

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC384018
Inspector	Fiona Littlefield
Type of inspection	Interim
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	19/11/2014

Inspection date	05/02/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **declined in effectiveness**.

At the full inspection in November 2014, the overall effectiveness of the home was judged as good. The home has declined in effectiveness since this time.

The Registered Manager has been absent since January 2015. Managers within the organisation are taking action to address and remedy this situation. These circumstances have, however, had a direct impact on the continuity and consistency of young people's care.

For some young people, the arrangements for contact with their families have not been followed correctly. This indicates a failure in effective communication between managers and staff. This has compromised young people's safety. Contact arrangements have recently been clarified and strengthened so that young people have more predictable and organised contact with family members.

On occasion, the behaviour of some young people has been very challenging. The impact of this on other young people in the home has been to leave them feeling unsettled and unhappy. This has been reflected in a reduction in school attendance for some young people, who had previously been making progress in this area. Some young people previously told their social workers that they wanted to leave the home. Young people's loss of confidence in the home was confirmed by family members and some external professionals. However, young people report that the situation has recently stabilised. This has led to a recent improvement in school attendance for some young people.

Young people respond positively to staff who know their needs well and are attentive to them. They describe a nurturing and committed staff team, who they can rely on for regular, reliable guidelines. Young people say that they are, 'pleased with boundaries, as they feel safer'.

Managers have not effectively monitored the quality of care and professional practice in the home. This is a missed opportunity to reflect on the impact of recent developments for the young people and to identify areas for improvement. Senior managers in the organisation are aware of this shortfall and are addressing this as a matter of urgency.

Managers and staff have recorded incidents, notifications and restraints appropriately since the last inspection. However, the frequency of incidents since the last inspection indicates that this has been a difficult time. Staff, who enjoy good relationships with young people, were concerned about the impact of a disturbed environment on the residents in the home.

In these circumstances, staff require robust leadership, regular supervision and training. However, these arrangements have fallen short of providing staff with the support they need. Staff now report that this shortfall is being addressed. Supervision arrangements have recently been reviewed and strengthened. Morale amongst staff has improved in the past few weeks. They are now more confident that they can work positively with the young people.

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
19/11/2014	Full	good
05/03/2014	Interim	good progress
07/11/2013	Full	adequate
13/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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
11 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the safeguarding and welfare of children accommodated and make proper provision for the care, education, supervision, support and, where appropriate, treatment, of children accommodated (Regulation 11(1)(a)(b))	19/02/2015
27 (2001)	ensure that all persons employed receive training, supervision and appraisal (Regulation 27(4)(a))	19/03/2015
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for improving the quality of care provided in the children's home. (Regulation 34(1)(b))	19/03/2015

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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.