

SC486165

Registered provider: Good Foundations Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a children's home for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities. The home is owned and operated by a private company.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 October 2017

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: 21 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people make good progress in their lives through living in the home. They grow in self-awareness and, over time, learn to manage their emotions, and to develop positive and trusting relationships with others.
- Young people experience care that focuses on their individual needs and builds on their strengths, talents and interests. Staff are attuned to the impact of previous life experiences on young people, and provide nurturing and holistic care.
- Consultation with young people is a strength of the service. Their input is sought in all aspects of the work undertaken. Young people said that they value this, and feel listened to.
- A wide variety of activities are available for young people, both in the home and in the community. Staff support young people in maintaining their hobbies and interests.
- The young people continue to make progress in this home, educationally, socially and emotionally. Young people have developed aspirations for their futures, and value the role that education brings to their lives.
- Transitions into and from the home are very well managed. All young people are consulted throughout both processes.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Records need to be accurate, signed and dated, and have a rigorous management overview.
- Placement plans and local authority care plans need to be adhered to in the day-to-day care for the young people.
- Up-to-date risk assessments need to be available to all staff.
- Visitors to the home require to be signed in, and identification needs to be more thoroughly scrutinised.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/08/2016	Full	Good
11/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/10/2015	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 standard'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
12: The protection of children standard 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— assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; 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)and(2)(a)(i)(b)) In particular, ensure that all visitors to the home are duly identified and full names recorded in the visitors book.	06/11/2017
13: The leadership and management standard The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(h))	06/11/2017

14: The care planning standard The care planning standard is that children— receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and that arrangements are in place to— manage and review the placement of each child in the home; and that each child's relevant plans are followed; (Regulation 14(1)(a)and(2)(b)(ii)(c)) In particular, ensure that contact arrangements between young people and their families are made clear to staff. When there are concerns around contact, arrangements are risk assessed to ensure that these are safe. Managers must ensure that the staff know the care plan for each young person. Managers and staff must ensure that young people's placement plans clearly set out their day-to-day care needs.	06/11/2017
36: Children's case records Ensure that the registered person maintain records ("case records") for each child, which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child; are kept up-to-date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1) (a) (b) and (c)) In particular, ensure that all documents within the home are duly signed and dated with the correct dates.	06/11/2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people continue to live in a safe, caring and supportive environment that enables them to make good progress in many aspects of their lives. Their experiences through living at the home are rewarding, and nurture their emotional growth. They are given sensitive responses that are well informed and thoughtful about their backgrounds, temperaments and strengths. They feel listened to, and said that staff care about them. A staff member said, 'The most important thing for us as a staff team is to ensure that we create a nurturing environment and I think we have achieved this.' This level of emotional literacy shown by staff has enabled the young people to open up and explore areas of their lives that they feel worried or anxious about, and to do so in a safe environment.

Young people comment favourably on their lives at the home. They acknowledge the sincerity of the staff team, and feel well cared for because they believe staff have a genuine interest in spending time with them. One young person said, 'The staff don't really see this as a job. We know they like spending time with us because they are always smiling.'

Staff support young people with their individual health needs and follow the detailed healthcare plans. Care, encouragement and attention to detail are given to all aspects of young people's health, including the quality of meals, attendance at appointments and access to professional services. Examples include the registered manager sourcing an alternative psychological provision for a young person due to a long delay in obtaining an appointment with the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) team. A social worker said, 'They do go that extra mile. They were very proactive in making sure there were no delays with the help the young person needed, and it is very impressive.' A nurse said, 'The staff are very proactive in ensuring that all the young people keep their health appointments.' This has resulted in young people having very good health outcomes.

All young people have an identified educational provision, or they are actively seeking job opportunities. From their starting points, young people make very good progress in terms of their academic abilities, willingness to attend and understanding of the role that education plays in their future lives. For one young person this has meant that he has significantly improved his previous low attendance. He has now achieved 100% attendance. A headteacher said, 'He is engaged in lessons and has positive relationships with both his teachers and peers.' Proactive staff support young people to prepare for, and seek, work experience and job opportunities. Young people enjoy their experiences, which have included preparing and delivering their CVs to potential employers, and developing their interview skills.

Staff support and encourage young people to develop their independence skills in line with their care plan, age and understanding. Young people have plans to budget for the week, cook their own meals, manage their own day-to-day needs and use public transport independently. They also have practical support from staff on areas such as taking readings of electricity and gas meters, and making their own health appointments. Staff understand that transitions towards independence for the young people are very difficult, and if young people are struggling with, for example, cooking and budgeting, staff amend their plans accordingly. This means that young people can move towards independence at a pace that alleviates any anxieties they may have, and they are able to talk to staff about why they find it difficult.

The home presents as a lived-in family home. It is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The quality of furniture and decoration is very good. The atmosphere in the home is very warm and calm, and social interaction is friendly and fun. Young people enjoy a variety of regular clubs such as football and boxing clubs. This improves their health and well-being, both physically and emotionally.

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

Young people say that they feel safe, and that staff constantly ask them where they are going and who they are seeing. They say that staff are very protective. One young person said, 'No-one has ever listened to me like they [staff] have before.' Each young person is able to identify a staff member who they said they would tell if they felt unsafe or were worried about something.

Staff educate young people on how to manage risk, and support them to take age-appropriate risks. For example, young people have completed online training in radicalisation, health and safety and food hygiene. Consequently, young people are developing decision-making skills on how to keep safe, and are achieving certificates, which strengthen their CVs.

Admissions to the home continue to be well organised, and a high level of consideration is given to the appropriate mix of young people. Risk assessments and pre-placement meetings show that admission decisions are carefully considered. This applies to both the current young people and the new young person. A young person commented, 'I came for a visit before I came to live here and the minute I came I knew I wanted to live here and I was right.' Young people who move on from the home receive a high level of support from staff. For example, a young person who recently moved to live in his own semi-independent flat continues to be supported by staff. The young person said, 'They [staff] are wonderful. They drop in for a cuppa and make sure that I'm okay. It's a great feeling to know that people care.' This demonstrates that compatibility and individual needs are considered to be of high importance.

Some young people, for whom going missing from home was a feature of their lives, experience a significant drop in the frequency of these episodes. When young people do go missing, staff are prompt to follow protocols and to liaise with other agencies. They go looking for the young people, check with friends and family, and search the local area.

Risk assessments are in place for young people out in the community and in the home. These outline potential risks, along with strategies for staff to manage these risks safely. The risk assessments are reviewed monthly and amended if needed. Staff understand the importance of young people managing certain risks, according to their age and understanding.

However, the present system for ensuring that the reviewed risk assessments are available for all staff is failing. For example, updated risk assessments are placed in a manager's file to await authorisation, and this has resulted in a delay in the most up-to-date assessments being on the young person's file. However, staff spoken with as part of the inspection were able to state the individual risks for each young person, and how they worked to reduce the risks. While the flaws in the existing risk assessment system have not directly impacted on young people's safety, it has the potential to do so.

Staff have a calming influence when young people become anxious or struggle to manage their behaviour. Behaviour management plans have useful de-escalation strategies that support young people. The home operates an incentive scheme for good

behaviour, which works very well, and young people have engaged fully in the scheme. This ensures that all young people are encouraged to display and maintain socially acceptable behaviour. A social worker said, 'The plans are all very young-person centred and individual to each young person.'

Environmental risk assessments accurately reflect identified risks and potential hazards. Young people and staff understand fire safety systems and how to respond if emergencies occur. The safety of young people is promoted further through good environmental health and food safety processes. The area risk assessment is being developed. The registered manager is working with the local police to provide current 'live' information regarding any potential risk in the local community. This means that staff and young people are alert to any current risks in the local area, and this will help to further safeguard the young people living in the home.

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

The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement. The inspection identified a number of shortfalls. The management team was not fully aware of these. Internal monitoring systems have not been strong enough to identify the shortfalls. As a result, these systems do not contribute to improving the quality of care that young people receive.

The manager registered with Ofsted for this home in September 2017. She has previous experience of managing children's homes, and is qualified and experienced to undertake the role. She is also the registered manager of another home within the company. Records show that she makes herself available to the children and is quick to act when they bring issues to her attention.

Case records and the quality of care are not fully monitored, or audited by the registered manager, to ensure that they are clear and accurate for staff. There are some discrepancies in one young person's plan, and staff have not provided care as per the aims and objectives of the local authority's care plan. For example, the staff have not followed the local authority agreed plan in relation to contact with the young person's family members. A social work manager said, 'The monitoring of contact is not being carried out as agreed in our care planning.' Consequently, the quality of care is not consistently monitored, leaving young people vulnerable to care that may not be meeting their needs.

For one young person, internal placement plans and risk management plans have not been reviewed effectively to identify the changing needs of the young person. They also fail to address the issues of risk and how these should be managed safely to promote consistency of care. Therefore, the registered manager cannot be assured that all staff have a full understanding and knowledge of all young people's needs.

Internal quality assurance is not robust; therefore, some shortfalls have not been addressed. For example, staff supervision files had the wrong date on them. However,

the registered manager has now begun to work on this, to ensure that the quality of care provided is regularly monitored and reviewed. This will help to identify patterns and trends, and improve the overall quality of care provided to young people.

Visitors to the home are not routinely asked to sign in. This could potentially place young people at risk of harm. In addition, it does not allow the registered manager to have an overview of which visitors are in the home, and when they arrived.

Team meetings and individual supervision take place regularly. This allows the staff team to discuss the running of the home and to look at ways to improve the service they offer. Staff also use this time to reflect on young people's progress, and to decide how best to support young people to reduce risks, such as missing from home. Staffing levels are good, and rotas clearly show the management arrangements that are in place on a daily basis. The staff team members speak positively of the support that they receive from management at the home. Staff members commented, 'We have really interesting team discussions with the manager in our team meetings and look at different subjects every meeting to help us get all the knowledge we need.'

Staff practice is supported by comprehensive guidance, policies and procedures. The home has appropriate systems in place to notify Ofsted and other relevant bodies of significant events that occur in the home, or with young people. This ensures that those with an interest in young people's welfare are kept appropriately informed.

The registered manager and staff are proud of the progress young people have made since moving into the home. They demonstrate a commitment to making further improvements in the lives of the young people who live in the home. They take pride in the young people's achievements and celebrate difference. A staff member commented, 'He has come so far. I am so proud of him.'

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: SC486165

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Good Foundations Limited

Registered provider address: 6 Tower Quays, Tower Road, Birkenhead, Merseyside
CH41 1BP

Responsible individual: Andrew Mannix

Registered manager: Georgina Pinkham

Inspector

Elaine Allison, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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