

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC068559
Inspector	Janet Hunnam
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	PJL Healthcare Limited
Registered person address	The White House Station Road, Withyham Hartfield East Sussex TN7 4BT
Responsible individual	Paul Sellars
Registered manager	Leah Anne Thompson
Date of last inspection	23/01/2014

Inspection date	04/09/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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Young people receive highly individualised support within a safe and caring environment enabling them to flourish. A skilful, cohesive and committed staff team, led by an effective Registered Manager, deliver consistent care enabling young people to make exceptional progress in their behaviour, social skills, independence skills and personal development.

Positive, trusting relationships allow young people to develop confidence and benefit from the support provided. Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of young people's individual personalities, interests, strengths and needs. Care plans focus on the specific characteristics of each young person, recognising their individual needs and identifying particular support strategies to assist young people to make progress and improve their life chances.

Young people's needs and their welfare are central to all aspects of how the home operates. Staff actively encourage young people to make choices in their daily lives and promote their independence at every opportunity.

Young people are happy and safe at the home with excellent safeguarding practices in place. Staff monitor young people closely to ensure their safety and react promptly and appropriately in all situations to protect them. Staff's detailed

knowledge of young people and their specific vulnerabilities, together with their skill and expertise, result in successful management of challenging behaviour contributing to young people's safety and well-being.

A comprehensive quality assurance system is in place to monitor the quality of care provided for young people at the home. The home strives to maintain excellent standards of care and continuously develop new initiatives to provide opportunities for young people to make progress and improve their future life chances.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 16 children and young people who have a learning disability. The service is privately owned. A respite/short break service is provided. Young people may stay in the home on an independence programme until the age of 25.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2014	Interim	good progress
21/08/2013	Full	good
15/01/2013	Interim	good progress
17/07/2012	Full	good

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people make significant progress in an environment that provides high quality care and support. A parent commented that the young person is 'doing really well and making huge progress in all ways. She is expressing herself, developing into an adult and doing things for herself. She has come on remarkably since being at the home'. Another parent commented on the significant progress her son is making and how his progress is improving his relationship with her. Highly individualised, consistent support enables young people to build trusting relationships with staff, which develops their sense of safety and security. Staff encourage and respect their individual identities so they develop confidence and self-esteem. Staff are skilled in using various communication methods allowing young people to share their views and preferences.

Over time, young people's behaviour significantly improves enabling them to access community facilities and make progress in school or college. Young people make huge progress in their level of independence skills allowing them to take more responsibility for themselves. A social worker commented that a young person 'is needing less support and supervision and now does not need to be watched all the time. He is much calmer and his behaviour has improved'.

Close attention to young people's health needs and effective liaison with health professionals ensure young people lead healthy lives. In small steps, young people are developing an understanding of healthy eating and a healthy lifestyle. Young people participate in physical exercise through enjoyable, fun activities and benefit from staff support to eat healthy, nutritious meals.

Young people have excellent attendance at school or college and are making considerable progress with their education. Close liaison and communication between the home and school ensures young people's development needs are coordinated and met. Young people participate in a wide range of activities at the home and in the local community, extending their social experiences, boosting their confidence and providing opportunities to choose what they would like to do. Young people attend such activities as local Zumba fitness classes, individual singing lessons, trampoline classes and trips out to local amenities. Staff facilitate and support contact for young people with their families, enabling young people to maintain and improve family relationships.

A strength of the home is the focus on promoting young people's independence skills. The emphasis is on young people doing as much as they can for themselves. Young people benefit from staff's enthusiasm and commitment in supporting them to develop independence skills appropriate to their level of ability. Well planned programmes, devised by key workers and the activity and lifestyle coordinator, link

activities to young people's individual targets and goals to develop their independence skills in small, achievable steps. Young people are making considerable improvement in their daily living and self-care skills, such as cooking meals, cleaning and tidying their rooms and helping with laundry, which enables them to make a positive contribution to the home whilst learning valuable life skills for the future.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people thrive in the home as a result of nurturing, caring relationships with staff, which provide them with a secure base of stability and trust. Interactions are supportive and responsive, founded on staff knowing young people extremely well. Staff provide guidance and support while respecting young people's individual choices and wishes. Committed staff have high aspirations for young people who have complex needs and value them as individuals. Young people develop the confidence to trust staff and they enjoy the friendly and relaxed atmosphere in the home. A parent commented that the young person 'gets on very well with staff and the young person knows they can talk to staff about anything that is bothering them and staff will help'. Another parent commented that staff at the home 'go the extra mile'. Staff encourage young people to establish appropriate relationships with their peers. Young people are developing social skills to the extent that they enjoy each other's company and participate in activities together.

A culture of promoting young people's choice is evident. The ethos of the home is extremely child-centred. Young people's views are actively sought and highly valued by staff. Young people play an active part in residents' meetings. Staff ensure young people put forward their views, using various communication methods, on such topics as planning meals, shopping for items of clothing and choosing future activities. The activity and lifestyle co-ordinator plays a pivotal role in ensuring young people's leisure choices are planned into the activity programme, thus promoting young people's individual interests both on-site and in the community. Activities are well thought out and linked directly to young people's individual goals to develop their independence skills. Consequently, young people are making significant progress in developing life skills and developing an awareness that their views are important and respected, building self-esteem and self-confidence.

A focus on identifying young people's specific needs and understanding each young people's character and personality is evident in outstanding care plans. These provide a distinct picture of the young person as an individual, identifying their particular needs with detailed strategies for staff to care for them and promote their development. Close liaison with parents, carers and external professionals enable staff to understand and recognise the implications of young people's difficulties and make provision through careful planning to facilitate their needs and personal development. Young people receiving a short break service also have detailed care plans and have identified goals to help them develop.

Staff are continuously alert to young people's health needs. Routine medical appointments and more specific health requirements are met to a high standard. Staff involve external health professionals whenever necessary, including psychologists, to ensure young people's physical and emotional needs are met. Staff receive specialist training to meet individual health needs when required, ensuring they have the skills and knowledge to provide competent, high quality care for young people with complex needs. Systems for the administration of medication are robust thus protecting the safety and welfare of young people. Young people enjoy a healthy lifestyle. Staff encourage their understanding of eating a healthy diet and the importance of physical exercise. Young people enjoy playing and having fun in the spacious grounds and exercising in the on-site swimming pool, which is a well-used and appreciated resource.

Staff are proactive in supporting young people to attend school or college and achieve educationally to their full potential. Key workers liaise closely with education staff and visit the young people at school or college to observe their participation and behaviour. This ensures that appropriate support is in place to assist young people's educational progress to maximise their potential. The ethos of ensuring that young people receive all the support they need extends to strong, effective partnerships with other professionals to meet the individual needs of young people. A parent commented that staff are particularly supportive if the young person has an 'off day', or is anxious and worried and always 'sort it out'. Consequently, young people are able to focus on their education with appropriate levels of emotional support.

Young people live in comfortable, well-maintained accommodation of a high standard. Young people personalise their bedrooms to reflect their personalities giving them a sense of identity and belonging at the home. Staff ensure young people on short breaks feel their bedroom is personal by adding their specific belongings, duvet covers and posters thus dispelling any institutional feel.

Keeping children and young people safe outstanding

High staff ratios, comprehensive risk assessments and highly individualised care planning protects young people from harm. Parents have no concerns relating to the safety of young people at the home. A parent reported that the young person 'feels safe and has made it clear that they want to stay there'. Young people appear relaxed, content and enjoying their time with staff.

Staff are consistently aware of young people's specific vulnerabilities and take appropriate action to protect them. Staff are competent, vigilant and suitably trained in safeguarding procedures. Any issues of a child protection nature are managed appropriately, with effective multi-agency working ensuring the safety of young people. Close monitoring of young people with excellent levels of supervision protect young people. Young people do not leave the home without permission but suitable procedures are in place if such an incident occurs. A robust and comprehensive

recruitment process is an integral part of an excellent culture of safety ensuring young people are cared for by suitable adults.

Staff have a meaningful understanding of young people and know each young person very well. They are attentive in recognising signs of potentially unsafe behaviour and adept at using approaches to minimise risk and protect young people. Staff tailor behaviour management to each young person's needs and clearly outline their safety and supervision needs in their care plan. Staff have on-site access to the expertise of a behaviour support specialist for advice and guidance on managing young people's behaviour. They receive regular training in using physical intervention from this specialist but restraint is used infrequently. Staff mainly use low level physical interventions, such as hair pull or bite release, with other de-escalation techniques, to manage young people's challenging behaviour. Recording of such incidents is of a high standard. Managers review incidents with the staff involved, encouraging and supporting them to reflect and consider possible alternative strategies.

Excellent health and safety measures protect young people and staff from the risk of harm. All checks are up to date, appropriate fire safety measures are in place and risk assessments identify potential hazards and risk reduction processes.

Leadership and management

outstanding

Young people benefit from effective management and clear leadership. The manager has been in post since December 2012 and is registered with Ofsted. An experienced deputy manager and senior staff team assist the Registered Manager to lead committed and enthusiastic staff in providing high quality care to secure positive outcomes for young people. The needs of young people are central to practice, planning and development with all decisions focusing on their best interests and promoting their development and progress.

The home continually seeks to improve the service. New systems for recording incidents, with a focus on staff reflection to inform and improve staff practice, are in place allowing staff to develop strategies to manage young people's difficult behaviour positively. Managers have increased resources to facilitate contact visits so that young people have regular interaction with their families and maintain meaningful attachments. In addition, the home is registered as an accredited training centre, enabling staff to access and benefit from the home's commitment to high quality training relevant to their role. This has a positive impact on young people as confident and competent staff care for them. No requirements or recommendations were made at the last inspection.

Rigorous monitoring systems are in place encompassing all key areas of the service. The manager completes comprehensive and detailed monthly reports and sends quarterly reports to Ofsted. Monthly reports from an external visitor contribute to maintain high quality care. In addition, the quality assurance manager oversees the

quality management system, auditing and checking the home's systems every six months. Senior staff are responsible for checking that young people's goals are current and linked to relevant activities to promote development. The manager audits all incident reports to identify patterns and trends which prompts a review of strategies to support young people effectively when necessary. This attention to monitoring, reviewing and evaluating has a positive influence on young people by continuously promoting high standards of care to allow young people to develop and achieve very good outcomes.

No formal complaints have been received by the home since the last inspection. The home's Statement of Purpose accurately reflects the services the home offers and is reviewed and updated regularly to ensure all information is current and accurate.

Staffing levels are high, reflecting the complex needs of young people at the home and ensuring that young people receive the level of support they require to have positive experiences. Staff report they receive excellent support, regular supervision and relevant, well-planned training. All staff hold the required qualification, are undertaking the award or are completing induction standards within their probationary period. Staff report that 'training is excellent'. They receive training throughout the year to enhance and inform their care practice. Staff say they feel very well supported to carry out their role through individual supervision, team meetings and consistent guidance from management.

Communication between the staff team and professionals, parents and carers is effective. Record keeping is of a high standard and these records contribute to a good understanding of young people's lives. Records clearly evidence the progress young people are making with photographs showing their enjoyment and involvement in activities.

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.