

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC367551
Inspector	Elaine Cray
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Crystal Care Solutions Limited
Registered person address	Nelson House, Boat Horse Road Kidsgrove STOKE-ON-TRENT ST7 4JA
Responsible individual	James Maxwell O'Leary
Registered manager	Alan Davies
Date of last inspection	31/01/2014

Inspection date	24/07/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There is no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	outstanding
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Young people have positive experiences and excellent outcomes while staying at this home. Comments such as, 'best home I've been in' and 'it is perfect' sum up their extremely positive views of the home. Parents reiterate this positivity by saying the home is, 'really good and communication is excellent.'

Young people experience a strong sense of nurture and clear boundaries. They develop positive identities and develop meaningful social relationships. Young people feel more confident and secure. They develop in adolescence because they live in an environment that proactively identifies, develops and celebrates difference.

Safeguarding outcomes are excellent for all young people. They develop a growing awareness about their risk taking activities and how to make more positive lifestyle choices. There are significant reductions in missing from care incidents and risky activities. These developments enable young people to make excellent educational progress as they make positive associations and focus on positive outcomes for their pending transition to adulthood.

Partnership working is a key strength of this service as young people's health and safeguarding needs are met and closely monitored. Young people make excellent

progress because staff work hard to make and maintain positive relationships with support agencies. Police and other professionals from drug, mental health and sexual exploitation agencies are very positive about the commitment of staff and the progress made by young people at this home.

Robust quality assurance promotes a clear focus on maintaining good standards and driving improvement. The manager has good insight into the service's performance and strong leadership drives improvement. For example, staff appreciate the improvements in recording systems and young people benefit from excellent developments in risk management.

No statutory requirements or recommendations are made at this inspection.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The service is a children's home that is registered to care for three young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is managed by a limited private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
31/01/2014	Interim	good progress
30/05/2013	Full	adequate
06/12/2012	Interim	good progress
17/07/2012	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people make outstanding progress in this service. They emotionally and physically thrive due to robust safeguarding and a strong ethos in building positive relationships and attachments. Social workers are very positive about outcomes, saying young people make a 'massive amount of progress' and 'massive improvement.'

Young people are safer as a result of living at this home. They identify clear improvements in behaviour. For example, young people are proud they have reduced missing from home episodes and no longer use alcohol and drugs. Young people see their relationships with staff as key contributors to helping them to better manage self-injurious behaviours.

Young people are very much in touch with their own emotional and mental health. Their connectivity with staff gives them confidence and self-belief. These positives enable young people to initiate and maintain good engagement with support agencies. Young people's understanding of their own needs enables them to utilise strong links with therapeutic services. These support agencies provide excellent feedback about the progress young people make. Agencies asking young people to return in a mentoring role exemplify how young people grow in self-esteem and awareness.

Young people mature and as they develop emotional resilience they also develop a meaningful understanding of their family backgrounds. This understanding coupled with improved behaviour helps them manage and better enjoy relationships and appropriate contact with family and friends.

Young people experience excellent improvement in education. All young people have previously experienced significant disruption in their education. They now experience positive engagement with learning. Some young people are attending additional education during the summer holidays to catch up on learning. Other young people have completed a number of GCSE examinations and received certificates on completion of college courses. Young people develop a strong sense of achievement and pride. They have clear goals and aims for their future. They see education as a key part of reaching their potential and getting a good job.

Young people feel listened to and involved in the day-to-day decision making in the home. They embrace opportunities to develop skills and confidence. Practically, young people take responsibility for looking after their rooms; shopping; cooking; and helping around the home. Their growth in maturity and self-esteem also enables them to emotionally feel safer and secure. Young people positively look forward to remaining at the home to support their transition into young adulthood. Other young

people have moved on extremely successfully to return to live semi-independently and attend college in their original communities. Young people have clear plans for their future and are excited about reaching their potential.

Quality of care

good

Frameworks for assessment, care and safeguarding are the cornerstone to the good quality care experienced by young people at this home. Staff have an excellent insight into the individuality and backgrounds of young people. The child-centred framework ensures the needs; choices and personalities of young people are focal to their placements.

The manager draws up and staff effectively implement comprehensive care plans to support young people. The framework encompasses all aspects of young people's lives and sets out practical strategies to support young people. Key working records are excellently detailed and clearly reinforce staff comments about their role to help young people 'establish brighter futures and achieve set goals.' These records provide meaning and context to young people's experience and journey of being looked after.

While young people understand and discuss their plans drawn up by the home, some experience high levels of disappointment due to lack of care planning and visits from their social workers. The manager and staff persistently chase outstanding placement plans and social work visits. Despite these care planning challenges; the speedy documentation prior to admission, regular review and updates of care plans ensures young people's care is relevant and contemporary. Young people invest in their placements and future plans because care strategies are tailor-made and discussed in depth with young people. Some young people who had never attended a meeting about their future were able to attend and contribute to their review meeting. Social workers value this development as a result of the commitment and support provided by staff at the home.

Young people settle well and positively move on from this home due to detailed and bespoke transition planning. Placing young people's individuality at the centre of the service promotes their welfare. Young people receive sensitive and individualised support to facilitate their transition to new placements. Social workers' comments such as 'transition was fantastic, I could not have asked for more from the staff' are testament to the tenacious work by staff and the excellent moving on outcomes for young people.

Similarly, young people settle well at this home because compatibility matching is effective. The staff team take the existing young people's needs into full consideration and give these equal priority to the matching of new young people's needs. As a result new young people have clear assessment of need, immediate care

and safeguarding strategies. In addition young people are prepared to welcome new young people to the home. Young people and staff thrive in this extremely positive and nurturing environment.

Good staff knowledge and commitment to partnership working promotes and protects young people's health. Comprehensive health plans organise and support young people's health and medical needs. Young people are protected with effective arrangements for the storage and administration of medication.

Young people with complex health needs are confident about the staff support they receive because they know staff are well-trained. Staff demonstrate good knowledge of health issues relating to young people's diverse backgrounds and lifestyle choices. This knowledge enables young people to receive good healthcare and have meaningful access to support agencies.

The on-going commitment from staff clearly impacts on the emotional health and strong personal identities of the young people. Young people grow in self-esteem because staff take time to make sure young people feel good about their personal appearance. Young people particularly enjoy beauty treatments; they improve personal hygiene and are keen to experiment with different hairstyles.

Young people engage in and enjoy education due the concerted efforts of the staff to explore, support and encourage a range of learning opportunities. Staff work tirelessly and are very proactive in finding placements and opportunities that will re-engage and support young people with learning opportunities.

Young people enjoy living in a well-designed and homely environment. They enjoy and respect the comfort and homeliness of the house. They choose items for the home and take pride in the upkeep of their rooms.

Keeping children and young people safe **outstanding**

Young people live in a safe, secure and stable environment. Their safety is the highest priority. Safeguarding strategies are effective because policies and procedures are robustly implemented and regularly reviewed by experienced and competent staff. Robust and effective safeguarding procedures include close liaison with police. This results in significant reduction in risk taking activities, particularly a decrease in young people going missing from care.

Excellent partnership working promotes young people's safety. Young people's welfare and emotional well-being is placed at the centre of safeguarding. Joint working, with the inclusion of young people, enables young people to develop a greater awareness of how to promote their own safety. Building self-esteem is key to young people feeling better about themselves and therefore making safer decisions. Staff ensure that safeguarding strategies are inter-connected and closely monitored

and they say, 'We empower the young people to take managed risks with informed choices about every aspect of their care.' This is testament to the commitment staff place on safeguarding young people at this home.

Relevant and meaningful risk management and inter-agency liaison safeguards young people. Staff are proactive and responsive and this results in timely interventions. For example, young people's safety and potential for self-harm is extensively addressed. Safety is effectively promoted because staff are extremely vigilant, practically equipped and use consistent monitoring.

In addition, young people's emotional welfare is central to the work carried out by staff. They are intuitive and explore reasons for behaviour. Talking time is integral to young people developing an understanding of their worries, anxieties and resulting behaviours. Young people develop greater self-reflection, self-control and self-determination. As a result their behaviour and sense of self-worth improves and they make more positive choices.

Young people are kept safe with structured boundaries. Behaviour is well-managed with meaningful behaviour plans which directly link to individual risk assessments. Staff have an excellent knowledge of how young people's previous experiences impact on and influence behaviour. They are trained in behaviour management, including physical intervention.

Expectations regarding free time are clear and structured. While young people often experience high levels of supervision in order to keep them safe, they value their free time and use this as a positive motivator to improve behaviour. Positive behaviour management is key to improvements in behaviour. Young people embrace reward and the consistent praise from staff when they do well. There are few sanctions and physical intervention is only used as a last resort. There are no physical restraints since the last inspection.

A robust response to bullying fully reinforces young people positive experiences of safety. Young people trust staff and grow in self-confidence. They are empowered to manage relationships. Young people learn how to respect other people and this supports a culture where bullying is not accepted or tolerated.

Robust recruitment processes protect young people. Visitors to the home are checked, vetted and monitored. Child protection training ensures staff are knowledgeable about their own and other agencies' roles and responsibilities in keeping young people safe.

Health and safety training ensures young people are cared for in a safe environment. Regular checks and fire drills ensure young people have a good awareness of how to promote personal and environmental safety.

Leadership and management

good

Young people are looked after by a team of experienced, motivated and well-trained staff. The experienced and qualified Registered Manager provides strong leadership. The staff team have a good understanding of the changing landscape of legislation and regulatory framework. Adjusting systems, procedures and practice ensures young people receive good quality care and excellent safeguarding outcomes.

The staff team works well with the local authority and share information about young people from other areas coming to live at the home. This engagement also extends to the local police and education facilities.

Social workers and parents are kept informed about the operation of the home with an up to date Statement of Purpose. The young people's guide provides good information about the home and details about what they should do if they have a concern or complaint.

Staffing arrangements are effectively managed in order to meet the needs of the young people and in line with home's Statement of Purpose. Staffing is effective and young people enjoy positive relationships with staff. Young people's identities are well-supported with a good balance of male and female staff. Gender relationships are important to young people who choose and feel comfortable in talking to the male and female staff about a range of different topics.

The staff team maintains good relationships with families, social workers, other professionals, neighbours and the local community. Social workers are very positive about communication and the child-centred approach by the staff.

The management team has an open and transparent approach to complaints made to or about the service. The service works well with neighbours and liaises well with community police to facilitate community relationships. This strong theme in communication and consultation is extended to young people. Young people feel empowered and included because the manager and staff are highly committed to including young people's views as part of the running the home.

Young people's care and safety is promoted and closely monitored with detailed and accountable records. Tracking outcomes, patterns and trends enables the manager to assess young people's needs and better inform practices within the home. The manager and staff understand their roles and responsibilities with regards to notifying appropriate individuals and agencies. This knowledge promotes good inter-agency protection and safety of young people.

The home and outcomes for children and young people continue to improve due to formal monitoring and regular managerial checks. Reports by the independent visitor to the home identify the positives and shortfalls and the manager utilises this feedback to drive improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.

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