

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>13/10/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC431806</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Limited</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>c/o, 591 London Road, SUTTON, Surrey, SM3 9AG</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Gerard Berry</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Position Vacant</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Chris Peel</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>13/10/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>improved effectiveness</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>Outstanding</b>
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

**SC431806**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is outstanding because:**

- A long standing strength of the home has been the engagement of young people in community activities such as Duke of Edinburgh Awards, cadets and other clubs. To this can be added a young person's successful part-time job. All this greatly increases enjoyment, achievement and contribution to society.
- Some young people have recently made the transition from school to college, having completed GCSEs with sufficiently good grades. Although not an easy step for them all they have been well supported by staff and are maintaining placements.
- This includes one young man who has moved out of the home and returned to his home area. As part of the transition staff helped him identify courses he could enrol on and potential semi-independent accommodation he could choose from. This was exemplary practice.
- All but the most recently admitted young person demonstrate significant progress 'across the board', but particularly in the reduction of risky behaviour identified prior to referral. There is a well-structured programme of therapy and group work that addresses a range of issues and demonstrates creative thinking in approaches taken.
- A final therapy report details advances made by young people over the time they have lived at the home, which includes a range of development areas. It clearly demonstrates progress from 'point of entry' to that of leaving as well as identifying areas to continue working on.
- Young people who have lived at the home for a considerable period have built up strong attachments to staff. When talking about the home they frequently refer to 'we' rather than 'they', emphasising the collaborative approach. It is this sense of belonging that has led to them taking on values and aspirations espoused by managers and staff.
- Young people and their families value the assistance provided by staff to maintain or, in a few instances, recommence contact. This includes transporting considerable distances, supervision and providing a warm welcome to parents.
- Parents greatly appreciate opportunities available at the home and the support given to their sons. One respondent to the survey conducted by Ofsted said 'this combined with the therapeutic support provides a first class environment to ensure my child has a healthy and positive transition into adulthood'.



## **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 recommendation(s):

- the homes should develop processes that illicit full information from placing authorities to understand the child's history and the impact that the child's arrival may have on the group living in the home (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations paragraph 8.3, page 38)
- the registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations paragraph 13.2, page 61)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate four young males with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned and is one of six run by the service provider. All young people have access to the organisation's specialist therapeutic service and to their school.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/03/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
23/10/2014	CH - Full	Good
11/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
04/10/2013	CH - Full	Good

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
<p>Young people who have been at the home for a while demonstrate significant and sustained progress in regard to enjoying and benefiting from community activities, education, gaining skills for independence, and reducing risky behaviours.</p> <p>Achievements include a bronze Duke of Edinburgh award, obtaining 'able cadet' status and football awards. All of an age to take GCSEs have attained grades required to be able to go on to college courses; one young person took two subjects early, evidencing the importance of and very effective support given to education.</p> <p>Staff support for transition to colleges has been particularly strong, including the deployment of a worker to assist students in classes or to be available in the college for them. This has enabled young people to take advantage of an education they would not otherwise had access to.</p> <p>Young people develop their own interests and hobbies with the encouragement of staff: one enjoys music and has disco equipment he uses for parties; another likes looking after his pet fish and gerbils.</p> <p>Young people are particularly well prepared for life after care, learning skills such as shopping, cooking, laundry and cleaning, albeit with the reluctance expected of teenagers. They are also encouraged to think about wider issues, such as contributing to society and the impact of anti-social behaviour on themselves and others. A group of young people, including two from the home, recently made a visit to a prison. They met selected inmates who commented the group was the most attentive they had had. This was an innovative and timely initiative for these young people.</p> <p>Perhaps the finest compliment that can be paid to these young people is that they are role models. Newly admitted children can be shown what has been achieved and so may to aspire to do the same.</p> <p>The fabric of home is of a high standard, and repairs undertaken quickly when required. Young people have a large say in how their bedrooms look, choosing décor and furniture for themselves. One suggested improving the rear garden; supported by staff and a budget he has done much of the work himself and it is now a pleasant place to sit or work.</p> <p>Staff respond well to comments and suggestions from young people, who say their ideas are valued and that they get to share in decisions making. In this way the experience of living in the home is enhanced and residents see themselves as</p>	

people who can shape their own lives for the better.

Rewards are given when young people make considerable efforts or show very good behaviour. These are awarded ad hoc; one young man described them as being 'random' but the fact that they are surprises adds to the impact of having particular instances recognised.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>outstanding</b>
<p>Young people have exceedingly good relationships with staff. Complaints that a new resident was getting too much attention demonstrate that they actually enjoy the time staff spend with them. The reaction has been for 1:1 time to be 'carved out' when possible.</p> <p>The disruptive behaviours exhibited by recently admitted young people have temporarily destabilised the normally secure atmosphere of the home. Two commented on how 'it's not nice to hear someone kicking off' and being unsure if someone is being hurt or something damaged. Nevertheless, serious incidents have been responded to well, with the safety of all involved at the forefront of actions taken. It is the nature of working with such complex young people that these 'settling in' periods occur from time to time.</p> <p>Meetings of everyone in the home, some called by the young people, have addressed concerns, allowing everyone to say what they thought about events. Although feelings could run high, the meeting observed during the inspection was conducted so that young people felt safe. They contributed in a way that was largely articulate and often displayed considerable empathy. Such meetings go some way to re-establish equilibrium and an opportunity to start again.</p> <p>The children's guide details how complaints can be made and how to access advocacy services (contact details of the Office of the Children's Commissioner were added during the inspection). Some young people had advocates and all had a good understanding of how to get support if they needed it from other organisations.</p> <p>Young people who have been in the home for some time rarely, if ever, go missing. Episodes that have occurred involve recently admitted children. Staff closely follow the home's policy and plans for each young person when this happens. Arrangements have been set up for return to care interviews to be conducted by managers from other homes in the organisation. Although this is a responsibility for local authorities their distance from the placement makes it difficult to fulfil and this provision gives young people an opportunity to air any</p>	



concerns that led them to run away.

A high level of supervision, strong e-safety practice and the nurturing relationships established with young people mean that the risk of exploitation is minimal. The staff are, however, very aware of the potential and group work with the young people addresses the issue.

Young people's contact with family is well supported with supervision of visits when required and children escorted long distances to see relatives if it is not conducive for them to come to the home. Those who do visit find the staff and manager accommodating and helpful; one respondent to the survey wrote 'we have found the care and support at the home to be absolutely fantastic. From day one it has been welcoming and supportive, and all involved in providing care genuinely take pride in what they do.'

Staff are carefully selected and strong adherence to safe recruitment practices was noted.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>The recent departure of the registered manager means that the home is going through a period of transition. Senior managers of the organisation provide a strong leadership role and this has assisted the deputy manager to maintain the focus of the home on meeting the needs of the young people.</p> <p>However, the deputy has not had formal supervision over this time and some monitoring of the home has also slipped, including two episodes of a young person missing from care not being logged. There has been no short term impact on the service provided but if this situation were to continue there could be more serious consequences.</p> <p>There is evidence from logs that sanctions, positive physical interventions and other incidents are monitored. A new electronic format has further strengthened the quality of recording as it clearly lays out what is required. There is some duplication in the process and it has not always been easy to find manager's comments or the date they were made. An addition made to the format during the inspection reduced the likelihood of this being repeated.</p> <p>Care planning is thorough and regularly reviewed. This results in up to date analysis of the current situation, with clear targets and steps to meet them. Young people take an active role in such planning; they are invited to the meetings and have child friendly paperwork to illicit their views and ideas.</p>	

Final therapy reports detail progress made from admission to the point of leaving. They enable managers, placing authorities and young people to see how effective the work done has been and areas for further development. It is an area of excellent practice.

Management and staff have accepted some very 'hard to place' referrals. The fact that these young people find it difficult to adjust to life in the home and present challenging behaviours as a result should not in itself count against the home. However, the process could be improved: impact risk assessments identify the potential effect of a referred child but focus on the resilience of residents to absorb a new admission. They do not analyse the potential impact of particular behaviours. In addition, the synopsis drawn up that brings together pre-assessment information have not always considered a full care history and focussed on particular behaviours to the exclusion of others. Had this not been the case it may have been possible to reduce the disruption felt following recent admissions. Managers are aware that key work sessions have not been held as regularly as the home's statement of purpose specifies and are taking steps to address the issue. Practice has already been improved with the introduction of a recording format that reports the issues that young people raise and actions that will follow the meetings.

Documentation from local authorities is often lacking from files but emails demonstrate that managers have persistently chased paperwork. Staff purposefully communicate with families and other agencies, regularly updating parents and social workers and responding to requests or concerns. One professional commented, 'communication I cannot fault; the organisation are on it all the time. I get a real sense of what things are like for the young person.'

## 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