

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	17/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC430320
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	The Vine Residential Services (TVRS) Ltd
Registered person address	Studio 4, 1st Floor, The Granary, 80 Abbey Road, Barking, Essex. IG11 7BT

Responsible individual	Audrey Joseph
Registered Manager	Sharon Williams
Inspector	Christine Kennet

Inspection date	17/09/2015
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

SC430320

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Leadership and management are a strength of this home. The Registered Manager has implemented an electronic recording system, which has improved efficiency.
- The Registered Manager has challenged local authority care planning on behalf of young people and involved the use of external advocates on their behalf.
- There is a committed and experienced staff group working in this home who work together well as a team to provide good quality care to young people. This home is warm, friendly and comfortable. Furnishings and maintenance are of a high standard.
- Staff know the young people well and have positive relationships with them. There is good evidence of partnership working with professionals and parents to support young people.
- Safeguarding is at the centre of practice and staff demonstrate they can keep young people safe.
- Staff feel supported through supervision, appraisal and flexible employment to do their jobs well.
- A wide range of activities and experiences are on offer to young people are when they visit this home including the use of an off-site activity centre.
- Young people are making steady progress from their starting points.
- Effective policies and templates are developed, but some require further updates to include the Quality Standards and new regulations.
- Risk assessments are holistic and include risk management strategies that are informative and effective.
- Responses to young people who go missing from home are good, pragmatic and child focused but ensuring placing authorities offer return interviews needs to be more robust.
- Two maintenance tasks are required in the home and this work will be undertaken shortly.

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 the registered person's reviews of the quality of care are underpinned by the Quality Standards as described in regulations 5 to 14. This recommendation in respect of updating essential documents to reflect the new Quality Standards. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64, paragraph 15.2)
- Ensure when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. The home should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. This recommendation in respect of staff understanding the new Quality Standards. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 53, paragraph 10.11)

Full report

Information about this children's home

A private company operate this home, which is registered for two short break services and three long-term placements. The short break aspect of the service generally operates between Friday and Monday and in school holidays. This service is for young people diagnosed with autistic spectrum disorder and/or have learning difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
07/01/2015	Full	Good
13/03/2014	Interim	Inadequate progress
13/11/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>The home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.</p> <p>Young people present as happy and secure in a home that provides clear routines and boundaries for them. Young people know what to expect in their daily routines and this helps them to feel safe.</p> <p>Young people enjoy trusting relationships with staff and are encouraged to join in a variety of activities. For example, a trip to the seaside, museum visits or going shopping or a bus trip. Other activities at the home are a trampoline, drawing, listening to music or playing on the games console. The home also uses an activity centre off site. This centre is community based and has facilities such as a sensory area, cooking, table games and a quiet area. Other short break service users can access this centre for a few hours while their parents have a break. This provides young people with a wide variety of opportunities, easy access to the community and interaction with other young people.</p> <p>Staff work hard to ensure the educational needs of young people and they are all on role for education. One young person attends a special school where they are making good progress. Another has home tuition every morning, which takes place at the activity centre, thus making her feel that she is going out to education and keeping a good routine. In the afternoons, she has support to learn independence skills such as shopping and cooking. The third young person has supported education within the community, attending a workshop three days a week at a local garage to do mechanics. On the other days, he works with a tutor at the local library learning functional maths and English.</p> <p>Staff support young people to be healthy, for example registering with local health services and ensuring appointments for routine health checks, such as the dentist and opticians. Two young people have regular checks with the local child, adolescent mental health services to ensure medication is appropriate, and behaviour reviewed. Risks around health and medication are clearly recorded which ensures good routines. Young people coming for short breaks follow the medication administration records protocol, cleared by their GP and updated as necessary on their care plans prior to admission. This ensures the safe administration of medication and consistency in routines for young people.</p> <p>The home is good at preparing young people for the transition to adult life. Within their capability, young people learn skills for later life. For example, learning cooking or baking skills, going shopping for ingredients, keeping their rooms tidy</p>	

and bringing their laundry downstairs for washing.

Staff know the young people well and pre-empt their needs effectively, for example supporting a young person to choose her handbag to keep her money safe and giving her clear guidance and boundaries to keep her feeling safe and to encourage positive behaviour. Young people make choices in what clothes they wear, what food they eat and which activities they prefer. Some of the young people were recently involved in making a video asking questions for staff recruitment purposes.

One young person says she likes living at the home and that the staff were 'all lovely'. She says she likes baking, cooking, and going to the centre best and likes her room; she feels safe staying there. Other young people are non-verbal but observations show them to be relaxed and familiar in their home.

Staff understand the importance of family contact. For example, the manager requested a review on behalf of a young person who requested additional contact with their family, involving an advocate to support this request. A safe contact plan is now agreed and this young person feels listened to. Two other young people have their contact with family supported by the unit and supervised in their family homes. This has helped one young person's plan to return home and the other to keep in close contact with her mother and siblings.

Staff give responsibility to young people, for example, one young person showed the inspector around the activity centre. This young person is also being encouraged to decorate one of the walls at the activity centre and to agree what pictures and notices to put up there. This has encouraged his sense of responsibility and promoted his self-esteem, and he will receive payment for this task as a bonus.

Staff practice demonstrates a good understanding of promoting cultural identity, religious and language needs. For example, one young person goes shopping with staff to choose halal meat and spices so he can cook traditional dishes with support. This young person attends a local Mosque with staff on Fridays. Staff bought another young person African music in her language, which she loves. Two young people attend church every Sunday with their family. Staff are very sensitive to ensure they are meeting dietary needs, religious needs and support cooking consistent with cultural needs. The staff group is reflective of the young people using this service.

There is a 'star of the month' certificate presented to one young person each month. This details what the award is for and young people gain a certificate with their photograph on it. These awards are on display in the home and are for achievable goals, such as particularly good or improved behaviour or skills. This gives young people a sense of progress and positive achievement.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>The children's home provides help and protection that meet the requirements for good.</p> <p>Informative risk assessments completed with input from professionals help staff to recognise and ameliorate risks for young people. These assessments advise staff on how to keep young people safe. There is a 'traffic light' system of responses, strategies for managing behaviour and de-escalation suggestions. The risk assessments are holistic, containing all areas in one document, which is easily accessible for staff managing complex needs. Staff ensure they re-read risk prior to short breaks young people arriving to refresh understanding of their complex needs.</p> <p>Very few young people go missing from this home due to their complex needs, ages and the individual support required. There are positive links to the local safeguarding partners and clear processes followed when young people do go missing. Due to their vulnerability, notification to the police is immediate if young people go missing and staff go into the community to try to locate them. Staff are clear on how to report young people missing and on what to do when they return. However, staff are not aware of the process for ensuring that placing authorities offer return interviews to young people.</p> <p>Staff give high priority to safeguarding in this home. Staff are aware of the safeguarding policy and undertake induction training to familiarise themselves with the process. Staff say they are 'confident' about reporting child protection concerns. Staff say they would 'tell the young person not to be frightened and re-assure them they had done the right thing'. Staff are aware of the local safeguarding team, have access to managers on call and are familiar with the whistleblowing policy. Knowledge for staff helps to keep young people as safe as possible.</p> <p>The use of restraint is rare. The staff all have appropriate training during their induction and refresher training has just taken place for all staff.</p> <p>Notification of serious incidents to the regulator ensures oversight of situations as they arise. An increase in notifications recently was due to one young person going missing and then returning home. This is being resolved with positive partnership working and a clear plan developed to manage this risk.</p> <p>Information sharing helps support the transition between short breaks and the family home and helps keep young people safe. Supported contact for two of the permanent residents within their family home also ensures access to family</p>	

members who are additional supports to very vulnerable service users. Positive feedback from professionals and parents comments on how well this home keeps young people safe.

Safe recruitment practices are in place and thorough vetting of staff occurs prior to working an initial probation period. Subsequent monitoring of practice post-probation takes place through supervision and appraisal.

Precautions are in place to prevent fires, for example emergency lighting, smoke detectors and fire extinguishers are in place throughout the home. Close supervision of young people takes place when they are in the kitchen and there is a pin lock on the door to control the number of young people in the kitchen. This is necessary due to the vulnerability of service users when cooking is taking place and prevents accidents or interference.

There is a comprehensive risk assessment of the building, which looks at the safety of the local area to assess any further risk. There is a careful balance to ensure the safety of very vulnerable service users with their need to become as independent as possible.

This home is friendly, welcoming and maintained to a high standard. Two minor issues are noted which require attention to ensure this continued high standard is maintained; a blocked sink and a faulty electric point. Both are reported for repair.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers meet the requirements for good.</p> <p>Management has successfully addressed one requirement and three recommendations made at the last interim inspection. This improves services provided.</p> <p>An experienced Registered Manager, who has previously run other registered provision, runs this home. She has many years of experience in working with children and families, holds a level 4 diploma, and hopes to complete a level 5 diploma in October 2015.</p> <p>Leadership and management are strong in this home. Both the registered individual and Registered Manager know the business well and have a positive vision for their service. They know the young people and their complex needs;</p>	

their focus centres on ensuring good care planning on their behalf. For example, ensuring a review of the care plan when a young person was distressed about this.

External monitoring of the service by an independent visitor who seeks young people's and families views on the service takes place. These views help the service to improve by listening to feedback. The Registered Manager completes internal monitoring, supported by feedback from professionals and parents. The monitoring reports are of a good standard and notified to the regulator in a timely way, which allows for a clear understanding of progress or difficulties within the home.

There is good evidence of this home working well with the wider system to ensure effective care planning for young people. For example, parents, professionals and commissioning teams are complimentary, particularly about the communication and flexibility of service.

Policies and procedures do not reflect the new Quality Standards and Framework for inspection. However, the Registered Manager's knowledge of the new framework and standards is evident, for example, within monitoring reports.

The Registered Manager has implemented a transition from paper to computerised systems over the past year. Recording of all essential information is now electronic and staff receive training on the secure use of this system. Staff say the system is, 'brilliant', 'saves time' and 'helps us plan'. Managers have led this process of change well.

Young people are making positive progress to their care plans. One staff member says young people are well looked after and are encouraged to attend education and be in good routines. Another staff member says she has seen huge progress, for example in small things like, 'making their own breakfast or preparing their own drink' and 'just seeing them take their own independence and small responsibility is great progress'.

There is an experienced and well-qualified staff team in place; most staff hold level three qualifications. Enrolment on courses has taken place for staff who do not hold this qualification. Regular refresher training is available for staff; however, there is a lapse in updated training on safeguarding and no training yet on the new Quality Standards and Framework. There has been no adverse impact or risk to young people but this training will help to improve practice further.

Staff feel well supported in their work and are very positive about the leadership and management of this home. Regular staff supervision, team meetings and appraisals help staff to be confident in their roles. New staff talk positively about induction training, working well as a team and having a supportive probationary period.

There is a clear and accurate statement of purpose, updated recently but not yet reflecting the new quality standards and regulations.

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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