

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	13/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC429748
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	The Ryes College Limited
Registered person address	Aldham Business Centre, New Road, Aldham, COLCHESTER, CO6 3PN

Responsible individual	James Fischer
Registered manager	Vivienne Toms
Inspector	Deirdra Keating

Inspection date	13/08/2015
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

SC429748

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is Good because:

- Young people receive individualised planned care delivered in the style of a caring parent.
- Relationships between young people and staff are very good.
- Staff source outside support in line with diverse needs.
- Young people all attend education and are stimulated and engaged in both term time and holiday time.
- Staff are long serving and enjoy working together to provide good quality care for young people.
- The manager provides good direction to staff with a considered and consistent approach.
- Monitoring is not always effective in terms of behavioural consequences and record keeping does not always support the monitoring systems in the home.
- Staff do not always receive specific training that supports the diverse needs of all young people in the home.
- The first floor décor requires refurbishment.

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>6. In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard in respect of the premises, the registered provider must:</p> <p>2 (c) (i) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished as to meet the needs of each child.</p>	<p>30/10/2015</p>

Recommendations

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

Ensure that staff have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to respond to the health needs of children (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 34, paragraph 7.12)

Undertake scrutiny of the home and make best use of internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement, in particular the records of bullying, missing from home and sanctions. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is one of five children's homes run by a private organisation, which also operates two schools. Young people can attend the school located on the site of another children's home owned by the organisation. The home provides accommodation for up to four children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2015	CH - Full	Good
07/08/2014	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/03/2014	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Young people benefit from planned and nurturing care. The staff value each young person as an individual. They recognise differences, challenge barriers and implement consistent boundaries. As a result, young people are contained emotionally; they feel secure and are therefore able to make progress.</p> <p>Young people benefit from consistent care that enables them to reach shared goals. They have been successfully reunified with their families. Others have changed their behavioural patterns.</p> <p>All young people attend school regularly. This has enabled them to progress academically and make higher education choices that will help them realise their potential. They have a daily structure and purpose, raising their esteem and self-belief.</p> <p>Staff focus on improving the quality of young people’s daily lives. Activities are varied and in accordance with young people’s likes. They enjoy gaming, shopping, swimming and football. They spend time with staff, peers and their families. Staff plan ahead and maximise opportunities to ensure young people’s days are busy and active. This helps develop young people’s skills and gives them healthy daily routines.</p> <p>Relationships with staff are good. Feedback from young people is very positive. One young person said: ‘The staff are always fair, they will sort anything out for you. I really like spending time with staff’. Another said: ‘The manager will always support us and listen. I have no problem with any of the staff.’</p> <p>Staff actively help young people to raise their concerns in the home. Young people complain in the knowledge that staff will listen. Staff source advocacy services to help with family contact and transition planning. While young people leaving the home have anxieties, they know that staff help them to articulate their concerns. This enables them to assert their views and contribute to future care plans.</p> <p>The house environment has a family home element. Communal living areas have photographs of young people and positive picture lyrics. Some furniture has been upcycled promoting a colourful and warm décor. In contrast, the first floor is plain</p>	

and has an institutional feel. There is a large padlocked cage over the heating boiler and some bedrooms are untidy and unkempt. Tile grout and paintwork is old and peeling. This does not provide the same quality of accommodation throughout the house.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people's personal safety has improved since living in the home. Risk taking behaviour has decreased. Young people are not involved in child sexual exploitation. Incidents of self-harm and going missing have significantly reduced in terms of individual profiles. Staff identify risks and work with other professionals to minimise these. Police say that responses are appropriate and incidents, where they have been involved, are managed well.</p> <p>Staff provide consistent boundaries regarding curfew times, acceptable behaviours and stable group dynamics. Young people do not identify bullying as an issue and say that exchanges and minor provocations are not a cause of concern. Generally, young people are reasonably accepting and tolerant of one another. This contributes to a feeling of stability and security.</p> <p>Staff follow up incidents of negative behaviours. They consider sanctions, although despite different behaviours, some have the same consequential response. Lack of an individualised approach in this respect does not support young people to learn from their actions.</p> <p>Staff provide good role models. They help young people to express themselves and use low key prompts to remind about inappropriate language and raised voices. Consequently, young people are learning to self-regulate their responses.</p> <p>Staff occasionally use physical intervention when events reach an agreed threshold. The record of these is comprehensive and demonstrates that staff always offer medical checks, welfare checks and debriefing discussions. This helps young people to consider their actions as opposed to dwelling on the intervention.</p>	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

The Registered Manager has been in post since April 2011. She has a level five qualification and is experienced in managing children's homes. She leads a team that maintains a focused commitment to make a difference to young people's lives. This is demonstrated by the progress young people have made.

The quality of professional relationships is good. One professional said: 'They treat each child as an individual and will take each need and see how they can work best with a young person. I am impressed with this home.' Effective working partnerships with outside agencies support young people's psychological health, their welfare and personal safety.

Organisational restructure has resulted in changes to some staff roles and management arrangements. Despite periods of uncertainty the staff remain buoyant and supportive of one another.

The Statement of Purpose was updated in May 2015. Staff share a vision and aspire to provide high quality care that represents the aims and ethos of the home.

Staff are positive, established in length of service and form a cohesive team. There are few vacancies and staff provide internal cover for periods of absence or sickness. Therefore, young people receive care from a consistent adult group enabling them to form fundamental attachments.

Staff feel well supported by the manager. Supervision is regular and encourages staff to consider their practice and reflect on their responses. Staff have a mandatory training programme, although, staff managing one young person's needs have not had specific training. This does not help them to understand patterns of behaviour and provide an agreed strategy, which impacts on their confidence.

The manager has a clear overview of the home's strengths. Monitoring is adequate but some systems of recording make oversight of incidents difficult. The manager records all incidents in order to get a clear picture of events in the home. Specific incidents, including missing from home and bullying, are not pulled through from the main incident log into their respective logs. This means that some numbers used to review care do not give a true picture of events in the home.

Staff actively challenge responses to professionals and advocate strongly for young people. Good relationships mean that young people do share concerns openly with staff. Staff help empower young people to speak openly and assert their views. This supports young people to become increasingly independent in preparation for leaving the home.

What the inspection judgements mean

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

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

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

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

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

Information about this inspection

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

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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