

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	08/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC482872
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Fairfield House Bishop Auckland Limited
Registered person address	Fairfield Lodge, Evenwood Lane, Evenwood, Bishop Auckland, County Durham, DL14 9NH

Responsible individual	Richard Parker
Registered manager	Dominic Thompson
Inspector	Guy Mammatt

Inspection date	08/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Inadequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	The responsible individual was issued with two compliance notices following the inspection on 14 October 2015. A monitoring visit took place on 20 November 2015, where it was judged that the responsible individual had addressed both of the compliance notices.
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	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC482872

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The manager has effectively attended to 15 of the 16 requirements made at the previous inspection and the monitoring visit.
- The responsible individual and the manager have listened to the professionals supporting the home and as a result, have significantly improved the professionalism of members of staff.
- The manager ensures that the staff team has good training opportunities and receive regular supervision. As a result, the quality of their work with children has improved.
- The children are doing well. They are all making good progress academically, socially and with their health needs.
- Staff members have a good understanding of the children's complex needs. They respond to them safely and do not use sanctions as a way to manage challenging behaviour.
- The staff effectively follow up serious incidents with the children; good quality reflective work and accurate professional records are now common place.
- The manager and the deputy manager have a good understanding of safer recruitment practices. They conduct thorough checks on all new staff, and the vetting checks for agency staff are excellent.
- The responsible individual and the manager effectively use the independent monitoring visits of the home to improve the quality of the care provided.
- All professionals and family members contacted provided positive feedback about the communication from the staff team and the progress of the children.
- Children need more support from staff to learn how to use the internet and social media safely. In addition, the staff need to ensure children can respond safely to a fire drill that may occur when it is dark. The manager's assessment of the home requires improvement. Currently, the assessment lacks evaluation and does not incorporate the views of the children and those who are responsible for them, about the quality of care.

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
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that staff (2)(ii) help each child to understand how to keep themselves safe	31/03/2016
25: Fire precautions After consultation with the fire and rescue service authority, the registered person must, ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of a fire (Regulation 25 (1)(d))	31/03/2016
45: Review of quality of care The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating — (a) the quality of care provided for children; (b) the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and (c) any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (1) (2) (a) (b) (c) (5))	31/03/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a small private company. It provides care and accommodation for up three children and young people, whom may have emotional and behavioural difficulties or a learning disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/10/2015	CH – Full	Inadequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Staff have a good understanding of the children's anxieties. They respond to the children's needs sensitively and demonstrate effectively to the children, that they will keep them safe. As a result, the children build good relationships with staff members and are reassured by their actions. A child told the independent visitor that she feels that she can talk to everyone and that she can trust them. The experience and progress for all of the children is positive. They live in a homely, well-kept setting with staff who provide good support for their education, personal health and social development. Consequently, all of the children are physically maturing and building their self-confidence. A family member for two of the children is very positive about the care that they receive. She says that one of the children is, 'a much calmer child since he went to live at the home, his language and development has improved and he has lost much of his excess weight.' About the second child she says that, 'her confidence and self-esteem has grown amazingly and she has become more outgoing in expressing her feelings and emotions.' Another child continues to do very well with her academic studies and behaviour while at school. A recent visit to Barcelona with the school choir is good evidence of the child's achievements and progress. Due to her past experiences and developing personality, the child can sometimes find it difficult living at the home. However, the new reassuring response, and less confrontational attitude from the staff team, has been positive for her. It enables her to repair relationships quickly and move on without thinking that staff will give up on her. The children take part in a wide range of social and physical activities. They enjoy team games with local clubs and their school, as well as activities with staff, such as swimming, horse riding, visits to the cinema and playing on the trampoline. These activities help the children with their personal development as they try new experiences and increase their independence skills. The staff effectively help the children to say how they are feeling and talk about their views. The correct complaints procedure is available for the children and they are now able to use the telephone without having to ask staff first. The deputy manager has employed an independent person to advocate for, and to represent, one of the children's views. She is appropriately engaging with the wider system, challenging the local authority and ensuring that the child's feelings are considered about their proposed placement move.	

The staff help the children to learn about British culture as well as traditions from international countries. Some of the children took part in Christmas activities and services for the first time, as they had previously not experienced a stocking full of presents by the chimney on Christmas morning. Staff members also help the children to learn about other beliefs and have made plans to celebrate the Chinese new year.

The children have good opportunities to be listened to and to discuss their feelings. Staff members use key worker conversations to discuss private matters in the children's life. The staff provide the children with photos of the fun things they do so they can remember the good times and celebrate their achievements.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
Staff members do not help the children to understand how to keep themselves safe when they use the internet, mobile phones and social media. The staff do not provide support through educational resources and personal advice, to equip the children for growing up where the use of such media is common place. The staff rely on restricting and supervising the children's use of the home's computer, which is not an effective long-term strategy for the children to learn how to keep themselves safe. The staff do not provide the children with sufficient opportunities to practice evacuating the house at night time. No fire drills have taken place when it is dark. Therefore, the children are unfamiliar with the routine of leaving the house and gathering at the muster point with only torches for guidance. Staff members use good techniques in response to children's challenging behaviour. They remain calm with the children and offer them pre-agreed behaviour management strategies. The children respond well to having time to calm down in their bedroom and/or a change of person to help them. These strategies are generally effective, de-escalating situations and keeping the children safe. Staff members do not use sanctions for poor behaviour as they understand that the children's behaviour is an expression of how they are feeling. They are positive with the children while still maintaining boundaries about what is acceptable. The staff team provide a safe response to children who attempt to run away from the home. They follow and reassure the children that they are not going to leave them and that they are always welcome to come home regardless. The staff understand that the children want confirmation through their actions that staff are	

not going to give up on them and that they do care.

The staff have used restraint once since the previous inspection to keep a child and others safe from being physically harmed. Staff repeatedly tried to calm the situation before judging that restraint was necessary. The child received medical support and a good quality follow up discussion with a member of staff who was not involved in the incident, which ensured that she was responded to safely and supportively. The recording of the incident is clear and the manager's monitoring is effective to allow learning from the incident.

The manager has implemented a personal care policy and a child sexual exploitation policy since the previous inspection. Suitable risk assessments and control measures are in place for children that need support in these areas. The deputy manager instigated a multi-agency meeting in response to a child's possible exposure to sexual exploitation, therefore, ensuring that the necessary safeguards are in place to protect her.

The manager and the deputy manager have significantly improved the recruitment and vetting procedures for staff. New staff's suitability is thoroughly assessed at interview and through the required pre-employment checks. They do not start working alongside the children until their disclosure and barring certificate and two references are received and verified. Agency staff are only used when all of the necessary information is supplied to the manager and then only once it has been verified by one of the management team.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The manager's assessment of the quality of care requires further improvement. His current assessment does not consider the opinions of the children, their parents, placing authorities and staff about the care and support given to the children. The manager's assessment lacks sufficient evaluation and analysis, failing to identify the actions that he considers necessary to improve or maintain the quality of care for the children. The manager has been in post for seven months and registered with Ofsted since December 2015. He has considerably developed his skills and confidence since the previous inspection. The manager now leads the team in-line with the aims in the statement of purpose. As a result, staff conduct themselves in a professional caring manner and provide the children with positive role models. The statement of purpose correctly details the supervision arrangements for all	

staff and the conditions of registration for the home. The responsible individual is undertaking continuous professional development to ensure that he is suitable to supervise the manager. The staff team receive regular supervision that guides them in their role and enables them to discuss and to reflect on, the quality of their work.

Staff access good training opportunities. This training has improved their professionalism, reporting writing skills and their understanding of how to respond to the children. Further training is now planned for certain staff to specialise in chosen areas and for all staff to complete more behaviour management training.

The manager and the staff team work effectively alongside the individuals and agencies involved in the children's care. They liaise regularly with school and health professionals to gain knowledge and to coordinate their support to the children. The manager notifies Ofsted of all significant events about the protection of children in a timely manner. The leaders and managers effectively use the independent visitor's monitoring to identify areas of weakness and drive forward the quality of the care provided.

The manager annually assesses the location of the home. He considers the home's proximity to agencies, negative influences and services to ensure risks are minimised and the location is suitable. The responsible individual implements a good business development plan. This focuses on the children's and staff's current needs and plans for the continuation of the service to children in the event of unforeseen financial or environmental circumstances.

The placing authority is happy with the overall experience of all of the children. Social workers feel that staff manage the children's needs well and that all of the children are making good progress in their personal development.

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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016