

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC431804
<b>Inspector</b>	Stephen Collett
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Registered person</b>	SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Limited
<b>Registered person address</b>	132 The Street West Horsley LEATHERHEAD Surrey KT24 6DB
<b>Responsible individual</b>	Gerard Colin Berry
<b>Registered manager</b>	Dennis Visser / POST VACANT
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	28/01/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	05/08/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>Overall effectiveness</b>	<b>adequate</b>
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	adequate
Leadership and management	adequate

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>adequate</b>
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## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The service is a four-bedded children's home registered for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home is owned and operated by a private organisation that specialises in the assessment and treatment of male adolescents who have experienced some form of abuse and have subsequently been involved in perpetrating abusive behaviour themselves.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2014	Interim	good progress
12/06/2013	Full	adequate
04/02/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
29/08/2012	Full	adequate

### What does the children's home need to do to improve further?

### 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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose, specifically where a young person has been restrained. (Regulation 17B(3))	30/09/2014

## Recommendations

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

- take action prevent children from identify bullying as a problem at the home (NMS 3.11)
- ensure that the records kept by the home when a child goes missing detail action taken by staff, the circumstances of the child's return, any reasons given by the child for running away and any action taken in the light of those reasons (NMS 5.10)
- implement a proportionate approach to any risk assessment; in particular ensure these reflect all relevant risks (NMS 4.5)
- ensure that the result of all reviews of placement plans are recorded on a child's file and individuals responsible for pursuing actions arising from reviews are clearly identified (NMS 25.8)
- ensure that there is an effective system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed. (NMS 22.1)

## Inspection judgements

### Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Over time, most of the young people living at the home make good progress in terms of their emotional wellbeing. This leads to increased self-confidence and a positive self-image. Many of the young people have struggled to settle in previous care placements, but gradually they achieve a growing sense of stability and security while living at the home.

The organisation provides a comprehensive programme of therapy and as a result most of the young people gain a better understanding of their past and are more able to sustain positive attachments. Consequently, these young people benefit from improved relationships with family members; some make significant progress in this area and make successful transitions back to the family home.

Young people learn about the benefits of leading a healthy lifestyle and all engage in a range of activities that provides good exercise. Not all young people respond positively to the advice given such as smoking. Most of the young people experience improved emotional and psychological health and, for some young people, outcomes in this area exceed expectation.

The home provides care and support for young people who have generally experienced instability and trauma in their lives: any also arrive with a history of unsafe and offending behaviour. Young people who settle well in the home make good progress in addressing these negative behaviours. Other young people though, who do not fully engage with the organisation's approach and therapeutic programme, continue to display unsafe behaviour.

All young people have educational placements, either in the organisation's school or in external provision. Young people have been successful in securing college placements following formal schooling. School attendance is high and any absences are usually for a good reason. Most young people achieve well in school although not all reach their full potential.

During the inspection, young people were observed actively engaging in the day to day running of the home. Young people are fully involved in planning and structuring their time and contribute well to the decision making process on all aspects of group living. Young people demonstrate high levels of self-confidence in group meetings and are able to express themselves well.

All young people learn independence skills appropriate to their age and gain the confidence to use these. This often benefits group cohesiveness, for example young people taking the opportunity to cook a meal for their peers.

## **Quality of care**

**good**

The home is set in a quiet residential street, with the town centre and all amenities close by. Young people live in a modern well maintained property which has sufficient space for group living. It is furnished to a good standard and has all necessary domestic appliances. There is a homely feel to the property with many photographs of the young people on display, and artwork on the wall, which gives a positive message. Young people are able to personalise their bedrooms and all take advantage of this. The garden space has not been well maintained but the manager is currently engaging young people in making improvements.

Staff and young people enjoy warm, positive relationships and there is a relaxed atmosphere about the home. All young people, spoken to during the inspection, expressed an appreciation for the care they receive from staff. Sanctions are viewed as being fair and young people have confidence in the ability of staff to calm young people when they are distressed and displaying challenging behaviour.

Comprehensive behaviour management plans, which reflect the needs of individual young people, are in place. A reward and incentive scheme is used to promote positive behaviour and the young people engage in this enthusiastically. This has resulted in a recent decrease in the number of sanctions used. When sanctions are applied, these are recorded and young people are given the opportunity to record their own views.

Staff are familiar with young people's behaviour management plans; through this they ensure consistency of approach with the young people. Negative behaviours from the young people are recorded as incidents, and these reports are subsequently used in reflective supervision to review and develop staff practice.

Creative approaches are used to encourage and develop young people's learning. A member of staff spoken to during the inspection described an approach that seeks to utilise everyday situations, such as shopping trips, to develop young people's skills. Educational board games are also used as a leisure activity, so that young people's literacy skills can be improved in an enjoyable way. There is generally good communication between the home and schools, although the manager referred to a situation recently where difficulties arose. The absence of a named teacher resulted in information not being adequately shared and consequently staff at the home were unaware that a young person urgently required internet access to complete homework. This situation has subsequently been resolved.

Placement plans are regularly reviewed, and young people are involved in this process. However, not all young people take the opportunity to attend meetings, with carers, therapists and teachers, to discuss their progress. When this happens, one-to-one meetings are held with the young people, so that revised goals and

targets in placement plans can be discussed.

Although regular reviews of placements are taking place there is often a delay in writing up amended plans. A consequence of this is that young people do not always benefit from having their own up-to-date version of their placement plan.

Young people engage in house meetings and are encouraged to express their wishes and feelings. They are subsequently praised for their honesty and level of contribution towards discussions. This approach is well-embedded in practice and significantly affects the ethos of the home. Young people have easy access to written information regarding advocacy, children's rights and the complaints process.

The key working system is not yet fully embedded within the residential setting, and the manager has identified this as an area for future development.

One young person at the home has made a complaint since the last inspection and this was satisfactorily resolved. The nature of the complaint could be an indicator of bullying but was not recorded as such in the homes log of bullying incidents. During the inspection a young person also expressed a concern that a peer could have been subjected to some covert bullying. This was discussed with the manager who identified steps that would be taken to address the issue. As a result a recommendation is made in relation to bullying.

Equality and diversity issues are recognised by staff. For example when young people express an interest in a particular aspect of their culture they are encouraged to explore this further. Any discriminatory attitudes are challenged by staff

The home maintains positive working relationships with external agencies and working protocols are in place to assist this. Effective multi-agency working is maintained and the home engages fully in planning and information sharing when public protection issues arise. A social worker commented that written reports received from the home are informative and the manager communicates well. The social worker further commented that young people 'thrive' as a result of the standard of care they receive.

### **Keeping children and young people safe   adequate**

Although most aspects of safeguarding practice at the home reach an acceptable standard, there are areas that could be developed or improved. One of the issues identified for improvement during the inspection relates to the recording of restraint incidents.

The organisation's policy on 'physical contact with children including use of restraint' contradictorily states staff are not permitted to restrain any young person but also notes there are circumstances where physical contact as a positive intervention may

be required. During the inspection it was noted that an incident occurred where a young person was restrained to prevent suffering serious harm. Leaders and management have not ensured this incident was recorded in line with regulations. A requirement is therefore made in relation to the recording of incidents of restraint.

Detailed risk assessments for keeping each young person safe are in place, and these reflect most individual needs and vulnerabilities. Some risk assessments contain generic statements regarding the young person's responsibility to disclose difficult thoughts and feelings as part of the risk management process. The recognition that young people have this responsibility does not contribute towards how staff will assess and manage situations. This detracts from the carers' responsibility to put in place measures which reduce risk.

Some risk assessments do not take account of all the information known about a young person. Leaders and managers state that where a young person has been questioned but not charged with a criminal offence, information gathered should not be used as part of a risk assessment, as young people could become 'labelled'. This approach could mean young people are not safeguarded from a peer's negative behaviour as well as they could be, as all potential risks have not been considered. A recommendation is made relating to the proportionate use of risk assessments.

The majority of young people do not go missing from the home and robust procedures are in place when this does occur. Agreed protocols are in place with the local police and multi-agency public protection measures are strictly adhered to. Staff actively search for young people when they go missing and attempt to keep in touch with the young person, family members and professionals to maximise the chances of the young person returning to the home.

Young people are welcomed back following a period of being missing, and sanctions are not used to deter future episodes. Although the home has a return home interview pro forma in place, this is rarely used as a tool for promoting discussion with the young person. This results in relevant information not being gathered and it prevents the analysis of data that could assist effective planning to minimise missing episodes in the future. A recommendation is therefore made in relation to return home interviews.

All young people living in the home report that they feel safe, and all can identify staff they would speak to if they had concerns. Young people are provided with regular opportunities to discuss any worries, both within the therapeutic work programme provided by the organisation, and also within the home.

The home environment is physically safe and appropriately secure. An up-to-date record is kept of visitors to the home and identification is requested before visitors can enter the premises. The garden backs onto other residential properties, and the fences are in a poor state of repair. The manager reports he is liaising with the organisation's maintenance team in order to address this issue. All health and safety

risk assessments are reviewed regularly and updated where necessary. Safety tests are carried out on electrical equipment and fire safety apparatus. Fire drills are conducted regularly and young people confirm that they take part in the drills and are aware of the evacuation procedure.

Staff recruitment records for the organisation were seen at an inspection of another of the organisations homes in May 2014, and a requirement was made in relation to obtaining a reference from a prospective employee's last employer. Recruitment records were not re-examined at this inspection.

## **Leadership and management**

## **adequate**

The manager has been in post since April 2014 and has made an application to Ofsted to become the registered manager. This application is currently being processed. The manager has worked for the organisation for three years, and was the deputy manager of the home from July 2013 until April 2014. He holds the national vocational qualification level 4 in care and management and is currently studying for the level 5 diploma in leadership in health and social care.

All recommendations made at the interim inspection in January 2014, when the home was judged to be making good progress, have been acted upon. The manager demonstrates an understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and prior to this inspection had identified many of the areas for improvement referred to in this report. There is a detailed development plan in place although this does not indicate timescales for completing actions to improve the home further.

The home delivers services in accordance with the statement of purpose. A social worker spoken to during the inspection was confident that young people receive the level of service and support outlined in the statement of purpose, and consequently young people 'thrive'.

Young people's records are not always kept up to date. Hand written notes of placement plan review meetings were observed on young people's case files, but these had not been translated into written plans with clearly defined goals and targets. The manager was not able to evidence, in every case, that young people have received copies of their placement plans. Some young people therefore have no point of reference relating to goals and targets they are trying to achieve. A recommendation is made in order to improve practice in this area.

Other records seen during the inspection were either incomplete or missing. For instance records of return home interviews, following a missing episode, are not completed and the log of bullying incidents does not contain information pertaining to a complaint made by a young person. The manager states that the home provides reports for looked after children statutory review meetings, but these are not kept. The manager reports that additional administrative resources, commencing

September 2014, have now been approved and this will assist in keeping records up to date in the future. A recommendation is made in relation to the quality and adequacy of record keeping.

New arrangements for regulation 33 visits have recently been implemented across the organisation's homes. The reports for this home are of a high quality and the home manager is using these to improve practice across the home. Recommendations made in the reports are quickly acted upon, and young people benefit from improved quality of care as a result. Regulation 33 reports indicate that young people are regularly consulted by the regulation 33 visitor.

All staff spoken to during the inspection indicated that they feel well supported by the manager and deputy manager. New staff are able to summarise the learning from induction training and guidance given by senior colleagues; they feel well prepared for direct work with young people. The organisation provides a comprehensive training programme and all staff complete mandatory child protection training. Formal supervision of staff is undertaken regularly and all staff spoken to during the inspection were able to reflect on how this had improved their practice.

Leaders and managers act as good role models for the staff team, and demonstrate a clear commitment to providing high quality individualised care for young people through a process of continuous improvement. A senior manager from the organisation undertakes regular residential care worker duties in the home, in order to maintain the skills necessary to effectively care for the young people placed with the organisation. The home manager is committed to maintaining recent improvements made in the home and building on the progress made in recent months.

## 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.