employment, proof of identity and a police check, among the documents required to evidence their suitability.

The young people know how to complain and feel able to do so. One complaint has been received by the manager since the previous inspection and has been robustly dealt with. Any bullying is safely dealt with, and the young people are educated about the impact of racist or offensive language on other young people and are helped to develop empathy for others.

The staff and young people know what to do in the event of a fire and how to use fire prevention equipment. Health and safety are robustly managed in the home to promote the safety of the young people and staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager is off work and, in the interim, the management role is being undertaken by an experienced and skilled manager from within the organisation. She is providing strong direction and excellent leadership to the staff. She has improved systems of recording, so that all records and documents are now easily found. The office is now ordered and tidy, and records are all up to date and contain all necessary information. The staff comment that morale is now high in the team because they are all clear about their roles and are being well led by a strong manager. Routines are running smoothly through clear communication from the manager. Robust disciplinary procedures mean that only suitable and skilled staff are now employed in the home. Additional staff have been recruited, so the staff team is now consistent and stable. Experienced staff from another home have been brought in to support the team and help to make systems effective. The staff report that they feel well supervised and are receiving sufficient training to help them to undertake their roles in the home. The manager sources additional	

training if necessary. For example, the staff are shortly to attend training on trauma management. One member of staff reported, 'There is a massive improvement in the home. The biggest improvement is direction. We have implemented new systems and processes. The young people have responded well to the leadership. There is a much calmer atmosphere, and the element of fun has come back. Morale is higher, and the young people pick that up. The levels of incidents have decreased. It is all going extremely well.'

The manager has worked very hard to implement and embed improvement in the home since the previous inspection and has produced a development plan that identifies the strengths of the home and areas for improvement. All requirements from the previous inspection are met. The development plan details how the improvements will happen and by whom they will be carried out. The plan is further informed by the monthly reports from an independent visitor. The manager has high aspirations for the young people and high expectations of the staff. The manager actively challenges other professionals, in order to obtain the services that the young people need. For example, she successfully advocated for the educational needs of one young person, who is now receiving an appropriate education plan.

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 children looked after 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 that 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 that 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 whom 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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