

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	12/05/2015
Unique reference number	SC415347
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Graham Baker
Registered person address	Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester, Warwickshire, B49 5JG

Responsible individual	Graham Baker
Registered manager	Mark Duckers
Inspector	Rebecca Quested

Inspection date	12/05/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC415347

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.
- Children and young people become increasingly safe as individualised plans are implemented. The frequency with which children and young people go missing from home decreases and staff develop effective behaviour management strategies which result in young people's behaviour improving and better levels of engagement.
- Partnership working is effective. The Registered Manager and staff work well with professionals and families to support children and young people and keep them safe. For example, staff engage proactively with families to promote contact arrangements. The Registered Manager and staff have excellent relationships with the police, ensuring a coherent response for those who go missing from home.
- Staff persevere to ensure they develop trusting and secure relationships with children and young people. Their relationships improve with all staff and they are able to discuss what is difficult and to make progress.
- Children and young people make measurable progress in achieving their educational achievement as their attendance and attainment increase significantly. Some are re-introduced to school after considerable periods of non-attendance which represents significant improvement from their starting point.
- The Registered Manager has not secured all relevant local authority paperwork to support emergency placements. Staff's ability to meet children and young people's needs effectively in the short term is restricted without care plans and details of their education and health needs. The Registered Manager has identified that the paintwork on the outside of the home requires re-painting for in excess of two years, but the provider has failed to complete this and that has led to the woodwork now rotting. This does not provide a high quality environment that children and young people need.

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

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 (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>In order to meet the care planning standard the registered person must ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that children receive effectively planned care in or through the home and have a positive experience of arriving at the home.</p> <p>This refers to the need for a complete and current local authority care plan to be available at the point of placement, including in an emergency placement, with detailed information regarding young people's health and education needs and legal status. (Quality Standard 14(1)(a)(b))</p>	15/06/2015

Recommendations

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

provide a safe and stimulating environment in high-quality buildings. (The Guide, page 6, paragraph 1.10)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The privately-owned home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children aged from 11 to 17 years at any one time. It provides care and accommodation for three children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/02/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/07/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
03/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>good</p>
<p>Children and young people consistently make progress in all areas of their lives. Staff work effectively with education providers to ensure children and young people attend and engage with education. Children and young people make significant progress with some re-engaging with education after years of dis-engagement. This constitutes significant progress. Some take public examinations and are able to make plans for the future. A parent said, ‘...staff support my young person to go to school and use positive reinforcement which means that there is now the offer of a place in main stream college in September.’</p> <p>Children and young people engage with interests in the community. Staff support them to attend events for their hobbies regularly. Children and young people develop skills and expertise in their hobbies and improve their self-confidence and self-esteem. Children and young people go on holiday with staff and family members which broaden their horizons and allow them to have new experiences. Staff support children and young people’s interests and show a detailed knowledge and pride in their successes. Staff support contact with family members and friends, where it is safe and appropriate to do so, ensuring that they benefit from maintaining relationships and friendships from their past. Where family and friends live a long way from the home staff ensure that they are flexible in supporting contact arrangements. This contributes to children and young people developing emotional resilience.</p> <p>Staff ensure that children and young people are registered with local health services and that their physical and mental health needs are met. The home is part of a large organisation which provides its own therapeutic services. Those who choose not to engage with direct therapy sessions benefit from indirect intervention as the therapists attend the staff team meetings and provide advice and guidance to staff. For example, where staff have insufficient information from placing authorities in an emergency admission, the support from therapists was vital in informing staff how to manage challenging and unexpected behaviours.</p> <p>Children and young people make progress in managing their emotions and the need for physical intervention by staff decreases through their placements. For</p>	

example, some are able to communicate their appreciation and understanding of needing to be restrained and the frequency with which physical interventions are necessary reduces. One young person wrote to staff apologising for their behaviour and thanking staff for their support and guidance following physical interventions. Staff evaluate their interventions effectively and amend behaviour management plans to promote improved quality of care. Staff treat children and young people with respect and dignity and recognise how cultural and ethnic differences impact on their experience of care. For example, when they encounter difficulties in developing relationships with staff of an opposite gender, all staff work together to consistently demonstrate that all staff listen and understand them. Staff endeavour to ensure that children and young people's food, activities and religious observance reflects their individual identities. As a result, they benefit from highly individualised and effective care which embraces cultural difference.

Children and young people enjoy positive relationships with staff. They seek them out to share their views, for support and for affection. Staff ensure those who move on from the home receive visits and understand that the staff remain interested in them as they make the transition into their new placement. Children and young people are at the centre of decision-making and planning. Their views are captured through key work sessions, young people's meetings, and feedback directly to the Registered Manager who ensures that he responds to them.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Children and young people become increasingly safe as staff support and protect them from harm. Staff understand the risks associated with individual's behaviours and work effectively with all stakeholders to minimise the risks associated with these. Staff develop effective relationships with the police and together, child-centred decision-making means children and young people are not unnecessarily criminalised and restorative justice is used effectively. For example, children and young people engage with the youth offending team to prevent re-offending as a positive choice, rather than as a punishment, or as part of a court order.</p> <p>Staff promote positive behaviour with success. Children and young people take</p>	

age-appropriate risks in line with parental and social work agreement. For example, one young person is rewarded with free time taking part in his hobby, going to skate parks, for attending education. This has progressed to staying overnight with friends close to the skate park.

Children and young people rarely go missing from home, reflecting significant progress from their starting point on arriving at the home. Staff always follow those who go missing or look for them and ensure a return interview is offered by an independent person. This provides them with an opportunity to discuss privately the factors which have led to them being missing and risk assessments and plans can be amended to reflect these.

Proactive relationships with the police result in well-coordinated responses to children and young people who go missing from home. This is especially effective where they are at risk of child sexual exploitation, where prompt and co-ordinated responses ensure the time young people are exposed to risk is minimised. The police describe their working relationship with the staff and Registered Manager as 'excellent'.

Children and young people are able to discuss any concerns with trusted adults either through key working sessions, young people's meetings or through the complaints processes. The Registered Manager ensures that all allegations and complaints are taken seriously and responded to appropriately. For example, the Registered Manager contacts the designated officer when children and young people make allegations about members of staff, either within the home or in school. Thus ensuring young people feel safe and listened to.

Staff are trained and understand the risks associated with children and young people's use of the internet. The Registered Manager has identified this as an area of further development for the staff team in view of the increasing role of social media in children and young people's lives.

Leaders and staff implement safeguarding policy comprehensively and swiftly across all safeguarding issues. This includes referrals to the designated officer when there are allegations regarding staff and to the local authority safeguarding team. As a result, children and young people are kept safe.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The Registered Manager is appropriately experienced and qualified, holding a recognised qualification in the management of children’s homes. He has been in post since 2010. The Registered Manager is passionate and committed to the young people and demonstrates an excellent understanding of most children and young people’s needs and plans. There is evidence that he challenges local authorities to provide relevant plans and advocates on behalf of children and young people. He ensures the Statement of Purpose is up to date and that staff provide care in line with the home’s ethos of nurturing and individualised care.</p> <p>The Registered Manager has not ensured that all relevant information is available in relation to a recent emergency placement. Staff’s ability to meet the young person’s immediate needs has been adversely effected as a result. This particularly applies to staff’s understanding of the young person’s legal status and health and education background and identified needs. The Registered Manager recognises this and is taking steps to rectify this immediately.</p> <p>The Registered Manager and staff work effectively with professionals and families to drive forward positive outcomes. For example, a parent described how staff ‘go the extra mile’ to support their young person. Leaders work proactively with the local community to promote positive relationships with the home and staff have a good local knowledge ensuring children and young people are able to engage with their specific activities and interests.</p> <p>The Registered Manager is aware of the impact of caring for vulnerable children and young people on staff. He acknowledges this with staff when they have managed challenging behaviours, encouraging reflective practice in formal and in formal supervision. This improves the quality of care as staff feel valued and supported and respond positively to advice and guidance. Staff receive regular training which reflects the home’s Statement of Purpose to provide individualised and nurturing care for children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. This ensures all staff continue to develop their skills and remain up to date with essential training such as behaviour management and restraint.</p> <p>Staff develop trusting relationships with children and young people who feel able to discuss their wishes and feelings. Staff work effectively as a consistent team which provides a sense of security and stability. A social worker said, ‘the key is the staff relationships which have enabled my young person to communicate on a</p>	

deeper level with staff.' Consequently, they make progress in all areas of their lives.

The exterior paintwork of the building is not of high quality. The Registered Manager has identified this as an issue for over two years but the provider has not carried out the maintenance. The paintwork is now rotting and developing holes. This means that the high quality environment which children and young people need is not provided and detracts from the progress made in improving the appearance of the inside of the home.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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