

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	17/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC486165
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	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	Genevieve Raw
Inspector	Elaine Allison

Inspection date	17/08/2016
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

SC486165

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people benefit from being cared for by a consistent, well-trained team of staff which is very young-person centred. The staff and young people have built strong relationships based on trust and mutual respect. The staff team has a detailed understanding of the needs of the young people, and works in a consistent manner in line with young people's plans
- 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 upon 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.
- The young people continue to make progress in this home educationally, socially and emotionally. The young people are happy and enjoy trusting relationships with the staff who care for them.
- The staff team and managers work very collaboratively with placing authorities, parents and other agencies. All feedback gained during this inspection was very positive. Such positive multi-agency working has led to improvements in the emotional well-being, social skills and educational achievements of young people.
- The staff team is highly motivated and committed to the young people. Both staff and managers are fully focused upon providing care that is reflective of young people's needs and is flexible in its approach.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure that children's needs are met In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, the registered person must: 5(c) 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))	26/09/2016
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular regard to staff training, the registered provider must ensure that the staff team: (3)(c)(i) has the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care. In particular, they must provide staff with training in managing incidents of self-harm, and ensure that the management team has a clear overview of the training that staff have received. (Regulation 6 (3)(c)(i))	26/09/2016
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard, the registered person must ensure:: (1)(a) that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home (ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home. This relates specifically to the placement plan, which does not	26/09/2016

give appropriate instruction or direction for staff to meet the young person's needs (b) have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure: (a) that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (b) that arrangements are in place to: (i) ensure the effective induction of each child into the home (ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home (iii) plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or to move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(ii)(b)(2)(a)(b)(i)(ii)(iii))	
--	--

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/10/2015	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people benefit from living in a stable home where they have built strong and secure relationships with the staff who care for them. Young people's views are sought throughout all aspects of the running of the home. Young people commented: 'We have our meetings and they really listen', 'I know that they listen to us. This is our home and they like sort of share it with us, it's nice.' This level of young people's involvement ensures that their voices are heard in all aspects of their care. Young people are making good to excellent progress in their education. For some, this has been a slow process of re-engagement in education after a considerable absence. During the inspection, one young person had the results of recent exams that he had undertaken. The young person said, 'I missed a lot of school now look, 85% in English and 95% in mathematics, that's with the tutor's help. The staff here really encouraged me. I never thought I would get marks like that.' Another young person who had been out of education for a considerable time said 'I am going to college in September and I can't wait.' The staff are enthusiastic, motivated and committed in their work. They have been successful in developing a positive and respectful relationship with the young people, and they act as good parents. Staff speak positively about the young people and are proud of their achievements. One member of staff said, 'The progress the young people have made is amazing. They have all come so far, we are so very proud of them.' This level of engagement has enabled young people to actualise their full potential, while living in a supportive, caring environment. Young people commented, 'My attitude has changed. I see things different now. The staff help me get a good mind-set,' and, 'I have matured so much in this house.' The staff team develops bespoke plans based on young people's identified and emerging needs. These are reviewed and updated to ensure that they are current. One young person did not have the required documentation from their placing authority. The registered manager had requested this, but the documentation had not been received at the point of inspection. The manager had failed to escalate the matter to senior staff within the local authority to ensure that the appropriate care planning documents were in place.	

Each young person has an allocated key worker and receives regular key-worker sessions. These address issues specific to that young person, as well as recent events, how to keep themselves safe and living a healthy lifestyle. Currently, the majority of these notes are satisfactory, but some do not contain much detail of the actual discussion. This makes it difficult to ensure that all work is carried out within the auspices of the individual care planning documents and jeopardises the opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the key-working sessions.

As a result of the good quality care and role modelling that are given, young people learn to appreciate others' views and share their thoughts and feelings in an acceptable way. Young people learn to trust the adults who care for them and, through this, they begin to talk about what is difficult in their lives. A young person said: 'I have gone from the floor to the ceiling. The staff and the kids have really accepted me for who I am. I feel very comfortable to be just me in here.' This level of trust, which has been created between the staff and the young people, has allowed young people to explore their identities in a safe nurturing environment.

Young people are given the opportunity to experience fun activities that support the positive use of leisure time, and that provide positive shared experiences with staff and other young people. Activities include guitar lessons, boxing, gym activities and trips out to the seaside.

The home presents as a lived-in family home. It is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The quality of furniture and decoration is very good. Young people described their house as: 'sound', 'like a great vibe' and 'the best house on the street, it's the best place I've ever lived in.' Young people are involved in making decisions on all aspects of the home's decor and layout, such as developing the outdoor garden areas and changing rooms from an office to a 'chill out' room.

	Judgement grade
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 that the staff, 'care and look out for us, not in a bad way like checking up but because they care.' Each young person is able to identify staff	

they would tell if they felt unsafe or were worried about something.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and are vigilant around the young people. Staff have completed training around safeguarding and child sexual exploitation. Staff have also completed individual child sexual exploitation risk assessments for all young people. Staff speak to young people in young people's meetings and key-work sessions about how to keep themselves safe.

Robust compatibility risk assessments are not completed prior to young people moving into the home. This puts them and other young people at an increased level of risk. The home's own policy states: 'it is imperative that all permutations with regard to the dynamics and triggers between young people are explored and evidenced.' The registered manager has failed to undertake a rigorous evaluation of information provided by placing social workers and partner agencies pertaining to young people. This has not had a direct impact on the young people currently living at the home, but this hinders the ability of staff to manage risk fully.

The young people are looked after by a staff team that has the skills to form respectful and supportive relationships. Observations of staff interaction with the young people demonstrate that they maintain good boundaries while enjoying spending time with them. Care staff spoken to say that the progress that the young people have made is 'phenomenal'. They said that they are proud of their achievements and progress and truly believe that they will succeed in all that they aspire to achieve. A parent commented: 'The staff are what make the home, they have taken the time to get to know (young person) and the best thing for us is knowing that he is safe, happy and well looked after.'

The staff actively promote positive behaviour and are careful to de-escalate potentially challenging situations before they become out of control. As a result, physical interventions are not used within the home. There is a strong focus on recognising and rewarding positive behaviour. Incentive targets are personalised and regularly reviewed. A social worker commented: 'I have found the best place to meet my young person's needs with this home. The staff have worked sensitively with him to put in boundaries and his behaviour has been outstanding. He is also less anxious and less worried now.'

There has been a reduction in young people going missing from the home, but for some this is still work in progress. Records of these events are detailed and include return to home interviews. The staff have individual strategies in place which they follow when a young person goes missing from the home. These are reviewed after each event. Actions taken include staff following the young person, and visiting their families and friends to find them.

The young people's health needs are promoted. They are registered with a local GP, a dentist and an optician and are supported to attend regular health appointments. Staff have worked in partnership with health colleagues to monitor a young person's eating disorder. This has been done sensitively and discreetly and has resulted in the young person gaining weight at a healthy pace. Staff work with young people to support them and encourage them with self-care skills to promote health and well-being.

Young people are being effectively supported to maintain regular contact with their families. Expectations from the placing authority are clearly understood and very good arrangements are in place to ensure that young people are supported and have their say. A parent commented: 'Staff go out of their way to make sure my time with my son is meaningful and a happy time.' Staff understand how important this is to young people and liaise well with social workers and families to ensure that young people enjoy positive experiences.

All medication is stored and recorded appropriately. Consent for medical treatment and first aid is in place for each young person. However, some consent forms have not been dated. All weekly health and safety checks are up to date and identified actions are completed within the appropriate timescale.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager is currently on a planned leave of absence. In response, an interim manager has been appointed to ensure continued management provision. She is an experienced and qualified manager who has shown a strong presence in the home. Staff say that the manager is supportive and caring. She encourages staff to review their practice and to reflect on any incidents. She supports staff to try to view events from the young people's perspectives, promoting their empathy with young people. There is a strong, shared ethos in the team about the importance of gaining and considering the views and wishes of young people. Discussions with young people take place daily to inform staff of young people's emotional well-being. Weekly house meetings take place to allow young people to express their preferred choice of activity, menus, what has gone well and any personal requests. A young person	

commented: 'It's great, we get to say what we like and it is all fresh not micro-waved food.'

The staff interviewed during this inspection feel extremely positive about their work and have a full understanding of the home's ethos. They feel very well supported and report that they receive regular supervision. Staff supervision is well recorded to show appropriate challenge and scrutiny. Team meetings are well attended, and discussions are focused on the needs and behaviours of the young people. Staff share young people's achievements, and review patterns and trends in behaviours. Staff members commented: 'We work well as a team,' 'I value the supervision I get. It's a time to talk over my work and look at ways of improving.'

Care planning documents held within the home are of a generally good quality. However, some records are not dated and identify the wrong gender of the young people. This does not mirror the good practice carried out by staff day to day. This does not have an impact on the day-to-day care received by the young people. However, it may have an impact on young people who are exploring their identities.

Careful selection and vetting processes ensure the employment of suitable staff to care for children in this home. A comprehensive organisational induction package introduces staff to this complex area of work. All staff have completed, or are due to complete, the national vocational award within the specified timescale. All mandatory training has been completed. However, some staff have not received training in self-harm. This is significant, as some young people currently living at the home engage in self-harming behaviour. This lack of training means that not all staff are able to meet the known or emerging behaviours of the young people living in the home.

The home is maintained to a very good standard. Young people have recently been involved in choosing colours and soft furnishings for their own bedrooms and in the redesign of the 'chill room'. Being involved in the decoration of the house gives young people ownership and a sense of belonging.

The manager and assistant manager have a good understanding of the strengths of the home and areas that need developing. Staff commented that they felt supported by both the manager and senior care worker and are supported and encouraged to bring new ideas to them. This means that managers and staff have ownership in supporting the young people to continually progress and have positive experiences.

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 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, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for children looked after 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