

SC483662

Registered provider: CareTech Community Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This short-break service provides care and accommodation for up to six young people who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The service is privately owned and forms part of a large social care organisation. The registered manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2017 and is appropriately qualified and experienced for the role.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 December 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 16 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/01/2018	Full	Good
09/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))	15/02/2019
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character; the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))	15/02/2019

The registered person must ensure that all employees— undertake appropriate continuing professional development; receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (4)(c))	15/02/2019
The registered person must ensure that— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— the date, time and location of the use of the measure; a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')— has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii)(c))	15/02/2019

Recommendations

- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are effectively safeguarded and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulations 12(2)(c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review 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. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Patient, nurturing and compassionate staff form positive relationships with all young people. Young people look forward to and enjoy staying at the home.

The manager and staff match young people well and ensure that the young people who visit the home for short breaks are compatible with each other. As a result, young people are in groups that help them to settle and thrive.

Young people have fun and enjoy doing the things they love the most. They participate in varied activities within the home and in the community, such as playing in the well-equipped sensory garden; using the sensory room; visiting local parks; cooking and baking; going to the cinema and going out for meals. As a result of their positive experiences, young people develop social skills, friendship groups, confidence and independence skills.

Young people work towards and achieve individualised targets. Staff support children well and help them to develop independence skills in line with their age and abilities. Young people are well prepared for their transition to adulthood.

Despite young people having complex needs, staff ensure that young people have a voice and have input into their day-to-day care. Young people engage in regular key-worker sessions and young people's meetings. Staff use different methods to communicate with young people, such as using words and pictures. This gives young people opportunities to express their wishes and feelings, and to choose activities and plan the menu.

New young people are given a warm welcome by staff and their peers. Young people visit for tea and this helps young people to get to know the staff and other young people, and to get used to the home environment. The tea visits gradually increase to overnight stays and are done with consideration of each young person's needs.

The home offers a warm and welcoming living environment for young people. Young people can bring their personal belongings to display in their chosen bedroom. This helps young people to settle and feel at home.

The short-break service helps young people and their families. Parents appreciate the good care that children receive. One parent told the inspector, 'The staff are like my family and when my child is unwell I have the confidence that they know how to meet her complex health needs.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff know young people's strengths and vulnerabilities well. They have clear safeguarding policies and procedures that enable them to safely care for young people. Risks identified in young people's healthcare plans are cross-referenced to individual risk assessments. Staff manage these risks and vulnerabilities appropriately. This promotes young people's welfare.

Staff provide young people with consistent routines and boundaries, which help young people to feel safe and secure. Clear behaviour management plans provide staff with guidance on how to manage young people's behaviour effectively. Staff understand the triggers for behaviour and know how best to support young people. They do this well.

Staff recognise young people's progress from their starting points and celebrate this with them. Praise and positive reinforcement help young people to understand what acceptable behaviour is. Furthermore, this approach boosts young people's self-esteem and helps them to feel valued.

Records show that staff use lawful and proportionate restraint only as a last resort, to keep young people and others safe. However, aspects of the recording of restraint incidents require improvement. For example, some records do not contain information such as dates of debriefings to staff and young people, the location of the incident and they do not fully cross-reference information about any injuries sustained. Records also lack management oversight. A requirement is raised to improve this recording shortfall.

There have not been any complaints or missing-from-care episodes since the last inspection.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

Managers do not use monitoring systems consistently well, and this compromises the effectiveness of management oversight. Six-monthly reviews for young people are not held with the placing authority within timescale. This means that some young people's plans are not up to date. Although the manager and senior managers take some action to raise this issue with placing authorities, they do not do this promptly or sufficiently to be effective.

Managers and staff communicate regularly with parents and review young people's care arrangements with them. This mitigates some of the risks associated with not having a formal review. However, a lack of a comprehensive review, which includes all relevant parties, has the potential to compromise young people's progress.

Most aspects of recruitment practice are good. However, there is a lack of clear recording about enquiries into one member of staff's employment history.

The manager has not completed the annual update of the home's location risk assessment. As a result, she does not review any potential risks within the local area and

use this information to inform staff and young people.

The manager works well with partner agencies overall and this supports young people's progress in education and health. The manager is particularly supportive of parents. For example, she supported a parent to attend a health appointment with their child. In addition, the manager will do her best to accommodate young people at the home when parents are in crisis. This eases pressure on families and helps them stay together.

Staff speak highly of the manager. They feel supported by her and receive good-quality supervisions and appraisals. Staff say that they are listened to and have access to good-quality training, which enables them to carry out their roles and responsibilities well. This subsequently improves the quality of care they give to young people.

Although staff receive an annual appraisal, the manager does not. The new senior manager in post is aware of the concern and is in the process of addressing the matter.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC483662

Provision sub-type: children's home

Registered provider: CareTech Community Services Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Roberta Davies

Registered manager: Linzi Harper

Inspector

Rumbi Mangoma, social care inspector

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