

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	18/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC028174
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Direct Care Limited
Registered person address	Rutland House, 90-92 Baxter Avenue, SOUTHEND-ON-SEA, SS2 6HZ

Responsible individual	Rebecca Ouellani
Registered manager	Carly Playle
Inspector	Jo Vyas

Inspection date	18/08/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained 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

SC028174

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make significant progress in this home. They are happy and have strong, trusting relationships with staff. They also make good friendships within the home.
- Young people make good progress towards becoming independent. They learn skills that help them to successfully transition into independent living.
- Staff are skilled at helping young people who are at risk of or subject to sexual exploitation. Staff work closely with external professionals to ensure young people receive good guidance and support. Subsequently risk-taking behaviours such as going missing are rare.
- Staff work closely with external professionals to provide a child-centred holistic package of care for young people.
- The manager is waiting for confirmation of registration from Ofsted. She provides strong, supportive leadership and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. She has a good development plan, which addresses any identified shortfalls and will ensure improved services for young people.
- There are few communal areas which means young people may struggle to find a private space for them to talk with their family or social worker.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

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

- Ensure appropriate forms of contact are promoted and facilitated for each child. This includes providing space within the home where children and their family or social worker can meet in private. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 58 paragraph 11.18)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is a privately run home, which is part of an organisation. The home offers care and accommodation for four young people aged between 10 and 18 years who have an emotional or behavioural disorder. The home particularly specialises in young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
14/10/2014	CH - Full	Good
21/02/2014	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress
10/05/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Young people like living at this home. They feel safe and have strong, trusting relationships with staff. They also get on well with each other and make good friendships. A young person said, 'Staff care for us and have time for us.' Another said, 'These people in this house are so nice. I love them all. They are like the family I have never had. They are all kind and caring.'</p> <p>Young people make significant progress particularly with regard to their education, risk-taking behaviours and independence. Young people admitted to the home were out of education, persistently running away and subject to sexual exploitation. After a relatively short period, young people no longer go missing and are attending their education placements. Young people successfully transition into independent living.</p> <p>Staff know and understand the young people. Care planning provides good information that is accurate and regularly reviewed. Young people have regular opportunities to discuss areas of concern with their keyworker. This helps young people to have a better understanding of how to keep themselves safe as well as why they are in care.</p> <p>Young people are currently on holiday from school. During term time, young people regularly attend school or appropriate alternative provision. Staff work closely with education professionals to promote young people's attendance and achievement. A virtual head said, 'It is great that this young person is now progressing with her engagement and you all have shown great skill in getting her to that place.'</p> <p>Young people benefit from a wide range of activities that allow them to develop key skills and build on their resilience. Young people's interests and hobbies are keenly promoted. For example, young people interested in sports are encouraged to join local clubs. One young person won silver medals for her achievements within gymnastics. Young people also enjoy visits to the cinema, seaside resorts, theme parks and go karting.</p> <p>Young people benefit from regular and positive contact with family and friends. Staff facilitate and support this important contact which helps young people to forge appropriate relationships with peers in the local community as well as maintain important links with family.</p>	

Young people successfully transition from this home into independent living. One young person said that staff had prepared her well for moving out and helped her to rebuild family bonds as well as get her a college placement. She said, 'I feel ready for this move.'

Young people significantly contribute towards decisions made about their care, future and the day-to-day running of the home. For example, young people meet regularly to discuss activities and the menu for the week, any problems or changes within the home, holidays and safety. Young people have decorated their bedrooms to their own personal preference and have made a decorative memory wall in the garden. This has their handprints and inspirational quotes painted onto it. A young person said that she asked for new wardrobes for her bedroom, which she got the following week.

This is a comfortable home. All young people benefit from single bedrooms, which are highly personalised. However, there is little communal space, which becomes an issue when young people want to meet with their family or social workers in private. A parent said, 'Not quite enough space for me and my daughter-time.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Practice to promote the safety of young people is good. Staff are competent in their knowledge of the home's safeguarding procedures and implement these well. Young people feel safe in this home. A young person said, 'I feel more safe here than anywhere I have ever been.' All safeguarding concerns are referred to the appropriate agencies. Effective action is taken to ensure the safety of young people.</p> <p>Staff are particularly skilled at working with young people who are vulnerable or subject to sexual exploitation. This is clearly stated within the home's statement of purpose. A social worker spoke about the significant progress her young person has made, 'She was very vulnerable to sexual exploitation. Her risk taking behaviour has significantly reduced. Going missing has significantly reduced. Her insight has improved as she reported on another young person who was at risk of sexual exploitation.' Staff work closely with other agencies to ensure risks of sexual exploitation for young people are significantly reduced. A social worker said, 'I feel I have had a good level of support from the staff here. I have been very impressed with how she has progressed.' Good links with a children's charity creates an environment where young people can understand and reduce their vulnerability to sexual exploitation.</p>	

Staff have a positive approach to young people and use effective strategies when the young people are angry or frustrated. They work closely as a team and use consistent firm boundaries to support young people. Staff rarely use physical intervention but know how to do this safely should they need to use it. Staff prefer to talk to young people about what it is that is causing them to be upset. Staff have strong positive relationships with young people which enables them to use talking and humour effectively in most situations. Occasionally, staff give a measure of control for poor behaviour. These are appropriate and often take on a restorative form of putting right what they have done wrong rather than taking something away from them.

Vetting procedures for new staff help to keep young people safe from unsuitable adults working with them. Staff checks are completed which includes an enhanced Disclosure and Barring Service check.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The manager is new to this post and has gone through the Ofsted registration process. She is currently waiting for confirmation of registration. The manager is completing a Diploma level 5 in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare and hopes to complete this by the end of the year. The manager provides strong, supportive leadership. She has implemented good monitoring systems that enable her to manage the home effectively. She has a good understanding of the home's strengths and shortfalls. There is an in-depth development plan to address any shortfalls and ensure the home continues to improve its services for young people. Young people have also contributed to the development plan and their requests to improve the home have already been implemented.</p> <p>The requirement and recommendations made at the previous inspection regarding complaints made by young people have been fully addressed. Young people know how to make complaints and feel they can discuss any issues with staff. Complaints from young people are managed quickly and effectively. Young people are kept informed of progress made towards concluding their complaints. Young people are satisfied with the outcomes of any complaints made.</p> <p>The home has some very experienced staff who have been working at the home for a long time and some staff who are less experienced but equally enthusiastic. Staff are highly motivated and care very much about the young people. Practice is child-centred which enables young people to grow and thrive. Staff feel very well supported by the manager and senior managers within the organisation.</p>	

The organisation fully supports the professional development of staff. Staff receive a satisfactory induction into the home with good ongoing training. This includes all mandatory training as well as more specialised training from external professionals such as drugs and solvent abuse and radicalisation. Staff have also received training in child sexual exploitation. All staff are either appropriately qualified or are completing the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare.

Staff work well with other agencies including social workers, independent reviewing officers, charitable organisations and healthcare professionals. This ensures young people receive a holistic package of care enabling them to make good progress in their health and wellbeing. An independent reviewing officer said, 'Good homely relaxed atmosphere. Also report produced was of good quality.' A community nurse commented, 'Made to feel welcome: always provided with good handover.'

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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