

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC439535
Inspector	Monica Hargreaves
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Pebbles Care Limited
Registered person address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane Kirkstall Leeds West Yorkshire LS5 3BT
Responsible individual	Luiz Miguel Guilherme
Registered manager	Kimberley Elizabeth Crabtree
Date of last inspection	18/12/2013

Inspection date	30/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

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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Young people receive an excellent standard of care from a committed and enthusiastic team of staff and as a result they make good progress overall. Staff develop positive nurturing relationships with young people. This helps young people to feel settled and to grow in confidence and self-esteem. Young people are able to make progress in education from their starting point on admission to the home. They have a healthy lifestyle and they learn practical and social skills that will help them in later life. Young people report that they are happy in their home and professionals outside the home are very positive about the way young people are cared for and the progress they make.

The home's arrangements for keeping young people safe are effective. Staff have an excellent understanding of young people's vulnerabilities and they have a good knowledge of safeguarding protocols and safe care practices. Consequently, they are able to ensure that risks are minimised and young people are protected. Young people report that they feel safe. They know that they are listened to and are confident that their views matter. Staff manage young people's behaviour well and help them to develop their social skills. As a result, young people's behaviour improves over time.

The home is well managed. The manager provides good support and leadership to staff and ensures that young people's welfare and progress are closely monitored. Staff work well together to provide consistent care to young people that helps them to achieve positive outcomes. Managers and staff demonstrate a clear commitment to the continuous improvement of the service for the benefit of young people.

One recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection. This relates to staff qualifications.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The children's home is provided by a private company and cares for up to five young people of either gender. The home is registered to care for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/12/2013	Interim	good progress
24/04/2013	Full	good
23/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
18/05/2012	Full	adequate

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 that all staff are registered for the Children and Young People's Workforce Diploma at Level 3 within 6 months of confirmation of employment. (NMS18.5)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress in all areas of their lives from their starting point on admission to the home. They are able to make and sustain good relationships with staff which enables them to settle into the home. The positive recognition they receive from staff helps them to develop in confidence and self-esteem. Consequently over time, young people are able to start to address difficulties they have experienced in their past. This enables them to achieve positive outcomes.

Young people enjoy good health. Their health needs are effectively assessed and services are put in place to make sure they are met. The health of some young people has greatly improved since they came to the home because they have been able to access routine health checks, for example with dentists and opticians and because they have started to take medication regularly. Young people who smoke, or who are believed to misuse substances, have prompt access to relevant agencies to help them to stop. Consequently, they are able to reduce their use of substances over time. This has a positive impact on their health. Young people are encouraged to take an active interest in health issues and to eat healthily and exercise. The home's arrangements for managing medication are robust, ensuring that young people are protected.

Young people have a good knowledge of their history and background. Their sense of identity is supported by the contact that they maintain with relatives and by the discussions they have with care staff and social workers.

All young people have an identified education placement that is appropriate to their needs and they make steady progress in education. Young people who have been out of school for some time before they come to live in the home start to attend and are able to move to a pattern of very regular attendance. This helps to improve their level of attainment. Young people who have lived in the home for some time have achieved considerable success in education gaining good grades in examinations and making plans for further and higher education and work.

Young people enjoy a number of different activities with staff such as going to the cinema, go-karting, fishing, arts and crafts and playing electronic games. Young people also go on day trips to local theme parks and have recently enjoyed a holiday with staff. Some young people are involved in community activities such as theatre groups and singing. These various activities help to broaden young people's experiences and support their general development.

The daily routine of the home enables young people to acquire the skills they need for adult life. For example, young people keep their own rooms clean and tidy, do their own laundry and learn to manage their own money. They also make plans for

their further education and training, which encourages them to have aspirations for their future employment. Young people are well supported to prepare for independence and also supported as they leave the home.

Quality of care

outstanding

Young people benefit greatly from the excellent standard of care they receive. Care staff have a very good understanding of young people's needs and are committed to ensuring that young people are supported to achieve to their full potential. Professionals report that they feel the quality of care is very good and that staff work very effectively with young people to help them to achieve positive outcomes. One social worker said 'Staff have really stuck with (name). She has come on a long way' and another reported 'The care and attention given to (name) has been massive and as a result he has really progressed well'.

Staff value and respond to young people as individuals, ensuring that care is tailored to meet their specific requirements. They develop holistic placement plans that address every aspect of a young person's needs, including those that arise from their culture or religion. Care staff support young people to be fully involved in all the decisions that are made about their lives. For example, young people contribute to and agree their plans and they attend their reviews. They also help staff to write their own risk assessments. This enables them to understand how staff are working to keep them safe and enhances their involvement in the care planning and reviewing process. Young people feel confident about their relationships with staff and say that they are able to approach any member of staff for support. One young person said 'The staff are friendly and kind and help me a lot' and another young person said 'Staff understand me all the time and help me'. These positive relationships help young people to settle and to achieve good outcomes.

The manager and staff have built exceptionally effective working relationships with partner agencies, such as social services, the police, health, education and youth offending services. This enables young people to have access to the resources they need and ensures that there is consistency in the way staff from different agencies work with and respond to young people. This supports young people's progress.

Staff give young people clear and consistent boundaries and promote positive behaviour through individual work and the use of incentives. This helps young people to learn how to manage difficulties and conflict in their lives in ways that are socially acceptable. As a result their behaviour improves over time and generally young people behave well towards one another and staff.

Staff are enthusiastic about the importance of education and they work hard to ensure that young people are able to achieve to their optimum. They liaise closely with education providers to ensure that young people have a provision that is

appropriate to their needs. They advocate strongly for young people to ensure that any problems that arise at school are resolved quickly. They establish very good routines in the home to promote young people's attendance at school and they support them on site when this is needed. As a result of the excellent work of the staff team, young people are able to improve their attendance at school and to make progress. This improves their life chances.

The home is maintained to a very good standard overall and provides young people with a comfortable, well furnished, warm and welcoming environment. Young people are encouraged to take a pride in their environment by helping to keep it in good order and helping to choose how the home is decorated. They report that they like their home.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

The home's arrangements for safeguarding young people are effective. Staff training in safeguarding and safe care is kept up to date to ensure that staff know how to recognise and respond to child protection concerns and keep young people safe. Detailed individual risk assessments are put in place for young people. These are regularly reviewed to ensure that they remain relevant and reflect young people's emerging needs. Social workers and other professionals confirm that they are confident that young people are cared for safely. Young people say that they feel safe in the home. They know that staff are keen to ensure that they remain safe when they are away from the home and say that staff talk to them about how to achieve this.

Young people confirm that they know how to complain and they are confident that they are listened to and that their concerns are properly addressed. They do not feel that bullying is an issue in the home. They say that when there are problems between young people staff help to 'sort them out'. This contributes to their sense of security.

Young people do not often go missing. Staff encourage young people to let them know where they are going when they leave the home. They maintain detailed information about young people which is shared appropriately with other agencies, so that effective plans can be put in place to protect young people if they do go missing. The reporting protocol is clear and is followed by staff if a young person is absent in order to ensure their safe return to the home.

Staff are all trained in behaviour management techniques, including in the use of restraint. However the way staff work with young people ensures that potentially challenging situations are defused before they escalate. Consequently physical intervention is rarely used. This supports young people's sense of safety in the home.

Robust staff recruitment practices protect young people by ensuring that all staff are

vetted and assessed as suitable before they start work.

Young people benefit from living in a home that is kept physically safe. This is achieved through staff training and a system of robust risk assessments and checks on the environment. Young people and staff take part in evacuation drills which helps young people to understand how to leave the home safely in an emergency.

Leadership and management

good

The home is managed effectively. The manager is registered with Ofsted. She has qualifications at Level 4 in care and management and is currently completing the Level 5 Diploma in Health and Social Care and Children and Young People's services. She is very experienced in working in residential care both as a care worker and manager.

The manager is enthusiastic and confident about the work the home does to help young people to achieve to their full potential. She has an excellent understanding of the needs of the young people and provides strong leadership to the team, promoting good practice and leading by example. She keeps up to date with new legislation and developments and discusses these with the staff team to enable them to maintain their knowledge of current care practice. She has an excellent understanding of the home's strengths and areas for further development and has produced a detailed action plan for the future of the home. She is supported by a suitably qualified and experienced assistant manager who ensures that the home continues to run smoothly in her absence.

Care staff have a very good understanding of the young people they look after. They demonstrate a strong commitment to ensuring that young people are well cared for and able to achieve to their individual potential. Care staff feel that they are supported very well by their manager and senior staff. They have regular supervision and team meetings. These arrangements provide staff with opportunities to discuss their own training and development needs and also form part of the management monitoring of the care given to young people. Staff report that the team 'works really well together'. This ensures that there is a consistent approach to young people which helps them to feel safe and settled in the home and to make progress. Care staff are appropriately trained for their role and the majority of staff are qualified. Some staff who have worked at the home for some time are working to gain a qualification at Level 3 and other staff are waiting to be registered. This means that not all staff have been able to start to work for the qualification within the required timescale.

Management monitoring arrangements are robust. The manager completes regular checks on care in the home and provides detailed reports to senior managers in the organisation and to Ofsted. An independent person visits the home every month and also completes checks on the care provided. Reports of these visits are clear and

detailed and also submitted to Ofsted as required. The manager takes action to address any issue that is identified as a result of these checks. She also responds promptly to matters raised during the inspection process. The requirement and recommendations made at the last inspection are met. The manager has updated the format of monitoring reports to include the consultation that has taken place with young people and other stakeholders. All written references which are provided for new staff are verified by phone; there have been improvements to the environment. This demonstrates the manager's clear commitment to improving the service for the benefit of young people.

The Statement of Purpose and young person's guide to the service provide good information about the home for young people, their relatives and placing social workers. The home's Statement of Purpose is detailed and accurately describes how the service works. The young person's guide is a colourful document which is written in a style that is appropriate to the needs of young people. It gives young people a good understanding of the routines of the home as well as information about their rights in care.

The service keeps detailed information about young people which contributes to their understanding of their history and their current plans. All records are kept up to date and are well maintained. Information about young people is held securely to protect their right to confidentiality. Young people are encouraged to read their records and to contribute to all their plans. This ensures that their views are reflected in their records.

Managers and staff have developed good relationships with neighbours. This helps young people to feel safe and comfortable in their local community.

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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