

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC384018
Inspector	Rosie Davie
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Surecare Residential Limited
Registered person address	19e North Street, 2nd Floor Bishops Stortford Hertfordshire CM23 2LD
Responsible individual	Simon Peter Barr
Registered manager	Patricia Haley
Date of last inspection	05/03/2014

Inspection date	19/11/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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The management and staff team provide purposeful care tailored to meet the individual's circumstances and needs. The staff team work inspirationally towards achieving the best possible outcomes for young people.

Psychological support is available for young people and mandatory for staff. This has a positive impact on the culture within the home.

Young people like living in the home. They value the care and support that they receive. One young person said; 'Others that have left really liked living here too.'

The home has improved since the last inspection. The area identified to develop practice is in relation to providing training for supervising young people's contact.

The Registered Manager is experienced and works to ensure that all young people experience the best quality of care. The team are committed to delivering creative and individualised care.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small group of homes run by an independent provider. This home offers care for up to four young people assessed to have emotional or behavioural difficulties, mild learning difficulties or autistic spectrum disorders.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/03/2014	Interim	good progress
07/11/2013	Full	adequate
13/02/2013	Interim	good progress
30/10/2012	Full	good

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

Recommendations

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

- 9.2- Staff have appropriate training, supervision and support if they are required to supervise and facilitate contact

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people accessing psychological support are making links between thoughts, feelings and behaviour. This means that the majority of young people are learning how to manage emotions and develop relationships. This has enabled young people to think ahead to alternative, appropriate actions. One young person said; 'I am learning about what happens to me when my feelings build up and about how to make different choices to hitting out or smashing things when I am angry. I am getting so much better at being able to tell people when I feel angry.'

Young people are encouraged to develop their individual potential. They make good progress in understanding their self-image which raises their self-esteem and self-worth.

Supporting contact is a key activity of this home. Young people benefit significantly from time spent with family, friends and others who are important to them. This supports young people to sustain relationships over time with significant people. This contributes to development of self and identity.

Young people attend school or have access to education. Since moving to the home one young person has progressed from 60% to 100% school attendance. Young people receive support to attend work placements, for example, mechanics or hairdressing. This encourages young people to think about their future lives.

Young people develop an understanding of health and behavioural risks. Some young people have been able to reduce risk taking behaviours. The impact of living at the home varies for individual young people. Young people move on from the home to a diverse range of destinations including reunification with family.

Quality of care **outstanding**

Staff have consistently high aspirations for the young people in the home. Staff recognise the potential young people have and offer support in creative and imaginative ways. This is recognised; one young person said 'In my last few placements I was not easy to be around and not at all interested in going to school. The staff have stuck by me and now I am going to school every day, I quite like it.'

Parents speak highly of the care their children receive. One parent said; 'The staff work as a team, they put boundaries in and stick to them. I know that my child has settled brilliantly.' This means that parents are confident that their child is well looked after.

Staff provide support that is individualised and inspirational. Staff implement risk management plans and organise regular individual key time with young people. Staff creatively deliver key worker sessions investing time and genuine interest in understanding young people. Subsequently, young people actively engage with staff. Staff are skilful and imaginative in their approach to supporting young people to access therapy. They identify young people's individual strengths helping them to make significant changes. Young people feel accepted and can identify the areas in their lives where they are making progress. One young person said ' Before I came here I was not interested in who I was or what I looked like, now the staff help me with my hair and give me advice about how to look my best.' Young people are seeking and accepting advice from the staff which provides a solid basis for them to make positive decisions.

Comprehensive placement plans identify goals in health, well-being and education. Staff implement and consistently review care plans. Young people actively contribute their views to their plan. Staff record and share progress with other agencies and parents. All young people receive an individualised memento of their stay represented in a photobook or a short video. This enables young people to review their experience of living at the home at any time.

Staff hold regular meetings with young people. Young people attend the meetings and bring items for discussion. They are encouraged to chair and minute the meetings helping them take responsibility and ownership for matters in the home. Young people personalise their bedrooms and are involved in the accessorising of the communal areas. They take an active part in menu planning. This enables young people to have a direct input into the running of their home in the confidence that staff will listen to their views and ideas.

Young people know how to make a complaint. Staff provide young people with a guide when they arrive at the home. Information displayed for young people details how to make a complaint. This means young people know how to access external help, advice and guidance when required.

Staff provide a diverse range of activities for young people. These reflect young people's preference, character and ability. Additional opportunities include holidays and eating out. Young people are actively engaged in a routine in the community which is purposeful and interesting.

The home sits within a residential area. The premises provides generous and comfortable space for privacy and communal living. This enables young people to use the space to relax or have friends to visit. Maintenance of the home's physical environment is of a high standard. Staff take pride in this which encourages young people to value and invest in their home.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people say confidently that they feel safe in this home. One young person said, 'Before I came here I did not trust any adult, now I have learned how to trust the staff, I don't mean one of them-I mean all of them.'

Young people say that there is no bullying in the home. Staff discuss bullying with young people and raise awareness through support of the national anti-bullying campaign. Young people generally get on well with one another. Staff confidently give prompts and have the skill to redirect when young people are disrespectful to one another. This contributes to young people to feeling safe in their home.

Young people have previously gone missing from this home; however, incidents have significantly reduced. Staff develop a good rapport with young people encouraging them to build trust. Staff adhere to the joint police and local safeguarding procedures to ensure young people's safety. Managers and staff have mutually supportive relationships with local police. The home has developed local community mapping information. This records spaces and places individual young people have shown an interest in. This means that when required, efficient systems are in place to aid young people's prompt return.

Risk assessments are person and activity specific which means that staff are clear about the approach to take in different situations. The use of physical restraint has decreased significantly. When used, it is as a last resort, to promote the safety of everyone in the home. Staff offer a range of individualised incentives and rewards to praise and promote positive behaviour. The result is that young people are responding to the opportunities created by staff to make positive behavioural choices.

The recruitment procedures are efficient. Files sampled demonstrate the organisation completes thorough checks to ensure staff have the appropriate skills and knowledge. All new staff receive additional supervision within their probationary period. This helps to ensure the suitability of adults working with the young people.

Managers fairly investigate and thoroughly record any allegations or suspicions of harm. Managers take decisive action in the event of any founded concern in relation to staff misconduct. Managers efficiently and effectively share information with external agencies. This results in a professional and transparent approach to dealing with staffing and safeguarding issues, protecting young people from potential harm.

Staff complete regular health and safety checks of the premises. Staff practice fire evacuation procedures with young people. Young people are encouraged by staff to understand the importance of assessing risk when they show reluctance to engage with practices. The result is that young people are aware of what to do in the event of an emergency.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post since March 2013. She holds relevant management qualifications and has considerable experience of working with young people. She promotes a social pedagogic approach which has a positive impact on the culture and quality of the care within the home. The management team in the home share a collective vision for improving the lives of children and young people.

Since the last inspection there have been a small number of complaints from some of the residents in the local community. The home takes complaints seriously and these have reduced. The Registered Manager actively works with relevant agencies and attends local neighbourhood meetings to encourage acceptance within the immediate community. Staff encourage young people to consider their neighbours. They model respectful behaviour by involving young people in fostering good community spirit. This encourages young people to take pride in their home and the local area.

The Statement of Purpose gives a detailed overview of the ethos and facilities offered. The information provides parents, placing authorities and other agencies with accurate information about the structure and benefits for young people using the service.

Managers review young people's files which hold comprehensive information. There is clear evidence of pre-admission assessment work to match new prospective young people with the existing group. This ensures that the young people who are living together are as well suited as is possible.

Staff share the company's ethos to improve the lives of children and young people. Staff receive supervision; from their line manager, peers and a psychologist. Staff value supervision and welcome the opportunity to reflect on practice. Managers hold regular team meetings which enables staff to share their views about the running of the home. Staff receive access to a range of training for example; first aid, working therapeutically and managing behaviour. Staff are involved in supporting young people where contact with families is supervised. However, the range of training available does not explicitly cover this area of practice.

There are external monitoring systems in place which evaluates the running of the home. Internal monitoring oversees the effectiveness of the staff's approach and informs the home's development plan. Senior leaders monitor and record the home's overall performance. The combination of systems is efficient and enables the management team to have a realistic understanding of the home's key strengths and areas for 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.