

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	28 June 2016
Unique reference number	SC480655
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Place Young People's Company
Registered provider address	18b, Market Place, Bingham, Nottinghamshire NG13 8AP

Responsible individual	Paul Emmerson
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Tracy Murty

Inspection date	28 June 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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

SC480655

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people receive care from a dedicated staff team which understands their needs well and strives to support them to make progress in all areas of their lives. Young people engage in a wide range of fun and stimulating activities in the local and wider community. As a result of this, their behaviour, confidence and self-esteem improve.
- Staff have the best interests of the young people at the centre of their practice. Stakeholders commend the staff for their tenacity and commitment to young people, some of whom present very challenging behaviours. As one stakeholder commented: 'The staff really stick with the children, no matter what they do. They are there for them through thick and thin.'
- Staff understand the complex and risk-taking behaviours of young people well. They take their responsibilities very seriously and ensure that detailed and comprehensive risk assessments and plans are in place, and are regularly reviewed. This, coupled with effective multi-agency working, makes young people safer.
- Staff manage the behaviour of young people well and demonstrate a good understanding of the reasons why young people may misbehave or present with challenging behaviours. The staff team receives training in therapeutic models and approaches, and uses its skills to reduce the number of incidents of challenging behaviour.
- Staff feel well supported in their roles. They receive good training and development opportunities and work as a team around the child. Staff use their skills to help young people to improve in confidence, emotional well-being and emotional empathy. The position of registered manager is currently vacant, with a new manager due to come into post in the very near future. Interim management plans are robust, with the responsible individual providing high levels of support to both staff and young people. A key strength of the home is how well the staff team and managers monitor and track the progress of young people. Staff also lead on monthly 'team around the child' meetings. Involved agencies and professionals all state how valuable these meetings are in ensuring that the changing needs of young people are considered and met.
- Some shortfalls have been identified as a result of this inspection. These relate to the use of surveillance, reviewing location risk assessments, staff recruitment checks, and independent visitors. There has been no adverse impact on young people as a result of these shortfalls.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. This relates to gaps in employment history. (Regulation 32 (3)(d))	1 August 2016
Ensure that any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises is kept under review and, if necessary, revised. (Regulation 21 (c)(iii))	1 August 2016
Ensure that when conducting the review of premises, the registered person must consult, and take into consideration the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46 (2))	1 August 2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the appointment of the independent person does not give rise to a conflict of interest that would, or would appear to, compromise the ability of that person to reach a rigorous and impartial judgement of the quality of that home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.6)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a small private company which currently has one other registered children's home. The home can provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21 December 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
28 July 2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people present as happy living in this home. They like the staff and have positive and trusting relationships with them. Young people make improvements in relation to their emotional well-being over time. For those who have struggled to control their emotions safely, staff work consistently, and with real commitment, to support them. An education provider praised this approach for one young person, stating: 'The incidents of aggression and violence to others have significantly reduced over the past year. The young person is now able to show their emotions appropriately and has developed empathy for others. This is real progress.' Young people take pride in the progress they have made in all areas of their lives. One young person spoke about attending their school prom, clearly feeling a personal sense of achievement in being able to attend such an event. Staff support young people to take part in a wide range of fun activities. These include camping, canoeing, football, horse riding and swimming. One young person is now a leader for the local scouts and has been on several camping trips with them. From their starting points, these are very positive achievements for young people, which is evident in the pride they exhibit when talking about what they do. All young people have educational provisions in place, with attendance being extremely good. Staff work tirelessly with education providers and placing authorities to ensure that young people have the right provision in place. They challenge any delays in education provision, and fully support young people by attending parents' evenings and other meetings. They work closely with teaching staff to ensure consistency of care between the home and education setting. Teaching staff report excellent communication between the home and education placements, with sharing of risk assessments and regular reports being provided. This provides young people with a real sense of being cared for across all settings and in knowing that responses in one setting will be replicated in another. Young people move on to further education and complete vocational qualifications. They feel positive about their futures and have real potential to succeed as adults because of these experiences. Managers and staff carefully consider the matching of young people being placed in the home to ensure that individual needs can be met. Young people benefit from receiving care and support from staff who understand their complex needs and who show real tenacity in the care and support they provide. Young people see family and friends, with some having been for tea visits to friend's homes. Staff promote the inclusion of young people into the local community and fully support	

agreed contact arrangements. Staff show a commendable understanding of the impact contact can have on young people and plan to support them before, during and after contact visits. They foresee potential issues, and plan well for these as a team.

Young people have their health needs well met in this home. Routine appointments are kept and staff support young people to overcome any anxieties they may have, such as in relation to attending dental appointments. Specialist services are provided to young people, with staff being trained to provide therapeutic models of care. This further ensures that young people receive the specialist healthcare support they need in a timely manner. Healthy eating and lifestyles are promoted for all young people. There is a real and positive focus on exercise and consideration of physical as well as emotional well-being. Young people have any specific dietary needs met well, with staff researching and discussing with young people what food they may like. This demonstrates a staff team committed to ensuring that the individual wishes of young people are addressed at all times.

Young people personalise their bedrooms and feel able to influence decisions about how the home is run on many levels. Regular young people's meetings provide them with opportunities to discuss any concerns that they may have and to make suggestions about improvements to the home. Managers are currently working to review and update the home's development plan in order to ensure that the views of young people are included. One young person expressed an interest in growing vegetables and has been provided with a space to do so. This shows management and staff's desire to include young people in all aspects of how the home is run.

Young people engage well in their children looked after reviews and other meetings to discuss their care. They have access to both independent advocates and independent visitors. The independent visitor comes to the home every month and the independent advocate attends review meetings and supports young people to express their views and feelings. The independent visitor for the home praised the staff team for the care it provides and stated how welcome they are made to feel when they visit. Young people, therefore, have good access to independent support and advice at all times.

Young people know how to make a complaint and feel confident in doing so. There has been one formal complaint recorded since the last inspection. This received very prompt attention by managers and was resolved to the satisfaction of the young person. There is also a 'grumbles box' in the home, for young people to post any low-level concerns or issues they may have. Senior managers regularly consider these and respond to young people. Because of this, young people feel listened to by staff and managers and feel able to express their views safely.

Staff work closely with young people to support them in learning new skills and in preparing them for their eventual move to adulthood. Young people learn how to budget and manage their money. They learn to cook simple meals and do their

own laundry. Staff have also supported one young person recently in preparing for interviews for college and in learning how to use public transport. This will greatly assist young people in their transition from this home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people feel safe living in this home and receive effective staff support to improve their safety. Staff know the actual and potential vulnerabilities of young people well and respond to them in a planned and consistent manner. Managers have formed close and positive working relationships with relevant agencies, particularly the local police, to address any issues in relation to missing from care or unauthorised absence. Police officers have attended meetings with managers and staff to consider any specific concerns and to assist in devising detailed risk assessments. They report confidence in how staff and managers respond to any incidents. Managers ensure that risk assessments reflect clearly the actions that staff should take in the event of a young person going missing from care. They take prompt and appropriate action, ensuring that all involved agencies are notified and carrying out detailed searches of the local area. Incidents of unauthorised absence remain relatively high for some young people, but are reducing. Meetings have been held with placing social workers, police and education providers regularly, to ensure that all assessments and plans reflect a robust response. There is a coordinated response to young people who place themselves at risk through their behaviours and this is leading to a reduction of incidents. Concerning and anti-social behaviours of young people reduce over time, due to the detailed assessments, plans and regular meetings held. One placing social worker stated how valuable the monthly meetings with the staff team and other agencies are. They feel that these meetings give all involved professionals an opportunity to consider progress and any concerns, so plans are always up to date. Staff monitor young people's access to the internet and social media sites closely. High staffing levels provide young people with support and guidance and enable robust monitoring of their computer usage. Regular key work sessions provide young people with an opportunity to consider any actual or potential risks they may face and to develop strategies to manage situations. The home uses motion sensors on the upstairs landing areas to enable staff to monitor young people's movements during the night. Placing authorities have signed consent for the use of such measures. Regular reviews have not taken	

place to ensure that the use of such monitoring and surveillance measures remains relevant for each young person. The use of such measures requires regular review to ensure that there is no unnecessary impact on the privacy of young people.

The use of restraint on young people is only undertaken when other strategies and de-escalation techniques have not been successful, and there is real concern for the young person's safety. Managers ensure that young people are consulted with following the use of such measures. Staff receive support and debriefing sessions to ensure their well-being. There is very close monitoring by managers of the use of such measures. This is in order to consider any potential triggers for young people, such as events which may lead to a deterioration in their behaviours. Monitoring also informs behaviour management plans and risk assessments.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
Since the last inspection, the registered manager has left their position. A new manager is due to come into post in the very near future. Interim management arrangements are been robust, with the deputy manager acting up as manager. This arrangement has been fully supported by the responsible individual and has caused minimal disruption to both young people and staff. The regulator has been kept fully informed of the changes and awaits an application for the new manager, once in post, to be considered for registration. Staff report high levels of satisfaction in their roles, training and support and in the supervision provided to them. They report that there are detailed and clear induction processes in place. They also say that they feel highly valued and happy in their roles. Training for staff is varied and has a strong focus on ensuring that they undertake mandatory training as soon as their employment begins. Staff receive training on how to address radicalisation and child sexual exploitation, as well as a wide range of other relevant areas. Monitoring of completed training by managers is undertaken, to ensure that all staff have the required skills and competencies. Managers undertake monitoring of all aspects of the home regularly. They produce detailed reports and statistical information on the progress made by each young person. Therapeutic models of support are provided by suitably qualified staff, with regular group supervision meetings taking place with the therapeutic lead for the organisation. Monthly review meetings are held with all involved agencies to consider the changing needs of each young person and to enable key work staff to consider and update all plans and assessments with young people. This provides	

for a very clear sense of the journey of each young person and the positive progress they make.

The independent visitor makes monthly visits. Their reports are detailed and provide clear recommendations for managers as to what improvements or changes in practice need to be considered. However, the independent visitor is also employed in other roles within the organisation. Consequently, they are not sufficiently independent of the home. This could lead to conflicts of interest when making judgements about the quality of care the home provides.

The home has a development plan in place, setting out aims and objectives for the future. The plan is currently being reviewed and updated by managers and the responsible individual. Staff have been consulted about what they feel should be included in the plan. Managers now intend to incorporate the views of young people into the plan. This will further strengthen the inclusion and voice of young people.

Managers have undertaken a review of the premises and surrounding areas and produced an assessment of their findings. There is a need for managers to ensure that they can more clearly evidence their consultation with relevant agencies and professionals as part of the annual review of the premises and locality. This would better enable managers to consider any new information which they may need to include in the reviews.

Staff recruitment and selection procedures and processes are generally robust and would prevent unsuitable adults from working with vulnerable young people. There is a need for managers to ensure that any gaps in the employment history of applicants are more clearly recorded, to reflect their consideration during the recruitment and interview process. There is also a need for clearer recording of verification of references. Such checks are routinely carried out before appointments are made, but some considered during this inspection were not fully recorded.

The home has a detailed statement of purpose in place, which clearly sets out the aims, objectives and services provided by the home. Placing authorities report high levels of satisfaction in how staff and managers support young people to make progress, in line with the statement of purpose. Managers and staff have very positive working relationships with all involved agencies. Feedback gained during this inspection was consistently positive, particularly in relation to the excellent communication and information sharing by staff.

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 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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