

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	28/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC020171
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Arnfield Care Limited
Registered person address	Brookbank House, Wellington Road, Bollington, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 5JR

Responsible individual	Wayne Relf
Registered manager	Paul Vella
Inspector	Rachel Griffiths

Inspection date	28/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Declined 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

SC020171

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home is providing good, and in many respects an outstanding, service to young people.
- Young people present as happy and settled. They speak very positively about their experiences and say that the positive relationships they have with staff make them feel safe. Staff are committed and caring and have a genuine attachment to those they care for.
- Staff provide good support to young people who have suffered significant trauma and have complex emotional difficulties. They are insightful. They provide them with high levels of support, praise and encouragement alongside structure, routine, clear and consistent boundaries. As a result, risk-taking behaviours significantly reduce.
- Young people are respected and valued. Their views are central to the running of the home. They are fully involved in the preparation and review of their own placement plans, risk assessment and behaviour support plans.
- A multi-disciplinary approach to each young person's care is a particular strength of this home. Good links with education providers, child and adolescent mental health service and specialist health and therapeutic services ensure that young people have bespoke packages of support that meet their individual needs.
- Staff are driven by an enthusiastic, knowledgeable and motivated manager. He is very child-focused and has high aspirations for young people. Staff feel valued and share the managers vision to improve the life experiences of young people.
- Some shortfalls and areas for improvement are identified as a result of this inspection. These are in relation to supervision and recruitment practices, the home's location assessment and the home's internal quality assurance systems. These are matters which are not currently having an impact on the safety and well-being of young people.

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
ensure that all employees receive practice based supervision by a person with appropriate experience, with particular reference to the registered manager receiving regular supervision. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	25/09/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice in respect of recruitment. Specifically, records confirming all checks in respect of each matter in Schedule 2 (Children's Home's Regulations 2015) should be completed and recorded without delay. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 13.1)
- The review of the home's location assessment should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- The registered person is to have a system in place which allows them to monitor the matters set out in regulation 45 at least once every six months. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64, paragraph 15.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to care for up to seven children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is owned by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in Effectiveness
08/10/2014	CH - Full	Outstanding
05/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
15/05/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Young people's experiences and overall progress are very good. One young person said: 'When I first came here, I was in a lot of trouble. I am now a well-rounded person. I have done my GCSEs and I have got a job. I have sorted my problems out through therapy. My life is back on track because of the care and help I have had. It really is a lovely place to live.' Young people's lives stabilise. They develop life and coping skills and they develop aspirations and dreams for the future.</p> <p>A key strength of this home is the positive relationships young people have with a consistent staff team who know them well. One young person said: 'The staff are happy. I have a good bond with them and they give me good advice. They have helped me to be calmer.' Another commented: 'The staff are amazing. They help me when I feel down. They are always here for me. There is always someone here I can talk to.' Observations of staff demonstrate that they are consistent, supportive and caring. These positive relationships, alongside high levels of emotional warmth, praise and encouragement, provide a solid foundation from where young people can develop in all areas of their life.</p> <p>Young people who have previously struggled in education or have been out of education for some time make excellent progress. Staff have high aspirations for them and encourage them to meet their full educational potential. The manager has recently established links with local universities and has arranged for young people to visit and meet university tutors with an aim of inspiring them in respect of further education. A parent commented: 'My son had missed two years of school. He is now doing brilliantly. He is going to visit some universities next week to look at courses he could do in the future.' Young people develop enthusiasm for learning and start achieving. As a result of this, their opportunities and choices in adulthood are greatly enhanced.</p> <p>Young people are fully respected and valued in this home. Their views are continually sought in respect of the day-to-day running of the home. A young person said: 'Staff listen to us. We have a say in what the house looks like. I asked for more pictures around the house and the manager is sorting this out. He is also buying a frame to put my certificates on the wall.' Young people are fully involved in their own care planning. A social worker commented: 'The young person is fully involved in setting his own goals. Staff are good at tuning into his talents and promoting positive experiences that reflect his interests and help him achieve his goals.' Consequently, young people's individual and diverse needs are well met. They feel listened to. They understand the aims of their placement plans and this</p>	

helps motivate them to work towards their goals.

Young people are very well supported in respect of their physical and emotional health. They benefit from eating regular healthy meals, engaging in physical activity and attending core health appointments. The stability young people experience as a result of consistent and predictable care impacts positively on their emotional well-being. In respect of one young person, an independent reviewing officer said: 'She is now feeling safe and secure enough to start her therapeutic journey. The staff have done wonders to get her to this point.' When a need for specialist therapy has been identified, the manager and staff advocate strongly for young people to receive this without delay. A professional from a partner agency said: 'The staff look outside the box to best support young people. They really care and do over and above to help young people progress.' By engaging in therapy, young people are helped to explore ways to come to terms with past traumas and move on in their lives. This impacts positively on young people's ability to form appropriate relationships and ultimately helps provide them with an improved sense of emotional well-being.

Transitions for young people moving into the home are well planned. A young person said: 'I visited a couple of times before coming. When I moved in, I was made to feel really welcome. I got a card and some chocolates and the staff and other young people helped me settle in.' Careful planning and preparation ensures that young people have the best opportunity to successfully settle into the home and feel more reassured and secure in their new environment.

Relationships between young people and their families improve as a result of the support provided by members of staff. A young person commented: 'Staff have helped me build a better relationship with family members. We have re-connected and get on well again.' Young people benefit greatly from these improved relationships in terms of their sense of identity. It also provides an opportunity for them to have an improved support network in the longer term.

The home is a comfortable and welcoming environment. Bedrooms are personalised. Photos and celebrations of young people's achievements and activities enjoyed by them are displayed around the house. Social issues such as legal highs, healthy living, cyber bullying and respecting diversity are highlighted through wall displays produced by young people. By creating and having access to such displays, young people are helped to become more socially aware. It also helps to create an inclusive and respectful environment for young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people feel safe as a result of the trusting and positive relationships they have with staff. A young person said: 'I could not ask for anywhere better to live. The staff make me feel safe. When I have flashbacks they sit with me and reassure me and make me feel safe.' An emotionally safe and secure environment provides young people with a strong sense of safety and well-being.</p> <p>There are no instances of bullying in the home. When young people move in, they are helped and supported to develop mutual respect and understanding for one another. A young person commented: 'There is no bullying here. We all understand we are not the same and that we are here for different reasons. We all look out for each other and respect each other. We are a bit like brothers and sisters. We respect there are times when we all have bad days and need some space. We can all sit together and watch a film and we have fun together. No-one is excluded but can choose to not join in and that is fine.' This contributes to young people's sense of safety.</p> <p>Young people are helped and protected as a result of staff knowing them well and the implementation and review of individualised risk management plans and multi-agency support plans. Staff engage young people in regular key work sessions targeting specific areas of vulnerability and need. Good links with partner agencies such as schools and colleges, mental health services, drug and alcohol services, specialist health and child exploitation workers ensure that young people get the help and support that they need and deserve. As a result of this and the consistency of care provided by staff, incidents of risk-taking behaviours such as aggression, substance misuse, criminal activity, going missing and self-harm significantly reduce and in some cases, stop.</p> <p>The manager and the staff have a good understanding of the home's safeguarding policies. Lessons have been learnt from a safeguarding issue that arose prior to the last inspection. A requirement set in relation to this has been met. Allegations or concerns that come to the attention of staff are reported without delay. The manager then deals with them robustly in consultation with the appropriate authorities. For example, when one young person made an allegation, immediate action was taken to safeguard her. The concern was swiftly reported to the local authority and police. In this instance, no safeguarding concerns were identified following investigation. The manager and staff's good understanding of safeguarding practices significantly reduces the risk of harm to young people.</p> <p>Despite the young people living in the home having a significant history of going missing prior to living in the home and being assessed as at high risk of sexual exploitation, instances of young people going missing are low. There have only been five occasions since the last inspection and each of these occasions were</p>	

effectively managed. The positive relationships young people have with staff, robust risk management plans, and good working relationships with the police ensure that on the few occasions young people have gone missing, they are swiftly located. Following incidents, young people are welcomed back into the home. They are supported to reflect on the reasons why they went missing. A young person said: 'When I get stressed, I run, but when I come back I realise how much staff care. They are not angry; they are pleased I am back. They help me get my life back on track and explore why I ran away. I am now aware of the danger and staff make me feel like I don't want to run again.' Positive support and the work undertaken with young people in relation to the risks associated with child sexual exploitation has been effective in preventing further incidents and safeguards young people.

Behaviour is well managed in the home. Young people are motivated by positive incentives which are offered in return for positive behaviour. Staff discuss with young people what strategies they believe will be most effective when they are feeling challenged. Strategies and clear aims are then agreed and implemented into each young person's behaviour management plan. Consequently, young people's behaviour improves. A parent said: 'I am seeing real progress in my son's attitude and behaviour. He is more cheerful and helpful. I am really proud of him.' As a result of effective behaviour management strategies, the use of consequences is rare and physical intervention has not been required since before the last interim inspection. This is testament to the skills and experience of the staff in supporting and de-escalating challenging behaviours.

The home's location assessment is up to date and provides information about the location of the home, crime statistics and resources in the local area. The assessment however, lacks an analysis of some potential risks associated with the home's location and strategies for managing these, for example, risks in relation to a train station and a large reservoir being relatively close by. While not impacting on the safety of young people at this time, as individual risk assessments cover strategies to follow should young people go missing, improvements to the location assessment would make safeguarding practice even more robust.

The companies recruitment and selection procedures are sufficient to help ensure that only those who are suitable to work with young people and do not pose a risk to their safety are employed. Appropriate information is sought from new employees and appropriate checks are undertaken. However, delayed recording of when specific checks have been carried out, such as gaps in employment or when references have been checked and verified, prevents the regulator from being able to monitor the robustness of safe recruitment practices.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager is suitably experienced. He is a qualified social worker and is due to enrol on and complete the required manager's qualification within the timescales set out within the Children's Homes Regulations 2015.</p> <p>The home is well managed by a committed, enthusiastic and child-centred manager. He is held in high regard by the staff team and partner agencies. A staff member said: 'It is good to have a manager with such experience and insight into young people's complex needs. He is brilliant.' The manager leads by example. His enthusiasm filters down to the staff team. Morale is high and a cohesive staff team ensure that young people's needs are consistently met to a high standard.</p> <p>Staff feel well supported and valued by the registered manager and acting assistant manager. They report high satisfaction in their work. They have regular staff meetings and supervision which ensures that their practice and development is monitored and supported. The registered manager himself however, does not have regular supervision sessions. Although there is no evidence to suggest that this is having a negative impact on the care being provided to young people, it has the potential to do so. All staff require effective supervision and support to be able to reflect on their practice and the needs of young people they are caring for.</p> <p>The home's statement of purpose has been updated. A requirement made in respect of this at the last inspection has been met. The document is comprehensive and provides parents and placing authorities with clear and accurate information about how young people will be helped and supported while living in the home. Young people are also provided with a guide so that they know what to expect when they come to the home.</p> <p>The manager effectively monitors the progress young people make. Data is collected in consultation with young people in respect of patterns of behaviour and progress being made on a quarterly basis. This information is then analysed and young people's placement plans and risk assessment are updated accordingly as and when their needs and level of risk either change or reduce. The monitoring system allows the manager to demonstrate the impact and value living in the home is having on young people's life.</p> <p>External quality assurance monitoring of the home is effective in identifying strengths and minor shortfalls in the home. Minor shortfalls are promptly addressed.</p> <p>In respect of internal quality assurance systems, a report is due to be sent to Ofsted analysing the quality of care provided by the home over the last six months. There is a slight delay in this being produced as the company are still in the</p>	

process of devising a new report template. Action is being taken to address this as a matter of priority. Although this is a shortfall, and if left unaddressed, it would have the potential to impede future improvements for the home, there is no evidence to suggest this is having a negative impact on the safety and well-being of young people at this time. Throughout the inspection, the manager has demonstrated a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. He continues to regularly consult with young people, parents, partner agencies and local authorities in respect of the quality of the service being provided and analyse the information obtained.

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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