

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	20/05/2015
Unique reference number	SC001452
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Five Rivers Child Care Limited
Registered person address	Five Rivers Childcare, 47 Bedwin Street, SALISBURY, SP1 3UT

Responsible individual	Ms Mausumi Maulik
Registered manager	Miss Carol Perkins
Inspector	Ms Jacqueline Malcolm

Inspection date	20/05/2015
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
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

SC001452

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people live in a stable, caring and nurturing environment that supports them to address their past trauma and complex histories. They are helped and protected by a consistent and well informed staff team.
- Care planning is highly personalised. This results in young people making measurable progress. This is specifically in relation to the development of their confidence and improving education, health and behavioural outcomes. Where issues arise in relation to any of these aspects, the home is good at communicating their concerns to professional stakeholders and placing authorities.
- Those young people who demonstrate challenging behaviours have learnt to self-regulate and better articulate their feelings. Others are supported by a resilient staff team that offers them unconditional positive regard and alternative strategies so they learn socially acceptable behaviours.
- Staff genuinely care about the young people and invest in their success. Positive relationships and attachments between young people and a number of staff have developed from their interpersonal interactions.
- Good leadership and management practice supports the delivery of effective child centred care. Committed and trained staff, good communication mechanisms and the monitoring of young people's progress ensures that they remain at the centre of all care practices.
- Shortfalls identified to meet the regulations and drive forward improvement do not impact on young people's safety, welfare and progress.

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
16: Statement of purpose keep the statement of purpose under review and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. If the home has a website, the registered person must ensure that a copy of the statement of purpose is published on that website unless the registered person considers that such publication would prejudice the welfare of children in the home (Regulation 16(3)(a)(b)(4))	30/06/2015
45: Review of quality of care ensure that the system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45 (2 a to c) and (5))	30/06/2015

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
23/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
19/12/2014	Full	Good
06/03/2014	Interim	Not Judged

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
<p>Young people make good progress because they receive highly personalised and consistent support. This is delivered by caring, intuitive staff who treat them with unconditional positive regard. Clear routines and boundaries in the home provide firm foundations that are child centred. This enables young people to live out their childhood in a safe, reliable and nurturing environment where they can start to address their past trauma. A social worker said that the young person placed by them is 'happy and wants to stay at the home.'</p> <p>Young people's involvement in their care planning is age appropriate and ensures that they have a say in their life journeys. This promotes their rights. It also enables young people to feel listened to and appreciate how the home works with other professionals to improve their life chances. For example, regular 'team around the child' meetings promote consistency. These gatherings strive to ensure that everyone is working towards the same objectives. Young people are consulted prior to their reviews and they have attended them. Young people's care plans are sensitive and responsive to their personal identity. Staff training in equality and diversity raises their awareness. This enables staff to promote young people's cultural needs and challenge discrimination. A member of staff said, 'a lot is in place to ensure equality and diversity of the young person and that their culture is promoted positively.' The support and available resources help young people to embrace their uniqueness and start to develop a positive self-image.</p> <p>Measurable improvements in some young people's behaviours are celebrated and rewarded. Young people are learning to understand the cause and effects of their negative behaviours and adjust their conduct at different paces. They confirm that staff recognise good behaviour and praise them 'all the time.' Young people are learning to express their feelings, apologising when they makes mistakes and model the behaviour of the positive adults around them. This meets the aim of the homes Statement of Purpose that refers to helping young people understand 'emotional competence' to 'enhance each child's capacity for empathy and sympathy and to understand the experiences of others.' High staffing levels enable young people to enjoy spending time with most staff and engage in key work sessions. Some positive and influential relationships are built on these times. Furthermore, some relationships have improved between young people and staff that were previously less well developed. A professional stakeholder said, 'x does have a good relationship with staff.'</p>	

Young people live in a home where education is highly valued and promoted. This aspirational culture meets the aims of the home Statement of Purpose. It states that education 'is an integral part of our approach to maximise the potential of every child and young person.' In practice, young people are excellent school attendees with close to 100% attendance. Communication between the home and schools are good. Staff have a very good understanding of where young people are up to educationally, which ensures they can support them. Whilst some young people have steady attainment levels, others through no fault of their own are progressing to their full capacity. The home is proactively working with their multi-disciplinary partners to ensure that young people in their care are afforded an equal opportunity to thrive educationally.

Young people enjoy good health. They are generally receptive to attending their health appointments and accept support in choosing healthy, balanced meals. Most young people's emotional health needs are identified and met by a qualified, trained and experienced professional. Where young people do not receive timely specialist services, the home has plans in place to contact the placing authority. This is with a view to exploring alternative resources so that young people get the prompt support that they deserve.

Young people confirm that they enjoy a range of fun activities. This enables them to spend quality time with staff, which strengthens their relationships and attachments. Young people are helped to experience different activities and their interests and talents are harnessed. For example, spending time with animals and playing sports. Young people also enjoy indoor activities playing on the facilities in the secure grounds, computer games or 'chilling' during pampering or DVD evenings. Young people's preferences are listened to and acted on which means that they get to partake in activities that interest them. Young people do invite their friends to the home and tea visits have taken place, which mirrors positive family life.

Young people maintain appropriate contact with their family. This is facilitated by staff who understand the importance of helping young people to maintain these significant attachments. The relationship between the home and families enables young people to see that both parties are working together in their best interests. This reinforces young people's sense of belonging, identity and connectivity with those close to them. Staff remain conscious of the impact of contact on young people's emotions and remain sensitive and supportive towards them.

Young people have developed useful skills that will benefit them when they get older. They know how to cook and prepare drinks and snacks. They clean their rooms and at times with staff prompts, keep themselves well groomed. These skills empower young people and equip them to do more for themselves.

Young people live in a homely physical environment that is well-maintained throughout. It feels and looks like a family home that gives a clear message to

young people that they are valued. Any damage and wear and tear is promptly attended to. Young people are comfortable in their home and they show pride when showing their friends and visitors around.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Young people live in a safe and secure home environment. This supports the aim of the homes Statement of Purpose, 'to reassure the child that they are cared for, cared about and safe.' Young people are cared for by a proactive and supportive staff team. They are familiar with young people's vulnerabilities and they know how to protect them. A member of staff said, 'I am thoroughly trained and informed on this topic after recent courses.' Young people say they feel safe most of the time and can identify staff with whom they can talk to if they felt unsafe or worried about something. Staff talk to young people about keeping themselves safe. This reinforces the safety message. It also informs young people that staff really care about them. Robust risk management strategies involve young people's social workers and they are effective in eliminating the risks associated with all forms of bullying, child sexual exploitation and other forms of abuse. Staff enable young people to take calculated risks. This improves their social development and independence. For example, walking to the local shop under staff supervision is noted by the independent visitor who reports, 'I have observed staff being vigilant with a young person who went to the shop to spend some of their pocket money.' Social workers raise no concerns about young people's safety at this home.</p> <p>Young people have not gone missing from home and they show no desire to do so. This maximises their safety because staff know where they are. Staff are acutely aware about the potential for young people to go missing and they know what protective action to take should this happen. A member of staff said, 'we have a missing from placement plan that is agreed with the local authority for our young person, it is designed to ensure x safety'. Another said, 'we have a particular risk assessment in place with guidance for staff on what to look for re a child being sexually exploited.'</p> <p>The Statement of Purpose states, 'our aim is to enable each child to take responsibility for and exert personal control over their learning and behaviour.' This is proving to be effective for some young people. The impact for others is yet to be fully realised. Young people understand the homes routines and boundaries that are intended to help them to behave in socially acceptable ways. Staff show competence and skill in building constructive relationships with the young people.</p>	

This is well informed by specific training and their keenness to understand the likely triggers for behavioural changes. A member of staff said that their behaviour management training 'is a fantastic tool to have been trained in for the preparation of working with challenging situations with the young people.'

Individualised behaviour management plans, challenging negative behaviours and consistent practice is helping some young people to self-regulate and start to articulate their feelings. This has led to fewer incidents. Those young people who show increased levels of aggression are helped to modify their behaviours and develop coping strategies through proactive staff interventions. This has involved some excellent team work that intends to establish effective and consistent responses. Young people understand that restraint is only used to keep them and others safe. Incidents of restraint include the views of young people who have the ability to reflect on their behaviour. Young people's social workers support the rationale where restraints from some young people have increased. Close monitoring of these physical interventions ensure transparent and safe practice.

Young people in conflict with each other are helped to quickly resolve their differences restoratively. This improves their ability to learn to respect each other's individual characters and put right their differences. On rare occasions, the local police community support officer has intervened at the home's request. This has proved to be very effective in raising young people's awareness about the impact of some discriminatory behaviour that could criminalise them. Young people have expressed remorse when their actions have hurt others. They have apologised for their behaviour and are sufficiently comfortable to give each other a hug and eventually move on from incidents. This toughens young people's resilience, raises their awareness and helps them to understand and manage disputes.

Young people are cared for and protected by the current staff team who have been carefully selected and vetted. No staff member is the subject of allegations made against them.

Fire safety and other health and safety checks maintain a safe home environment. This protects young people from hazards to their safety and welfare.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>Young people benefit from living in a well managed home that is fundamentally conducted within the Statement of Purpose.</p> <p>The home is managed by a Registered Manager who has been registered with</p>	

Ofsted since September 2014. The Registered Manager holds both a social work and management qualifications. She has over 25 years' experience working for children and young people in a number of social care settings. This validates her suitability to manage the home. Good deputising arrangements mean that the home continues to operate effectively when the Registered Manager is away from the home.

The Registered Manager is very child focussed and firmly believes that every child deserves to be loved. She has a good understanding of the young people and can identify how living at the home has made a difference to their lives. Her aspirational and committed approach to caring for the young people is shared and delivered by the rest of the team. A member of staff commented, 'we strive to be the best.' The management and staff team are keen to help the young people meet their potential and deliver care and support as set out in the Statement of Purpose. This document is under review to ensure it complies with the new regulations and clarifies the therapeutic aspects of service delivery. A new children's guide is also under review. It intends to inform new young people to the home about the services they can expect to receive.

The Registered Manager and staff team have developed effective relationships with social workers, other professional stakeholders and where possible, families. They achieve this by ensuring good communication with them. This means that the team can deliver young people's care plans in a manner that promotes their individuality and self-expression. Leaders and managers challenge professional stakeholders when much needed services are not made available to young people in a timely or 'good enough' manner. This is evident with respect to health and education matters that are hindering the progress of some young people. Similarly, issues and disagreements raised by placing authorities are resolved. This improves working relationships that stimulate positive outcomes for young people.

Professional stakeholders are generally satisfied with the services provided by the home. A social care professional said that the home 'is doing a really good job' caring for a young person placed by them.

Young people are cared for by a skilled, well retained staff team. They have an excellent insight in the young people's personalities and behaviours. This enables them to positively influence young people's daily lives. The home is currently holding two staff vacancies. These are covered by existing staff whilst a recruitment drive to fill posts is underway. Staff say that despite some significant challenges they enjoy their role. A member of staff said, 'the team is strong together. Fresh every day, no-one is carrying negative energy.' A range of regular management, keyworker, team meetings and handovers provide opportunities for discussions about young people's progress. Some are in consultation with the therapist. These effective support mechanisms improve staff consistency and shared ownership of team practice. Staff feel well supervised and supported. This is confirmed by a member of staff who said, 'the supervisions provided by this

company are really effective and give me much more confidence in doing my job and dealing with difficult situations. Having a psychotherapist on site also offers the chance to discuss feelings and coping strategies if something difficult has happened.’ Staff are well trained and benefit from a range of good training opportunities. Some staff have received specific training, enabling them to lead on certain practice areas. For example, behaviour management. The team has a range of opportunities for reflective practice. They factor in time to discuss the emotional impact of caring for young people when their behaviour is challenging. A member of staff said, ‘it is very reflective and child centred. The team are well trained and motivated.’

The Registered Manager is aware about the homes strengths and weaknesses. She can articulate the actions already taken or planned to drive forward improvement. For example, the quality assurance of young people’s records to ensure consistently good audit of young people’s progress. The previous regulation with respect to reporting on outcomes of consultations with young people, parents and professionals has not been suitably met. Although there is no direct impact on the safety and welfare of young people; it is not clear how the manager demonstrates how they improve young people’s experiences. This requirement is therefore repeated. The Registered Manager has addressed the previous shortfalls in relation to restraint records.

The Registered Manager responds to any issues raised by the independent visitor to ensure improved outcomes for young people. The visitor consults with young people. They state the reasons when they have not been in contact with social workers or relatives during the visits. The independent visitor confirms that they are confident that young people are safe and are being cared for in a safe manner. This provides a reassurance to the Responsible Individual and stakeholders about the care and protection afforded to the young people.

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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