

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	23 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC486114
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Life Change Care Limited
Registered person address	Room 119, B1 Business Centre, Empire Way, Burnley, Lancashire, BB12 6HA

Responsible individual	Julie Stirpe
Registered manager	Emma Bogle
Inspector	Mark Kersh

Inspection date	23 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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

SC486114

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home provides consistent care to young people with a background of trauma, sexual, physical and emotional abuse. Managerial oversight is highly effective, enabling young people to progress.
- The home has an extensive range of resources that support therapeutic work with young people. These arrangements complement their daily experiences and enhance young people's emotional, social and psychological well-being.
- The management team and staff are good role models. They meet young people's needs extremely well, and long lasting relationships are secured.
- Seeking the views of young people and acting on their wishes is central to how the home operates and gives young people a sense of belonging.
- Arrangements for young people's education are sensitive to their emotional and psychological well-being. Confidence building enhances their social skills and supports their education placements.
- Thorough decision making and planning for admissions ensure that young people are compatible. Risks are considered that reduce any likely impact on young people. Staff members help young people to move in and move on with considerable insight, sensitivity and respect.
- There is a clear understanding of any risks associated with young people. Boundaries are distinct, with rewards schemes and praise encouraging young people to develop acceptable behaviour and self-regulation skills.
- Young people are safe in the home and are protected by strategies that are understood and followed by staff. This reduces risks related to absences or missing from home incidents. Prompt responses to self-harm prevent young people from harming themselves or others.
- A skilled leadership team prioritises the welfare and safety of young people extremely well. Reflective practice and lessons learned improve the quality of care provided to young people.
- Partnership working is effective. The management team and staff members work well with other professionals to support young people.

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:

- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all their staff have been adequately trained in the principles of restraint and any restraint techniques appropriate to the needs of the children the home is set up to care for. (*Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*, paragraph 9.57, page 49)
- Ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). (*Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*, paragraph 13.3, page 61)

Full report

Information about this children's home

- The home is registered to accommodate four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home may provide care and accommodation only for single sex occupancy.
- The home is privately owned.
- The purpose of the home is to provide specialist therapeutic care for girls who have been subjected to child sexual exploitation or others who require specialist therapeutic care to facilitate emotional and psychological healing, as written in the home's statement of purpose document.
- Individual therapeutic formulations are made by expert psychotherapists and psychologists offering a wide range of interventions, as outlined in the home's statement of purpose document.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
2 November 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 experience positive changes from their starting point in the home and continue to make steady progress. Their previous disruptive lives have often been characterised by levels of risk-taking behaviour and a lack of consistent boundaries. Young people have successfully been supported to make positive changes and strengthen their emotional resilience. Positive and trusting relationships with staff encourage young people to develop confidence and self-esteem. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of young people's individual personalities, interests, strengths and needs. Young people's welfare is central to all aspects of how the home operates. They are listened to and staff provide them with explanations in relation to questions they raise. This develops self-respect because the young people know that their views are valued and this gives them a sense of belonging. One young person said, 'This is a good home I am getting the help and support I need.' Young people are provided with support to meet their emotional, social and psychological needs. The organisation has its own qualified professionals who provide therapeutic interventions to each young person's specific need. This ensures that young people are supported in line with their agreed plan of care from the point of accommodation. Staff continue this work with young people in the home. They keep clear assessment records of the work completed and discuss progress at regular clinical governance meetings. This provides young people with a consistent approach and means that they receive intervention as and when they need it. Young people's physical health is supported by local services and records of appointments attended are completed. Robust procedures followed by staff to ensure that medication is dispensed safely, recorded and accountable in the home. Young people's participation and attendance in school has often been disrupted prior to being accommodated in the home. Education arrangements are discussed at the pre-planning for admission meeting. Support and intervention is agreed and provided to young people in order to build their confidence and identify suitable education provision. Partnership working with teachers is effective and ensures that staff advocate on behalf of young people. Staff are interested in the young people's days, welcome them back into the home and encourage them to complete their homework.	

The management team carefully consider the compatibility issues and risks of young people at the referral stage. An initial six-week assessment is provided where the home feels they can meet the needs of young people. Detailed reports, meetings with other professionals and involving young people and their families, ensure that there is minimal impact on the young person being placed or on the current resident group.

Social workers and social work managers are positive about the home. They said, 'I currently deal with three care homes and feel this home is the most effective, and they do care' and 'Ability to meet complex needs of my child by liaising closely with myself. The young person has made excellent progress since being in this placement. Fantastic level of care offered. Therapy and care all under one umbrella. Staff really know my young person and appear to be meeting her needs to a very high standard' and 'Overall, I am really impressed with the service this home provides to young people. They provide regularly updates and I feel that they work well with other professionals such as schools and police. Young people's opportunity to benefit from professional therapy is a positive I like about this home.'

The home has separate facilities for young people who are at the point of moving on. This provides an opportunity for assessing how they will cope in later life and enhances their independent skills. Work is still ongoing with young people who have moved on from the home. The organisation continues to provide therapeutic input with them and their families. These arrangements further improve young people's life chances.

Activities, hobbies and interests are encouraged and young people enjoy visiting local amenities as well as having breaks away and holidays together with staff. They have access to a farm and horse riding stables owned by the organisation. This provides equine assisted therapy to young people, helping them to deal with emotions and build their confidence. All professional therapy carried out with young people takes place away from the home, in suitable therapeutic environments. As a result, the home provides them with family-style accommodation where they are comfortable in their surroundings.

Young people know their arrangements for contact and any reason as to why contact has to be supervised. This reduces their anxieties, supports them when change happens and sensitively addresses any issues arising from young people's contact arrangements with their friends or family. Young people respect the home and are proud of their environment and friends and family are welcome to visit.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good

Young people have individualised recorded risk assessments in place. These are detailed and cover all known risks at the point of admission. Assessment of risk is ongoing, with any changes of behaviour having agreed strategies in place for staff to follow. Staff know the strategies well and this helps young people to become increasingly safe. Young people are safe and protected in the home.

Staff have undertaken training in safeguarding, child sexual exploitation, bullying, and internet safety. They are competent, and their knowledge and their application of these principles is good. None of the young people are considered to be the subject of child sexual exploitation. Any suspicion of abuse is reported in line with the home's safeguarding procedures to the relevant authorities charged with protecting young people.

When young people are absent or go missing, staff are proactive, they go out and look for them and on occasions have been able to persuade them to return home. The length of time that young people are missing is significantly reducing and one-to-one work is helping young people to understand how to avoid difficult situations and keep themselves safe.

Staff recognise the triggers which cause young people to engage in self-harm. They are trained and experienced in working directly with young people who self-harm, including those where their self-harm behaviours are potentially life threatening. Effective responses and strategies, including one-to-one therapeutic work, identify the cause of these behaviours and reduce young people's risk.

Staff have a non-judgemental approach when dealing with a self-harm injury and provide comfort and support, and if necessary seek further medical attention for young people. In circumstances where young people require hospital admission as a result of self-harm, staff accompany them and support them on the hospital ward.

Staff are supported by the management team and responsible individual. They challenge and escalate any concerns about partners or services to ensure that young people receive the support they need, particularly around hospital risk management plans, mental health assessments and diagnosis. Staff are de-briefed shortly after incidents take place and this allows staff to reflect and act upon how their own feelings and behaviour may be affected by the behaviour of the young people who they care for.

All staff are due to attend therapeutic crisis intervention training. This model of intervention focuses on de-escalation and safe restraint techniques. A strong emphasis is placed on positive relationships and rewarding young people's good behaviour in ways that they understand and respond well to. Staff understand and work to a model where communication, negotiation and mediation help young people to address inappropriate behaviour, as a result restraint is not used in the home.

Some staff have completed restraint training. However, a restraint training event had to be cancelled, due to external factors of the training provider. This was discussed at the previous inspection in November 2015. As a result, a recommendation is made. This is to ensure that all staff have been adequately trained in the principles of restraint and in any restraint techniques appropriate to the needs of the children who the home is set up to care for.

Recruitment practice is robust and ensures that, before working with young people, all staff are checked as safe to do so. All visitors sign into the home and are not left unsupervised with young people. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and routine fire drills undertaken. These arrangements keep young people, staff and visitors safe.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home has a qualified and experienced registered manager who is supported by a qualified and experienced management team. Together, they fully prioritise the needs of the young people and support staff to deliver a service to meet young people's needs. These arrangements are overseen by a responsible individual who has an understanding both of effective practice in responding to the needs of young people and of local authority care planning duties and how children's homes are required to support these. Clear plans show young people's progress from their starting points across all aspects of their development. The registered manager has systems in place to analyse and track their care, development and progress. This ensures that care is consistent with the placing authority plan. The home is sufficiently staffed to provide one-to-one care to young people. The majority of staff are qualified, with eight having completed their level 3 or higher qualification. Four staff are undertaking their level 3 qualification and will have completed this within the two-year timescale, from the time they commenced work in the home. Staff confirm that they receive regular supervision from the management team as well as supervision from a clinical psychotherapist. These arrangements enable them to focus on young people's needs, consider their training and development opportunities and reflect on their practice and how young people's behaviour may impact on their own feeling and emotions. However, some of the records for supervision are incomplete. As a result, a recommendation is made. This is to ensure that records provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation.	

The home was first registered in June 2015. The management team are scheduled to complete all staff annual appraisals. They have systems in place to set objectives and measure staff competencies.

The home's statement of purpose document describes in detail the services provided by the home and who will deliver these services. It informs placing authorities and families about the procedures that staff will follow and how and who to make a complaint to if they are not satisfied with the services that the home provides. Young people have been involved in and contributed to the contents of the young person's guide. Both documents are informative and provide a true reflection of the services in the home.

There have been no complaints from young people, their families or placing authorities. One complaint from a neighbour has been acted upon and resolved. This was in relation to noise coming from the home and visitors parking cars on the main road. Appropriate action has been taken to the satisfaction of the neighbour. Records kept in the home evidence the nature of the complaint, action taken in response and the outcome of the investigation.

Comprehensive monitoring systems are carried out and reported on by the independent person who visits the home each month and produces a detailed, evaluated and effective report. Shortfalls identified in monitoring visits or audits by the management team are discussed during management and team meetings and are quickly rectified.

As a result and through reflective practice, the strengths and weaknesses of the home are known and monitored through the home's development plan. The management team have made and implemented improvements to the admissions process, seeking consultation on the services that the home provides and recruitment of staff. Improvement work is ongoing with staff and the therapy team in relation to understanding each other's role and how this supports young people's needs and their plan of care.

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 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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