

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>08/07/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC065684</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>J &amp; R Care Limited</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>J &amp; R Care, Ash House South, Ash Road, New Ash Green, LONGFIELD, Kent, DA3 8JF</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Mrs Jane Parish</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Mr Gowkurrun Chuttoor</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Mr Collett</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>08/07/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>

## SC065684

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is requires improvement because:**

- Young people are not always kept safe and protected from harm. Risk is not consistently assessed and effectively managed. There is insufficient challenge to placing authorities who do not respond to young peoples' needs.
- Some young people experience bullying. Leaders and managers have not followed its own policy in addressing this or implemented the complaints process to seek resolution.
- There has been some inconsistency in maintaining appropriate staffing levels. This has resulted in young people not being adequately supervised and subsequently putting themselves at risk of harm.
- There are shortfalls in the care planning process. Placement plans are not always reviewed and updated following significant events. Managers have not always provided reports which could benefit the care planning process.
- Staff are not consistently given the support needed to ensure they acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to provide effective care.
- Young people do not always receive the supervision and support they require to manage appointments with external agencies.
- Physical restraint has occasionally been used before more appropriate de-escalation techniques are tried.

## The children's home strengths

■The home provides stability for some young people who have experienced a number of placement breakdowns. Management and staff are committed to working with young people who present challenging behaviour, and are reluctant to give up on young people when difficulties arise.

■Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff and form attachments. Staff support young people who are in crisis, and seek to make transitions as smooth as possible.

■Some young people improve their school attendance and begin to engage with education, despite having negative experiences in the past. They are supported in finding appropriate post 16 education and training.

■Specialist counselling provision is available to young people who would benefit from such intervention.

■Staff encourage young people to achieve their career aspirations, and offer guidance and practical assistance in preparing for interviews. Staff advocate for young people to overcome barriers in terms of career planning.

■ Good links with local recreational facilities enable young people to take part in sports and fitness training, and provides them with opportunities to take regular exercise.

## 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>5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met</p> <p>In order to meet the engaging with wider system standard, with particular reference to a placing authorities performance being inadequate, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>5 (c) challenge the placing authority or relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans.</p>	31/08/2015
<p>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular reference to supporting young people at appointments with professionals, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>6 (2) (b) (iv) provides personalised care that meets each child's needs.</p>	31/08/2015
<p>11: The positive relationships standard</p> <p>In order to meet the positive relationships standard, with particular reference to staff supervision and bullying, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>11 (2) (a) (x) are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same.</p> <p>11 (2) (a) (xiii) have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them.</p>	31/08/2015

<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard with particular reference to protection, risk management, supervising and keeping children safe, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>(2) (a)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm;</li> <li>(ii) help each child to understand how to keep safe;</li> <li>(iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that the child is at risk of harm;</li> <li>(iv) manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other;</li> <li>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children;</li> <li>(vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.</li> </ul>	<p>31/08/2015</p>
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with particular reference to the skills and qualifications of staff, sufficient staffing levels, and the quality of care, the registered person must:</p> <p>(2) (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>(d) ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>(f) understand the impact that the quality of care is having on the progress and experiences of each child, and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	<p>31/08/2015</p>
<p>14: The care planning standard</p> <p>In order to meet the care planning standard, with particular reference to placement plans and providing specialist reports when requested, the registered person must:</p>	<p>31/08/2015</p>

<p>14 (1) (a) ensure children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>14 (2) (b) (ii) manage and review the placement of each child in the home.</p>	
<p>Ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16 (5)). (This specifically relates to a therapeutic model of care being implemented in practice, behaviour management and performance monitoring).</p>	31/08/2015
<p>Ensure restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing (a) injury to any person (including the child) or (b) serious damage to the property of any person (including the child). (Regulation 20 (1) (a) (b))</p>	31/08/2015

## Recommendations

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

Comply with relevant health and safety legislation; specifically, ensure fire door mechanisms are well maintained and fire doors are not kept propped open. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Ensure children are able to take up issues or make a complaint with support; specifically, ensure young people have the opportunity to address their concerns, such as bullying, through the complaints procedure. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 23, paragraph 4.13)

Ensure staff have the skills to respond to each child's individual behaviour; in particular, ensure staff maintain boundaries in relation to personal space. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 39, paragraph 8.14)

Ensure staff support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home; specifically, when plans indicate key-working sessions will facilitate discussion around safety issues, ensure these take place regularly. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 43, paragraph 9.9)

Ensure children are not charged with offences resulting from behaviour within a children's home that would not similarly lead to police involvement if it occurred in a family home. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 47, paragraph 9.40)

Ensure records of restraint are kept; in particular, ensure the restraint log book is kept up to date, and cross references restraint incident reports. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 49, paragraph 9.59)

Ensure the home develops effective working relationships with relevant persons; specifically, ensure effective communication and information sharing is maintained with other professionals working with a young person. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 52, paragraph 10.3)

Oversee the welfare of children through engagement with professionals involved in the care of each child; specifically, ensure management and staff are familiar with the work being undertaken by the homes consultant psychotherapist. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 54, paragraph 10.23)

Ensure the home only accepts placements for children where they have fully considered that the placement will have on the existing group of children; specifically, consider the impact of admitting young people with substance misuse issues. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 56, paragraph 11.4)



## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is privately run and provides care and accommodation for no more than five young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Education is provided in an adjacent building.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/03/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
13/05/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
11/03/2014	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>requires improvement</b></p>
<p>Some young people develop increased security and stability through living at the home for significant periods. Some make good progress and become more emotionally resilient. This helps them to manage their anxieties and anger more effectively. However, this progress is not consistent for all young people and some continue to misuse drugs and engage in offending behaviour.</p> <p>Staff build positive relationships with young people and become familiar with individuals needs and aspirations. Young people say that staff try to support them and keep them safe, and they can identify staff with whom they have a particularly good relationship. A professional stated she had observed a 'close and affectionate' relationship between a young person and carer.</p> <p>Despite these positive relationships, staff do not consistently place young people at the centre of their practice. One professional reported that a young person was not given adequate support when attending appointments. Staff did not wait for the him or respond quickly to requests for a lift home. This meant the young person was often left unsupervised. Staff were also observed struggling to maintain boundaries and protect their personal space during the inspection.</p> <p>All young people have a place at the organisations on site school, although attendance varies among the group. Some young people who have previously had very poor school attendance begin to engage with education and see an overall improvement in their attendance rate. However, other young peoples' attendance has dropped as low as 30%.</p> <p>Good support is given to young people planning their post 16 education provision, and some have secured placements at local further education colleges. One young person has made excellent progress towards his goal of taking up a military career. Staff encourage young people to do well in education, and arrange 'homework slots' to assist young people completing tasks.</p> <p>Arrangements are made for young people to receive specialist help to address issues such as substance misuse, although not all young people take advantage of this. The organisation commissions an 'in house' psychotherapist who offers weekly counselling to the residents. Some young people are unwilling to engage with this service, and at times have responded negatively to the therapists interventions.</p>	

Reports relating to young peoples' progress in therapy, which have been requested by placing authorities, have not always been completed in a timely manner, or addressed significant issues. This is potentially detrimental to the care planning process for young people with very complex needs.

Opportunities for young people to discuss their concerns and receive advice on keeping safe are often missed. Although young people's placement plans state they will have regular key-work sessions, this often does not happen. Placement plans identify the goals young people are working towards, but often lack detail on how progress will be measured. Some placement plans are not updated following significant events, such as being charged with a serious criminal offence.

The complaints process is not used as a tool for addressing young peoples' concerns. Despite a young person reporting bullying incidents for several months, management and staff have not recognised this as a complaint. Consequently, opportunities are not taken to learn and improve practice through analysis of complaints.

Young people are given advice on maintaining a healthy balanced diet, and some learn to prepare nutritional meals. They are encouraged to keep fit and take regular exercise. Some of the residents attend a local community gym and take part in activities such as boxing. Other young people are more reluctant to engage in purposeful activities with staff, preferring to use their free time to get away from the house. One young person said he did this to avoid bullying.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>requires improvement</b>
<p>Young people say staff support them 'as best they can' and take steps to protect them. However, staff have not been able to prevent young people being bullied by their peers, and one young person reported that this had been going on 'for over a year'. This is despite staff and young people receiving training on how to counteract bullying. The home's 'preventing bullying' policy sets out procedures for staff to follow when bullying is identified, but these are not always followed.</p> <p>Many young people engage in unsafe behaviours, such as misusing drugs, offending, and some self-harm. Some young people are known to have formed associations with adults engaged in drug dealing. Management and staff are aware</p>	

of these concerns, and have liaised with the Police and placing authorities to address these matters.

The particular risks associated with individuals' behaviour are well documented, but risk assessments are not an effective tool for keeping young people safe. Some risk assessments do not take account of significant events and reflect the fact that the potential for harm has increased. Risk assessments are not always reviewed in a timely manner, and some of the actions to mitigate against risks are not taken. Key-work sessions are often identified as opportunities to support young people to keep themselves safe, but in some cases key-work sessions have not taken place for several months.

Detailed behaviour management plans provide staff with guidance on how to respond to negative behaviours, and identify the triggers and indicators that a young person may become aggressive. A points system is used to promote positive behaviour, and young people are familiar with rewards that can be earned. One young person's behaviour has become increasingly difficult to manage, and it was clear during the inspection that this had a significant impact on the ability of staff to manage and support the group.

There have recently been several incidents of challenging behaviour. The external independent visitor's report for June 2015 identifies 41 such incidents. Some of these have impacted negatively on the local community. Many of these incidents have occurred after bed time, and on occasions there have been insufficient numbers of staff on duty to manage the situation and keep young people safe. The behaviour management policy recognises that at times it may be necessary to call for police assistance when such incidents occur, and states this does not necessarily mean prosecutions will follow. However, there have been recent incidents when the police have been called to intervene, rather than the on-call manager attending. This has increased the potential for young people to be charged with offences which may otherwise have been resolved internally.

Physical restraint has been used to prevent young people physically harming one another, and to prevent young people putting themselves in imminent danger. During the inspection staff used appropriate restraint techniques to prevent serious self-harm. However, records indicate that on some occasions, staff members employ physical restraint when young people will not comply with requests. On these occasions there has been no risk to the young person's safety or serious damage to property. There are also some shortfalls in the recording of physical restraint, particularly in relation to the log book, which is not kept up to date. This therefore hinders managers' ability to make informed assessment of the sanctions used to manage behaviour.

Management and staff are familiar with the risks associated with young people

absconding and going missing. Although some young people have reduced their missing episodes, practice is not sufficiently robust to maximise young peoples' safety. Staff are not provided with consistent guidelines on how to respond when a young person goes missing. One young person's file records three different times for when he should be reported as a missing person.

The actions recorded in behaviour management plans for responding to young people going missing are not always followed. In one case the plan states the young person should be followed if he leaves the site. However, the young person confirmed this never happens. Management report this is because staff have to assess the likely response from the young person if they follow the instruction laid out in the plan. Staff currently assigned to undertake return home interviews are not sufficiently independent. Some missing person incident reports do not record any discussion taking place with young people returning from a missing episode, and there are no written observations of the young person's appearance or demeanour.

Any concerns about staff performance are quickly identified. Allegations made against staff are promptly reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO).. Internal investigations into any such allegations are robust, and staff are suspended during the process. Thorough recruitment procedures include undertaking checks on applicants to ensure they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people.

Concerns about the safety and well-being of young people are reported promptly to placing authorities. However, management and staff do not always identify concerns as child protection matters. Issues relating to young peoples' safety during contact with family, and associations with adults who are said to have threatened physical harm to young people, have not been reported to the host local authority child protection team.

Health and safety checks are undertaken and domestic installations are maintained. However, clear audit trails for these are not kept. During the inspection it was observed that a fire door was kept propped open, which would have prevented it activating in the event of an emergency.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>requires improvement</b>
There is an experienced and suitably qualified Registered Manager in post, who was recently promoted from his deputy manager role. The former Registered	

Manager has taken up the post of head of education and training, and maintains regular contact with the home. The home is not fully staffed, and recruitment to vacant posts is being undertaken. Generally, sufficient staffing levels to keep young people safe have been maintained during the day, but not always at night. Management have recently taken steps to address this shortfall.

The statement of purpose is reviewed annually, but does not present a factual description of how the home is currently operating. The statement emphasises a 'therapeutic' approach to caring for young people, based on attachment and social learning theories. It states that staff work with young people's 'unconscious processes'. Although the Registered Individual and head of education and training have relevant qualifications to deliver this model, none of the care staff who work with young people on a day-to-day basis have relevant qualifications or appropriate training.

The statement of purpose also contains inaccuracies in terms of how challenging behaviour is managed, and the approach to performance monitoring.

Although the organisation offers a comprehensive training programme, not all staff have undertaken sufficient training, including refresher training, to ensure they have the skills to meet the needs of young people. All but one staff member have completed safeguarding training, but four members of staff have not undertaken child exploitation and on-line safety training. Other staff have not had recent health and safety, food hygiene or medication training. Two members of staff have not had recent training on physical intervention.

No staff have received training relating to autistic spectrum disorders, despite one resident being diagnosed as on the autistic spectrum.

Many staff are not currently receiving regular supervision. They do not have the opportunity to reflect on their practice and the needs of the young people. They do not receive the level of support required to meet the challenges they experience, or develop their professional practice. One member of staff who has been in post for nine months, has not undertaken an induction programme.

Some young people have been in placement for long periods, providing them with stability and security. Insufficient consideration has been given to the likely impact new admissions have on this group. Although it was known that some young people were misusing drugs, the admission of a young person with a history of substance misuse issues went ahead. Drug related issues subsequently escalated, and some young people have experienced a decline in the progress they had been making.

Concerns about young people's lack of progress and safety are reported to placing authorities. However, when placing authorities fail to take effective action, leaders and managers do not offer robust challenge. This has resulted in a young person's

behaviour becoming seriously out of control, to the point where they could not be kept safe in the home. This situation was resolved during the inspection.

The quality of care is monitored by an external independent visitor, who identifies good practice and any shortfalls. Reports clearly identify what actions need to be taken to rectify any concerns. Management also conduct regular monitoring of the quality of care in line with the regulations. However, the organisations internal annual performance monitoring process, as outlined in the statement of purpose, has not been completed this year.

Managers and staff maintain a regular dialogue with placing authorities and provide written reports on young peoples' progress. A Social Worker stated that 'we have plenty of updates from the unit'. However, good communication with all professionals is not maintained. A youth offending team officer expressed concern that she was not kept informed of significant incidents where young peoples' actions had compromised their safety.

## 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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted). If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk).

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit [www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence](http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence), write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk).

This publication is available at [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted).

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: [www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted](http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted)

© Crown copyright 2015