

Inspection report for children's home

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<b>Unique reference number</b>	SC001452
<b>Inspector</b>	Jacqueline Malcolm
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Full
<b>Provision subtype</b>	Children's home

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<b>Registered person</b>	Five Rivers Child Care Limited
<b>Registered person address</b>	47 Bedwin Street SALISBURY SP1 3UT

<b>Responsible individual</b>	Richard Marshall Cross
<b>Registered manager</b>	Carol Denise Perkins
<b>Date of last inspection</b>	06/03/2014

<b>Inspection date</b>	19/12/2014
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Previous inspection	not judged
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

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

## Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	<b>good</b>
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This home has not been operational since October 2012 and no young people have been placed during this period. The provider has maintained the home's registration with Ofsted and the premises have undergone significant refurbishment to a high standard. A new Statement of Purpose has been submitted to Ofsted. It supports a service that aims to meet the needs of younger children to prepare them for foster care. The home has a new Registered Manager who is a good leader and is supported by effective deputising arrangements. A newly formed, motivated and enthusiastic staff team have spent several months preparing for the re-opening of the home through training and group activities. The home is now fully up and running and young people are establishing themselves in the home.

Young people live in a good, nurturing home where they benefit from bespoke care planning that is intended to improve their outcomes. However, not all young people's placement plans reflect the existing good practice with respect to how the home promotes their cultural, emotional and psychological health needs. Young people's positive attachments with staff promote trust and mutual respect. This enables young people to express their wishes and feelings and discuss their histories in a safe space where they feel listened to and valued. Young people's safety and welfare is promoted by safe care practices in the home, which minimises their exposure to risk in its various forms. Young people say they feel safe and highly rate

their safety in the home. Young people's behaviour is well managed and approved restraint is only used as a last resort.

Good partnerships formed between the home, families and professional stakeholders promote a good 'team around the child' ethos, which stimulates consistent childcare practice.

As a result of this inspection a number of requirements and recommendations have been raised to help the home drive forward improvement. These relate to: management monitoring, recruitment, staff training and records. The shortfalls bear no detriment to young people's welfare.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned children's home. The home is currently registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2014	Interim	not judged
06/11/2013	Interim	not judged
15/03/2013	Interim	not judged
17/05/2012	Full	good

### 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
26 (2001)	ensure that where a person has previously worked in a position whose duties involved work with children or vulnerable adults, so far as reasonably practicable verification of the reason why the employment or position ended (Regulation Schedule 2 (4))	27/02/2015
27 (2001)	ensure all staff receive appropriate training, in particular cultural awareness and diversity training. (Regulation 27(4)(a)(b))	27/02/2015
33 (2001)	ensure that the independent person forms an opinion as to whether the children accommodated at the children's home are effectively safeguarded	27/02/2015

	and the conduct of the children's home promotes the wellbeing of the children accommodated there (Regulation 33 (8)(i)(ii))	
34 (2001)	ensure that the registered person establishes and maintains a system for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. Specifically in relation to placement plans, staff recruitment and how the home consults with other community services used by children accommodated at the home. (Regulation 34, Schedule 6 (4) (24) and (27))	27/02/2015

## Recommendations

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

- ensure a written record is kept by the home detailing the time and date and length of each supervision held for each member of staff, including the registered person (NMS 19.5)
- ensure there is a system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take prompt action when needed. (NMS 22)

## Inspection judgements

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

Young people receive a warm and friendly welcome when they move into this home. This caring attitude helps young people to feel valued and this supports them to quickly settle in and make good progress. Young people respond well to the staff who are intuitive to their needs and get to know them, using good engagement skills to secure positive attachments. This contributes to young people feeling sufficiently safe and secure to discuss their histories and concerns building their self-esteem and emotional resilience. Their sense of identity and belonging is sustained by their appropriate contact with family and significant people in their lives. Families are supportive of young people's placements. This gives a clear and consistent message to young people that their best interests are prioritised.

Young people benefit from very good health. They do not drink, smoke or get involved in activities that would otherwise threaten their well-being. Their prompt access to primary health care services ensures an efficient response to their health needs. Young people are not involved with the child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS). However they do have prompt access to the organisations therapist. This ensures that young people's psychological and emotional needs are properly assessed. Young people benefit from consuming home cooked, nourishing meals that satisfy their cultural needs. They are starting to appreciate the benefits of exercise through walking and horse riding.

Young people attend school regularly, which is a significant improvement for some of them. Young people who receive short-term exclusions are engaged in home based education, consisting of visits to museums and completing school work on the computer. This continues to develop their learning and skills outside of the school arena. Young people's educational attainment is closely monitored. This ensures the best opportunities are available to help them to aspire and improve their future employment prospects.

Young people embrace after school activities that they choose and enjoy. For example, going to the cinema, shopping and visiting places of interest. Young people who show a flair for performing arts are helped to connect with relevant clubs. They also enjoy spending time in the home, enjoying pampering evenings, playing with toys and relaxing in front of the television with a DVD. Young people's social and emotional development is enlightened by their new and varied experiences. Young people partake in community activities that benefit others. This includes activities, such as feeding the ducks. With staff support, young people are exploring ways in which their interest in caring for animals can become a reality. This helps young people to develop empathy and gives them a good sense of achievement.

Young people's independence skills are age appropriate and help them to acquire

useful skills that will empower them to do more for themselves in later life. They learn how to budget, shop, take care of their appearance and carry out household duties, such as cleaning their rooms. Young people are supported to develop effective coping strategies to help them to moderate their behaviours.

## **Quality of care**

**good**

Young people benefit from living in a home that has a strong ethos based on mutual respect, care, support and nurture. The positive relationships developed between young people and staff inform young people about appropriate and trusting relationships. An upbeat atmosphere and fun banter between young people and staff makes this a positive environment for young people to live. Staff speak highly about the young people and they are aspirational for their future outcomes. A member of staff said, 'We have built up a good relationship. I have respect for her and she has respect for me' and 'I love spending time with x.' This positive approach serves as a natural behaviour management strategy. This is because it helps young people to self-regulate their behaviour and majorly comply with the homes routines and boundaries.

Young people's care planning firmly prioritises their care needs in the home. Individual placement plans are tailored to meet young people's diverse and complex needs. However, limited details in the plans do not do justice to the actual practice that is implemented. For example, young people's ethnic origin is identified in more than one way in their plans, which lacks clarity. Their needs arising from their cultural heritage and the desired outcomes are not made explicitly clear. In addition, the therapeutic interventions are not incorporated into the placement plans to show how this need is met in practice. These administrative shortfalls do not negatively impact on the good quality of care that young people experience in the home.

Young people influence their plans and the running of the home, which makes them feel listened to. Young people spend time with their keyworkers and other staff discussing their opinions and needs. For example, young people from a different cultural heritage being supported to have a hair consultation at the hairdressers to ensure its proper care and maintenance. Young people are consulted prior to their statutory reviews. They benefit from committed staff who strongly advocate for them and this helps young people feel cared about. Although young people understand the complaints procedure, they have not had cause to complain about their care and treatment.

The home places a high value on education. Good communication between the home and education providers helps young people to remain valuable members of the school community. Staff make excellent use of professionals who act in young people's best interests and support them in education meetings. Their involvement ensures a healthy challenge to potential barriers to young people's progress and

achievements, such as times when young people have been excluded from school. This helps young people to return to school with a clear plan to ensure their education placements are sustained and they are not unduly failed by the education system. Effective partnerships with parents and other professional services, such as the organisation's therapist, education providers and social workers promote a 'team around the child' ethos. This ensures that everyone is working towards a consistent child focussed objective and provides young people with prompt access to the services they need.

Young people live in a welcoming home that has undergone significant refurbishment. The home has a distinctly non-institutional feel and exudes a homely, warm and nurturing ambience. The clean and tidy environment is complemented by a high standard of decoration and furnishing and there is sufficient space for personal and communal activities. Young people like the house and they have enjoyed putting up Christmas trees and trimmings. Young people's rooms are personalised to suit their individual tastes and reflects an environment that values them.

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

An effective safeguarding culture in the home promotes young people's safety and welfare. Their vulnerabilities are protected by staff who have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and safe-care practices in the home and community. Mandatory safeguarding training, comprehensive risk management plans and good strategies are implemented in practice. Staff understand their responsibility to report any concerns to protect young people from risk without fear or favour. A member of staff said, 'It's about the young people in our care, I would report it, you need to put the needs of young people first.' Staff have a good awareness about the local authority designated officer (LADO). A recent visitor from the local safeguarding board (LSCB) to a team meeting was considered to be positive. This promotes good partnership working. There are no current safeguarding concerns at this home.

Young people say they feel safe at the home and rate their safety as 'Ten out of ten.' Staff frequently tell young people that they are cared about. This has resulted in young people feeling sufficiently safe to disclose information of concern, which has been appropriately referred to the relevant authorities.

There are no young people currently living in the home who are at risk of sexual exploitation. Young people do not go missing from care, which is testament to their strong sense of security at the home. However, staff are familiar with the missing from care procedures to follow in the event that a young person should absent themselves from the home. Young people do not report bullying to be an issue that impacts on their lives at the home.

The positive relationships between staff and young people acts as a strong behaviour management tool that helps to reduce a negative home environment. Staff training in



behaviour management supports them to manage challenging behaviours calmly and effectively. This includes the promotion of positive rewards and consequences that young people respond positively to. These measures successfully reduce the need for physical restraint, which is used as a very last resort to keep young people and others safe. Young people are infrequently restrained and the home is satisfied that the techniques used are approved, safe and only performed by trained staff. Records following restraint are detailed and young people are debriefed and supported. However, one restraint record includes an inaccurate description of the measure used. This had not been identified and rectified through monitoring. This does not impact on young people's safety, but is a missed opportunity to ensure it is put right.

Overall, good recruitment practices ensure that all staff are checked and assessed as suitable. This protects young people from unsafe adults. However, not all of the checks have been completed to verify the reasons why applicants have left positions that include vulnerable adults. This does not promote robust recruitment practices.

Young people's health and safety and that of staff and visitors is protected by regular monitoring of safety equipment. Checks on gas, electrical appliances and fire prevention equipment reduce risk and keeps everyone safe in the event of a fire.

## **Leadership and management**

## **adequate**

Overall, young people live in a well-managed home. The Registered Manager is qualified and has many years of social care experience. She has been registered with Ofsted since September 2014. A staff member said that the Registered Manager, 'Brings so much experience, gives staff confidence, listens and makes decisions together and strives to be the best.' The effective deputising arrangements ensure that the home is competently run in the Registered Manager's absence.

Management monitoring of the home is enhanced by the interventions of an independent external Regulation 33 visitor. They are good at highlighting the home's strengths and areas for improvement. However, the reports do not make clear the views of the visitor following consultation with young people and stakeholders to confirm their satisfaction that young people are safeguarded. Aspects of internal monitoring have been slow to identify and tackle weakness. For example, the accuracy of some records and missing information from young people's placement plans. The Registered Manager has not demonstrated during the monitoring process how the home actively works with local services. They have not demonstrated how the home's recruitment strategy highlights the measures taken to promote a culturally diverse staff team that all young people can identify with.

Young people are cared for by a well-resourced staff team whose level of supervision keeps young people safe. New staff confirm that they reap significant benefits from the good management and peer support and absorb the informal 'hands on' learning. Team communication is strengthened by daily handovers, regular team meetings,

mandatory and bespoke training. However, the majority of staff have not received specific training to further improve their awareness when caring for young people from different cultural backgrounds. Staff express high levels of job satisfaction in their responsibilities towards young people and they have risen to the challenges faced during difficult times. A member of staff said, 'I love it. I absolutely love it!' Staff confirm they are regularly supervised which is documented. However, it is not clear how frequently the manager is supervised because there is no record to evidence the frequency of their supervision.

The home's comprehensive Statement of Purpose was updated in December 2014. It informs stakeholders of the services that young people can expect to receive.

## 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.