

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	12/05/2015
Unique reference number	SC039213
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Mr Abubakaar Sesay
Inspector	Ms Filiz Osman

Inspection date	12/05/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Adequate
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	Requires improvement

SC039213

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The staff have a good understanding of most aspects of the young people's needs in relation to their history, family relationships, mental health and independence skills. They are sensitive and responsive to the young people's needs. This includes supporting them with Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) appointments, individual one-to-one time and building good relationships with young people's parents.
- In the short time they have been in the home, young people have made good progress. They take part in various positive activities of their choice which in turn develops their self-esteem.
- Young people enjoy positive relationships with the staff team. They have formed at least one close relationship and have trust in the whole staff team. They feel settled in the relatively short time and have attributed this to how the staff treat them.

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>The education standard</p> <p>8.—(1) The education standard is that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(v) promote opportunities for each child to learn informally;</p> <p>(vi) maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement;</p> <p>(vii) raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority;</p> <p>(viii) help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible;</p> <p>This in particular relates to effective challenge and partnership with the relevant virtual schools and the local education authority.</p> <p>Also to involve the young people with other learning in the home and the community, such as being involved in the home improvements, budgeting for the food shopping and the gardening.</p>	31/07/2015
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>6.—(1) The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	31/07/2015

<p>(a) understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; (b) ensure that staff— (i) understand and apply the home's statement of purpose; (vii) provide to children living in the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably; (c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to— (i) meet the needs of each child</p> <p>This particularly refers to that The Statement of Purpose is updated and that the outstanding maintenance and improvements are completed.</p>	
<p>5. In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff— (a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; (b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; (c) if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and (d) seek to develop and maintain effective professional relationships with such persons, bodies or organisations as the registered person considers appropriate having regard to the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the children's home is to provide care and accommodation.</p> <p>This is in particular referring to challenging the relevant virtual schools, developing and building effective relationships with the Local Education Authority and youth services.</p>	31/07/2015
<p>13.—(1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— (a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous</p>	31/07/2015

<p>improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>The care planning standard is particularly relevant to appraisals being completed, supervision records filed correctly and to be reflective;</p> <p>The manager to delegate more responsibility to key workers in building relationships with the virtual schools and the local education authority;</p> <p>To routinely review the statement of purpose and update if necessary;</p> <p>To complete the annual assessment of the location of the home;</p> <p>To update the home's missing policy to include the offer of an independent interview on return;</p> <p>To update and review all policies that refer to another children's home and be specific to this particular children's home;</p> <p>And to have a development plan for the home, so that staff training is targeted.</p>	
<p>16.—(1) The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>(2) The registered person must provide a copy of the statement of purpose to HMCI and make a copy of it available upon request to—</p> <p>(a) a person who works at the home;</p> <p>(b) a child, or a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered;</p> <p>(c) a parent of a child, or a parent of a child for whom accommodation in the home is being considered;</p> <p>(d) a child's placing authority; and</p> <p>(e) in the case of a qualifying school, the Secretary of State.</p> <p>(3) The registered person must—</p> <p>(a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>(b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.</p> <p>(5) Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose.</p>	<p>31/07/2015</p>

<p>The statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted and should be sent whenever it is updated, stating clearly what the home provides for young people.</p>	
<p>43.—(1) The registered provider must appoint, at the registered provider's expense, a person ('the independent person') to visit and report on the children's home carried on by the registered provider.</p> <p>(2) If the registered provider carries on more than one home, the registered provider may appoint the same person as the independent person for all or any of those homes.</p> <p>(3) Subject to paragraphs (4) and (5), the registered provider may not appoint the following as an independent person—</p> <p>(g) a person who has, or has had, a connection with—</p> <p>(i) the registered person;</p> <p>(ii) a person working at the home; or</p> <p>(iii) a child,</p> <p>This is in particular in relation to the independent visitor who also provides training, supervision, consultancy, including creating and updating policies and procedures.</p>	<p>30/08/2015</p>

Recommendations

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

Full report

Information about this children's home

This section should outline:

- This is a privately run children's home. The home provides care for to up to six young people of either gender who have emotional or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/11/2014	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
18/06/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
26/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
<p>Staff have got to know the young people well in the relatively short time they have lived at the home. They respond to the young people's needs appropriately and support them with their family relationships, developing their interests and their independent skills. The staff team is stable and this provides the young people with a sense of security and consistency. Many staff have been working in the home for over five years.</p> <p>Staff support and are responsive to the young people's health needs. They attend relevant appointments with them. Young people are consistently encouraged to develop and participate in positive activities in the absence of formal education and different opportunities are explored with them. Young people have access to CAMHS and are given choice over whether to have their appointments at the home with support from the staff team or elsewhere. This choice makes it easier for young people to access the help they need. Mental health needs are reviewed regularly.</p> <p>Young people feel safe in the home. They report that they do not experience bullying. They know who to go to when they want to discuss something and are aware of independent advocacy if they want to talk to someone independent of the home.</p> <p>Some young people say that even though they did not want to be in the home when they first arrived, they were made very welcome and helped to feel 'at home'. One says that it 'feels like I am with family'. They are given a copy of the children's guide and a welcome box to help them settle. They say the welcome box was full with things they needed, such as toiletries. Where possible, the young people are allowed to have family members visit them at home and spend time with them doing an activity.</p> <p>Young people have positive relationships with the staff team. They have formed at least one close positive relationship within the home and have trust in the staff team. The young people feel settled in the relative short time they have been there and have attributed this to how the staff treat them. One young person's comment was 'they treated me like a person'.</p> <p>Young people are treated with dignity and respect. They feel their needs are met including their specific cultural needs, such as dietary requirements. One young person commented that meals are 'like food I had at home'. All are asked and</p>	

offered support in practicing their religions, such as going to church. Young people like that there are staff from their own cultural backgrounds who they can identify with.

Young people's risk-taking behaviour, such as going missing or using aggressive and threatening behaviour has reduced; placing authorities comment on this as a major improvement. Young people's challenging and often violent behaviour has reduced. Allocated social workers have commented that this is due to a good balance of male and female staff who are firm with implementing the rules and are clear about what is acceptable behaviour. The staff have training in managing challenging behaviour, de-escalation techniques and restraint, although it has not been necessary to restraint young people for over a year. Behaviour management is consistent and in line with the behaviour management policy, which is to de-escalate and contain situations.

Young people are not in any formal education and were not in education before they came to the home for a number of months. Some progress has been made by staff working in partnership with the placing authorities but as yet this has not been effective in enabling the young people to access education. In the meantime young people are supported with accessing other activities, which include going to the gym, developing their independence skills and home-learning, such as completing work books and reading. However, young people are not offered wide enough choice and early action is not taken with regards to accessing activities. Young people say that there could be more activities within the home, based in the living room.

Young people receive some of their pocket money on a reward basis, based on completing chores and complying with certain rules. Young people are accepting of the reward system and understand the basic principles around it.

The home environment is mostly homely although minor repairs and improvements have not been made. For example, the conservatory is cluttered and the activity room somewhat bare. Young people like their bedrooms, think they have all that they need and that they are of a good size.

Young people move on from the home with clear plans and are well-prepared for their move to semi-independent accommodation. For example, staff prepared a young person for motherhood and helped a young person move on to semi-independent accommodation while completing an apprenticeship. One social worker said, 'The home was fantastic.'

	Judgement grade
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>The manager and staff anticipate risk well and there are robust risk assessments and plans, however these are not reviewed or updated in a timely way after particular incidents. The manager and staff identify risks well and notify the local authority and, where appropriate the police, for example, when a young person is missing. Young people are offered a de-brief by the staff and when relevant the police. The staff understand the difference between young people being missing or absent without authorisation and respond appropriately. Records of absence and missing records are kept but not clearly differentiated. Young people are not offered an independent return interview as per statutory guidance and regulations. The missing policy and procedure does not include the offer of an independent interview. Staff attend strategy meetings as and when required for young people.</p> <p>Young people say they feel safe. One young person said, 'I feel safer than I did before I came here'. Young people say they are not bullied but know they can talk to a member of staff if they felt they were being bullied. Safer recruitment processes are evident in staff files to ensure staff are thoroughly checked before they start work in the home.</p> <p>Staff provide weekly reports to allocated social workers and have regular email and telephone contact with them. Staff provide a comprehensive report for the looked after children's review.</p> <p>There are robust practices in place for safety, such as having the computer in the activity room and not allowing access to the home's Wi-Fi. E-safety is not discussed sufficiently with the young people either in key work sessions or the young people's meetings; therefore young people may not understand or remember the danger of social networking.</p> <p>The physical environment in the home is safe on the whole although some minor repairs have not been carried out, such as a torn carpet on a stair.</p> <p>Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and child protection policies. They receive refresher safeguarding training to maintain their skills and knowledge. Staff understand the role of the Local Authority Designated Officer and access training from the Local Children Safeguarding Board.</p>	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement

The staff and management team is stable and new staff have been recruited safely, including those that have previously been employed by the home. There is long-standing permanent staff and bank staff which avoids the need to use agency staff, providing young people with consistency. New staff have had a good induction to their role and responsibilities and already feel part of the team.

The current manager has applied for registration with Ofsted. His interview took place at the time of this full inspection but further checks have yet to be completed. The manager has just completed the level 5 qualification in Leadership and Management and is awaiting his results.

Staff talk positively about their manager: 'He has positivity and this rubs off on the staff.' However, staff think their manager could delegate more. The manager is aspirational for the young people for the home. The deputy manager and a senior residential care worker are undertaking level 5 qualifications in Leadership and Management; this means that the leadership team will be sufficiently qualified in the event of the manager's absence.

Training is a priority and there has been a lot of in-house and external training from the Local Children Safeguarding Board, such as training on gangs, child sexual exploitation training, young people and budgeting training and refresher safeguarding training. Staff get to choose what training they wish to attend in addition to mandatory training. The training at times may not be directly relevant to the individual staff's professional development needs or to their role in the home.

Key worker reports are very good, detailed and reflective. Young people's files are maintained well and contain all the relevant information. Some actions in the young people's case files are not followed-up, and though there are reasons for this, for example a young person did not want to see their doctor, this is not recorded in anything such as key work records.

The manager and staff make efforts to access education for the young people but this is not effective. The manager and staff are not fully aware of the role of the virtual schools. The staff and manager have not demonstrated that they have strong and effective partnership with sufficient local services, such as the local youth club, which is a resource young people could use.

Staff supervision records are very task-based and are not reflective and some supervision records are misfiled. Appraisals are incomplete and appraisals have not been completed for over a year. In this respect it does not appear staff reflection and development is a priority.

The maintenance and improvement of the home environment is not a priority. Maintenance needs are not properly recorded and maintenance needs are not prioritised or even recognised such as improvements to the bathroom, activity

room, garden and conservatory.

A visitor reports monthly on what goes on in the home. The visitor is also a consultant for the home, provides supervision to the manager, training to the team and support in developing policies and procedures. The visitor is therefore not independent as required by regulation. The manager is now providing regular reports of his own monitoring of what goes on in the home.

Management have not completed an assessment of the location of the home. Therefore, any risks in the area and all facilities which could be used by young people are not identified.

The statement of purpose is inaccurate and misleading as it suggests the home provides therapeutic intervention. However, this is accessed externally through CAMHS. The statement of purpose has not been sent to Ofsted every time this has been changed.

Complaints are recorded and managed well. Partnership working is strong with social workers, placement officers, CAMHS staff and youth offending services, but no partnership working with the relevant virtual schools and limited partnership with the local education authority; this results in delay for young people accessing education.

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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