

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC031220
Inspector	Pauline Yates
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Compass Fostering North West Limited
Registered person address	Highfield House 185 Chorley New Road BOLTON BL1 4QZ
Responsible individual	Bernadine Louise Gibson
Registered manager	Rochelle Anne Hey
Date of last inspection	20/02/2014

Inspection date	18/11/2014
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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	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to five young males. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is a small school on site which acquired DFE registration in July 2012.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/02/2014	Interim	good progress
28/06/2013	Full	good
26/02/2013	Interim	good progress
05/12/2012	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):

- ensure children are supported to: establish positive and appropriate sexual relationships develop positive self-esteem prepare for the world of work and/or further or higher education prepare for moving into their own accommodation develop practical skill, including shopping, buying, cooking and keeping feed, washing clothes, personal self-care and understanding and taking responsibility for personal healthcare Develop financial capability, knowledge and skills know about entitlements to financial and other support after leaving care, including benefits and support from social care services

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

The young people attend the educational provision which is on-site on a daily basis and their growing commitment to education will increase their life chances. Their individual achievements in this respect are marked particularly in light of previous adverse life experiences. For some young people their attendance has significantly improved. One placing social worker felt that since being at the home the young person was now no longer isolated in their education and was benefiting from the social experiences of learning. Another young person is considered to be exceeding in maths and is likely to be entered early for examination.

Young people's emotional health and well-being is a particular strength of this home. Young people grow in self-awareness and mindfulness which equips them in making positive choices and maintain a healthy lifestyle. Young people are able to describe the journey they are making and the benefits which have resulted from the support and advice they receive. They are given on-going opportunities to explore their backgrounds in a safe and managed way, which facilitates the young people's willingness to build trust, develop appropriate responses to anger and frustration and, express their feelings in a positive manner. This outcome in emotional growth permeates all aspects of the young people's lives and increases their abilities to make successful and appropriate choices. One social worker said that a particular young person was 'thriving on the care and attention from the home and is happy'. Young people are motivated by the staff to set personal goals and are fully supported through this process of achieving. These steps assist the young people in developing the skill of perseverance in achieving their aspirations and goals.

Young people are provided with safe care that facilitates their participation in community activities. Their sense of achievement and contribution grows in line with the benefits from taking part in fund-raising events and developing their hobbies and interests. For example some of the young people have joined a local gym and they spoke about their enthusiasm for exercise and the setting of personal goals. This compliments and enhances the healthy lifestyle which they are encouraged to embrace. Young people eat healthily and are encouraged to take steps towards managing their own health needs. As a result their health improves. Young people show a marked reduction in risk-taking and inappropriate behaviour and, behaviour which could result in criminal conviction. Professionals spoken to confirmed this view.

Young people considered that they were listened to and that they were consulted about their care. Their positive experience of consultation improves their social skills in communication, negotiation and empathy with others.

The shortfall in the assessment and clearly documented progress of independence

skills for the young people, limits insight into the needs of the young people and optimum transition into adulthood.

Quality of care

good

Young people enjoy positive and trusting relationships with staff, which places the well-being of the young people at the centre of their practice. This is reflected in the effective assessment, care planning and review process which ensures a responsive and individualised care programme. One Independent Reviewing Officer commented 'The staff are good at engaging the young person and tailoring their service to the young person's needs.' A placing social worker commented 'They (staff) go above and beyond.'

Staff show good insight into the barriers and challenges which the young people face due to their life experiences. This insight enables staff to shape and encourage young people to better manage their behaviour helping young people to integrate safely into their local communities and explore new opportunities. Staff receive regular and onsite advice and guidance from the therapist who assists staff in developing and adjusting the care provided. Young people benefit from responsive and tailored provision which encourages the young people to build trust and respond to the clear boundaries which are in place. One placing social worker described the assessment process as 'Very very child-focussed.'

The young people have an active input into issues which affects them within the home. These include frequent keyworker sessions, individual therapeutic sessions, young people's meetings, and community meetings. Each of these meetings complements each other and promotes the young person's confidence in influencing and negotiating. Young people are given opportunities to make decisions about menus, activities and safe expression of how they feel about one another.

Young people are actively encouraged to explore issues relating to different cultures, religious celebrations, countries and food. This enables them to develop understanding and tolerance.

Young people benefit from effective working relationships with other agencies. As a result of the open and regular communication that the home has with other professionals, young people's progress can be monitored closely and decision making attuned to their needs. A particular strength is the liaison with the Registered Manager and the Deputy Head. Regular meetings to discuss the progress of young people and input from the therapist ensures that the strengths, areas of progress and set-backs the young people are experiencing, is taken into account and reflected in their educational provision. Young people are encouraged in their education through support from staff with homework and established evening routines.

The home is well-maintained and furnished to a good standard. Young people personalise their rooms and take an active part in home life, such as assisting to prepare meals, taking part in the washing-up rota and choosing meals. The young people's art work is displayed around the home. The fabric of the building and the young people's involvement, encourage their sense of ownership and sense of belonging.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people say that they are safe and feel safe at the home and professionals agree. Young people say they have good relationships with staff and that they know how to make a complaint should they need to.

Missing from home incidents are infrequent and where this does happen staff take appropriate measures to locate the young people. Staff give the safety of young people a high priority and staffing ratios reflect the risk assessments which are thorough, updated and understood by staff. Staff understand the risks and vulnerabilities which each young person faces and in turn poses and work actively to ensure their safety. For example, there are clear stepped programmes which assess the young person's risks, insight and abilities to progress to unsupervised time in the community.

Staff are trained in de-escalation techniques and physical intervention is rarely used. Staff use their skills in engaging the young people in activities, promoting their interests and developing positive behaviour. Young people are encouraged to reflect upon conflict, which has a positive impact upon their future responses.

Young people understand the routines and boundaries within the home. Staff employ clear boundary setting, complimented with good routines and a positive approach to the young people. This has resulted in a reduction in negative responses from the young people and a move towards acceptable means of communicating with others. The therapeutic approach and overview which is taken with young people's behaviours ensure that the young people grow in self-awareness and confidence in managing their own behaviours. Young people demonstrate insight into their own risks and actively apply the guidance offered from staff. One social worker commented, 'I would certainly recommend this placement because my view is that the risk of re-offending will significantly reduce'.

Managers ensure that staff are appropriately recruited and vetted and that they are trained in the particular approach the home employs towards managing the behaviours the young people may exhibit. The premises are safely maintained. Appliances, equipment and fire measures are all checked regularly. The environment is a safe place to live.

Leadership and management

good

The Registered Manager has been in post for seven years, has suitable experience and is appropriately qualified to manage this home. There is a good management structure in place and there is strategic oversight which seeks to improve the quality of care and outcomes for young people. Alongside formal monitoring in place to review the progress of young people, there is a strong management presence for the young people at the home. The young people said they could approach the manager and raise any concerns they had.

The manager understands the strengths of the home and actively seeks improvements. There is active and on-going liaison with other professionals to review the care provided and implement changes where appropriate. For example the registered manager meets with the staff and therapist twice a month to update the homes care plans and then in turn meets with the deputy head of the school to discuss developments and changes. These meetings inform and contribute to the keyworker sessions with the young people.

The home employs sufficient staff to ensure that the young people receive the level of attention and safeguarding required to their individual needs. Staff are appropriately trained and supervised in order to provide this support to the young people. The structure of weekly meetings with the young people, therapist and staff ensures that the care provided is not only personalised but also responsive. The young people's files are kept updated and any gaps in information from other agencies is actively sought.

The registered manager is active in developing the service and open to feedback. For example a feedback form has recently been developed and sent to all professionals working with the home and, staff are now implementing a new morning and night time routine for the young people. As a result the young people experienced improved sleeping and rising routines, which in turn has a positive impact upon their concentration levels during the day.

The young people benefit from the good relationships which the staff develop with other agencies and professionals. Placing social workers and Independent Reviewing Officers expressed confidence in the staff and found the communication about the young people to be effective and receptive. One social worker commented upon the distances which the registered manager was prepared to travel in order to attend meetings and support contact arrangements.

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.