

SC486114

Registered provider: Life Change Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is registered to give care and accommodation to four young people who may have social or emotional difficulties.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in July 2015.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 June 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 May 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/05/2018	Full	Good
20/09/2017	Full	Good
12/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/05/2016	Full	Good

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
The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b)) This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the safer area report is used in conjunction with a young person's impact risk assessment to ensure that the area is safe for them.	30/08/2019

Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of Regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- As set out in Regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

This is specifically in relation to ensuring that when verifying references, further questions are asked and noted, when a basic reference is given from past employers.

- Ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

This is specifically in relation to ensuring that the steps taken by staff to secure good progress and outcomes are clearly recorded within the young person's documents.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in a caring, friendly and supportive home. Staff give the young people the help that they need to flourish, by being patient, understanding and firm. A professional said, 'There is a highly professional team who know the young people well and provide the consistency they need.' Another professional said, 'They make a real difference to the young people's lives.'

Young people have good transitions in and out of the home. The transitional planning allows young people to visit the home before moving in, and to visit any proposed placement when moving on. The manager ensures that she has all the relevant documents from the local authority, so an informed decision can be made as to whether the staff can meet the young person's needs. In reaching a decision, the manager also considers whether a new young person will be compatible with the other young people already living at the home. The manager has compiled a good safer area location report that identifies risks in the local area, such as the busy main road in front of the home. However, these risks were not fully considered for the most recent young person admitted to the home. Currently, this has not had an adverse effect on the young person's safety, but if not addressed, it has the potential to do so.

Young people are making good progress in all areas of their lives, but the steps that staff have taken to support them are not recorded well in the young people's records. Therefore, it is difficult to see their journey throughout the placement. However, young people's plans are updated regularly. Any changes to the plans are discussed thoroughly with the young people and during staff meetings. This means that everyone knows and understands what support young people need.

Young people can share their thoughts, views, wishes and feelings through regular key-worker sessions, house meetings and daily chats. Further to this, they are supported to attend their reviews and other meetings about their care. One young person said, 'The staff are great; I can talk to them about anything, and they give good advice.' The staff welcome the young people's friends into the home, and the young people appreciate this.

All the young people are in school, or they attend college, and their attendance is very good. Young people receive extra support from staff with any homework, transport and preparing for their day. Educational achievement is good because the staff work closely with educational professionals. For example, one young person had not been in school before being placed at this home. She had a tutor for a short period, and she is now in mainstream school. The young people have ambitions for their future; for example, one young person is enrolled on a hair and beauty course and another young person wants to work with animals.

Young people are in good health and staff promote the importance of maintaining good

health and general well-being. The staff have received training in administering medication and this helps ensure that young people receive their medication in line with their prescription. Some young people are self-administering their medication as part of their semi-independence plan. Effective safety measures, such as each young person having a locked box for storing their medication, reduces the risk of other young people having access to it. Further to this, good risk assessments show how young people will be supported in this area.

Young people have individualised arrangements for keeping in touch with important people in their lives. These arrangements include taking some young people a good distance to their family home. Young people value the time that the staff take to make their journeys pleasurable. As a result, young people are building on or re-establishing positive relationships with people who are important to them.

The home is warm and welcoming. The young people have been fully involved in the new decoration and furnishing of their bedrooms. Each bedroom represents their personality, interests and hobbies. For example, one young person loves horses and goes horse riding three times a week. As a surprise and reward, the staff team chose a horse mural that the young person was delighted with, which now covers the main wall in her room. The manager makes sure that any maintenance issues are rectified quickly. Young people said that they were fully involved with tasks in the home, such as decorating, food shopping and cleaning. Some tasks are given as an incentive or as part of building independence skills. As a result, one young person said that she was confident that she would have the skills needed to look after herself when she moves on from the home.

When young people come to the end of their formal education, the staff team prepares them for semi-independence. Places that young people would like to live in, properties, colleges and work opportunities are all explored early. Therefore, young people work towards these plans slowly with a clear target in mind. As a result, several young people have moved on successfully and remain in touch with the staff team. Other young people are excited to be on this journey.

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

Young people said that they have warm and trusting relationships with staff and feel safe. Young people said that they could approach any one of the staff team and they would listen, do what they could to help or pass on any concerns to the right person. A professional said, 'This is the best placement that she has had. Previously, there were concerns for her safety, but not now.'

Staff training at this home is exceptional. Staff said that they attend something different every month and although it may not be directly associated with the young people that they care for, they do cover other important issues, such as gang culture, child criminal exploitation and harmful sexual behaviour. One member of staff was able to reflect on the recent self-injurious behaviour training. He said, 'I am now able to validate how a young person may feel. I can remain calm and reflect on the impact this may have on

my own emotional health.' A professional said, 'The staff are extremely well trained for the work that they undertake. They are very skilled at problem-solving and can defuse any problems quickly.'

Staff understand how to manage safeguarding incidents. The manager investigates these promptly, which ensures that young people are safeguarded. Staff inform Ofsted when there are significant incidents in the home so that the regulator has an oversight of patterns and trends.

Before coming to live in this home, some of the young people had high levels of being reported missing to the police. There have only been three short periods of young people being reported missing over the last year. This is because of the good routines, structure and individual work done with the young people, which makes them feel safe and secure. Additionally, young people explore safety issues with their therapists and staff. Therefore, they understand the risks that they have put themselves at previously. A professional said, 'I am amazed. The staff know her well and can predict and take effective action when she is becoming unsettled.' When young people do go missing, they are protected in line with agreed protocols. The manager ensures that an independent person completes return interviews. This practice means that young people can discuss any concerns with someone independent of the home.

The young people receive a high level of therapeutic input. This input allows them to focus on their past, their behaviour and their future. In conjunction with this, the therapists consult with the staff team on the best ways to support young people. This, coupled with clear structures, boundaries and expectations of good behaviour and a consistent staff team, means that young people have not been held for their, or others', safety.

There are good reward and incentive systems in the home. The young people can earn extra money for helping around the home and keeping to their routines, such as attendance at school. Staff have celebrated accomplishments, such as good school reports, with the purchase of personal items. When young people stray from their routine or display unacceptable behaviour, they are offered a choice that includes a reparation task. This means that young people have the opportunity to reflect and learn from their mistakes and can put things right.

Overall, staff recruitment is sound. However, the manager could further enhance the recruitment records by ensuring that information gained during the verification process with the previous employer is adequately recorded.

Regular health and safety checks mean that the home is physically safe and secure.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She is supported in her role by a deputy manager. Staff said that there is an open environment where their views and opinions matter. Staff receive regular and useful supervision from the

manager and benefit from additional supervision from a therapist. This means that the staff's emotional well-being is very well supported and monitored. However, the home's workforce plan does not distinguish the different timescales for the supervision of regular staff, new staff or bank staff.

Six members of staff have left the home over the last year due to retirement, personal reasons and career opportunities. Recruitment over the year was successful and vacant positions were quickly filled. As a result, there is a full staff team. All members of the staff team hold a relevant childcare qualification.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with a range of agencies and professionals involved in young people's care. When services have been slow to respond, or not available, the manager has challenged these shortfalls effectively. For example, working with virtual heads for education to quickly identify new educational provision or in ensuring that the home has the right documentation, such as personal education plans. This means that young people usually receive the services that they need.

The manager and staff team work positively with placing authorities and other services. A social worker said, 'They [the staff] always know where the young person is up to, what she needs, and nothing is too much trouble.' All professionals contacted during the inspection say that communication between them and the home is excellent.

External monitoring of the home is good. The independent visitor regularly identifies areas for improvement. Accordingly, the manager takes the findings from these reports and includes them in her monitoring and review report. She ensures that monitoring includes consultation with young people, parents, professionals and stakeholders. This approach helps to ensure that the manager maintains a good oversight of the service.

There is a detailed development plan that shows how the home would like to move forward. For example, there has been lots of consultation with the young people around developing the home, such as new bathrooms and making the garden into a more reflective area.

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: SC486114

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Life Change Care Limited

Registered provider address: Room 119, B1 Business Centre, Empire Way, Burnley, Lancashire BB12 6HA

Responsible individual: Julie Stirpe

Registered manager: Emma Bogle

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care regulatory inspector

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