

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	28/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC048552
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered person	Wings Education Limited
Registered person address	Suite 3, Holmere Hall, Dykes Lane, Yealand Conyers, CARNFORTH, Lancashire, LA5 9SN

Responsible individual	Mr Paul Brosnan
Registered manager	Post vacant/Craig Hoggarth
Inspectors	Gillian Walters/Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	28/09/2015
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

SC048552

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

Relationships

- Young people feel valued and cared for by staff; strong relationships exist.
- Young people feel listened to and understood; they understand that they can make mistakes and still move forward.
- Young people feel a sense of belonging and community and many make good attachments to staff.
- Teaching staff and care staff work collaboratively providing structured activities and consistent boundaries that support young people.
- Young people have good opportunities to participate in a wide range of activities with staff that promotes friendship, their confidence and self-esteem.

Safeguarding

- Young people feel extremely safe and are trusting of the staff that care for them.
- Young people feel protected from victimisation; they do not perceive bullying to exist in this home.
- Young people's individual risks and needs are well understood and managed.
- When young people go missing, staff work effectively with partners to ensure young people are returned quickly and safely.

Staff and Management

- Senior managers know young people well and take an active involvement in their day-to-day care.
- Parents, social workers and other professionals speak highly of the staff and management team; they are viewed as caring and dedicated.

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
The registered person must maintain records for each child which are kept up to date; and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. This relates specifically to monitoring activity and clearly recording incidents that occur when children go missing and ensuring this is reflected in their revised risk assessments. (Regulation 36(1)(b)&(c))	02/11/2015
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. This relates specifically to those complaints that are investigated as a child protection concern. (Regulation 39(3))	02/11/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs to appropriately fulfil the role of Appropriate Adult when children are in police custody. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 53 paragraph 10.11)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned residential special school which is also registered as a children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 50 young people of both genders, with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
25/06/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
05/03/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
03/12/2013	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress
03/05/2013	CH - Full	Adequate
31/10/2012	CH - Interim	Good Progress
10/05/2012	CH - Full	Adequate
22/03/2012	CH - Interim	Good Progress

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 are recognised as individuals in this home and their care is planned around their differing behaviours and needs. This ensures that each young person has a personalised plan of care and specific behaviour and development targets.</p> <p>A key strength of the home is that young people feel valued and cared for because of the strong relationships that exist between young people and staff. Young people recognise the resilience of staff in dealing with difficult behaviour and feel they are given opportunities to start over when they have made mistakes. One young person reported 'when people struggle they (staff) stick with you; they always give me a second chance.' A further strength is that the management team take a very active interest in the young people and play significant roles in their lives which the young people value enormously. One young person commented, 'Staff are always around for me when I need them. It's like a big family to me, everyone is so caring.'</p> <p>Most young people make good progress across all areas of development and their achievements are celebrated which helps improve confidence and self-esteem. For some, their progress is excellent. A social worker commented of one young person, 'After a bumpy few weeks he started to show signs of settling. He started to access support from the educational psychologist and the psychologist, which was much needed. He continued to make progress in terms of his behaviour and build trusting relationships. In terms of his education he made 3 years progress in just 12 months.'</p> <p>Young people are healthy, and their health improves from the point of placement. Many parents reported that their child's school attendance and attainment had improved since being placed in this home. External agencies such as CAMHS are used to good effect and the young people benefit from the emotional support this brings to their lives. Young people are encouraged to develop their social skills and learn to be polite and well-mannered in preparation for moving on into the wider community. Where young people are not making progress there is recognition and plans in place to address their faltering development. Staff understand that some young people cease to make progress for varying reasons. In such cases, efforts are made to understand why some young people's behaviour deteriorates, and support provided to assist them in resolving the issues that are affecting their progress.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged and supported to engage in a wide range of extra-</p>	

curricular activities and to mix with other local young people in organised activities which develops their skills base and their ability to make new friends. This has also proved successful in promoting their confidence and self-esteem. For example, one young person was very pleased to have been nominated and chosen to represent her school and home by participating in the local authority's children in care council.

The home advocates for young people in respect of contact arrangements. If appropriate arrangements are not in place then the home works closely with the placing authorities to get the arrangements put in place. Young people therefore benefit from safe and appropriate contact with their families which changes in line with their developing needs.

Young people feel listened to and understood. They report that care staff and teachers take time to get to know them as individuals and understand their worries and concerns so that they know how to manage any challenging behaviour or upset they may experience. Young people feel that if they express a wish then this will be taken into consideration when decisions are made in respect of their care. An example of this is a young person who achieved his wish to change residence from one house to another.

Preparation for the transition into adulthood and independence is well managed and young people benefit from a structured and incremental approach to gaining freedoms and beginning to take more responsibility for elements of their care. In summing up his experience of the home one young person said, 'It's a nice place where everyone is happy. There is a laughing, happy atmosphere, but it's up and down. Staff are decent but you don't always get on with everyone. I would give it 10 out of 10.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Young people speak highly of the staff and managers that care for them in both their education and care settings. Young people in the main respond very positively to the sincere warmth and empathy they are shown. As a result many have achieved extremely valued and trusting relationships, identifying this home as a place where they feel completely safe and well cared for.</p> <p>Young people do not perceive bullying to be a problem in this home, understanding that it is inappropriate and unacceptable. Young people are encouraged by staff to appreciate each other's individuality and live as a</p>	

community that supports one another without victimisation. One young person said, 'I wouldn't say there is bullying. There are massive mood swings; people fall out, then make friends and sort it out.' Another commented, 'You have arguments with people but we all stick up for each other, it's like we are a family.'

Staff show consistency in modelling and promoting acceptable behaviour. Risks are well understood and managed with the support of personalised risk management plans. This guides staff to understand young people's specific vulnerabilities and the challenges they present. Young people respond positively to the patience and support shown by staff to help them resolve conflict and other issues that may concern them. Consequently, many young people develop some positive insight that enables them to better manage and regulate their behaviour.

Staff receive regular behaviour management training that enables them to deal with the range of challenges that young people present. Although there has been a recent increase in the number of restraints occurring at the home, young people are clear that this is not normal or regular practice. One young person commented, 'Staff don't restrain anyone unless they have to.' This increase in restraint practice has been mainly linked to the arrival and departure of a large number of young people over the summer period. Some have taken time to settle into placement, while others have chosen to disengage as their placements come to an end.

Similarly, the home has also seen an increase in the number of occasions when young people go missing. This is in part due to a revision in local authority arrangements that no longer permit children and young people to be reported absent without permission, hence reported data is distorted.

Staff are effective in maintaining good communication with parents, police, social workers and other relevant professionals throughout such incidents, searching and assisting young people to return to the safety of the home. Staff follow agreed procedure on young people's return; discussing their reasons for leaving the home and ensuring that they also have the opportunity to discuss matters with other professionals independent of the home. Staff identify personal or family crisis as the most usual reason for young people going missing. One young person clarified, 'Some people run away but it's for a reason, not because they don't like it here.' One parent commented, 'He does run away but that's not because he doesn't like it and they do everything they can to keep him safe.'

The home's environment is physically safe and appropriately secure with staff making regular safety checks as part of their routine monitoring activity. Staff recruitment and selection practice is robust and well established. Managers ensure that all staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and vetted as suitable to work with young people before starting work in the home. This ensures that young people are protected and not exposed to unsuitable adults that may cause them harm.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The home is in a period of transition due to the registered manager moving on to another role within the organisation and a newly appointed manager taking over management of the home. However, to date, this has had little impact upon the young people. The newly appointed manager is suitably experienced and qualified for the role, possessing both a Diploma in Social Work and a level 4 Registered Manager's award. He has extensive experience of working within the company and has held the position of Registered Manager in two of the company's other services.</p> <p>Leaders and managers have a very good understanding of the needs of the young people and prioritise their resources to ensure those needs are met. There is good oversight of young people's progress and a strong focus on creating a sense of community and belonging, regularly celebrating young people's individual achievements.</p> <p>The staff team are relatively stable and staff report that they are well supported by the management team. Regular and effective supervision takes place and extensive training is available for staff to further their development. On occasions, staff are expected to act as 'Appropriate Adults' for young people when they are in police custody, but some have not yet received training in this area. Consequently, staff cannot be guaranteed to have the required knowledge to ensure young people's welfare is protected in such situations.</p> <p>Staff morale is good and the quality of the relationships between staff and managers enables effective communication and a cohesive team ethos. Positive relationships are also reported by external agencies, including local authority officers, police and social workers. One professional commented, 'The home is fully receptive to the police, we have a good relationship and there is good communication. I feel staff are doing a good job in difficult circumstances.'</p> <p>Complaints and allegations are dealt with effectively, with a clear process followed and outcome recorded. However, complaints made by young people are not all recorded as complaints if they involve an allegation or a child protection issue. Whilst this does not impact negatively on the young people, or on the complaint outcome, it distorts the complaints figures and impacts on the accuracy and effectiveness of internal and external monitoring.</p> <p>The home has a development plan in place which sets out the objectives for the year. The statement of purpose is reflective of the service and provides information</p>	

to placing social workers and parents.

Records are appropriately detailed and kept mainly up to date, although some records are at times repetitive, cumbersome and difficult to follow. Some minor recording shortfalls were identified. These did not negatively impact on the care provided to young people but did detract from the generally good standard of record keeping the home achieves.

Parents report high levels of satisfaction with the commitment of the staff team and the progress their young people make. They speak highly of the management team and feel that any issues they raise are responded to with action being taken to rectify or improve any areas identified. Parents say they are made to feel welcome and that the home feels open and honest to them.

The home is undergoing some renovation work and some repairs to minor damage caused by young people. It is generally furnished to a good standard and in a good state of repair. Where work needs to be done; this has been identified and in some areas is already ongoing.

The home has successfully addressed one recommendation made during the home's last interim inspection and a requirement resulting from a monitoring visit on 30 June 2015. As a result, improvements have been achieved in the detail recorded when young people receive sanctions and notifying relevant bodies when significant events occur. This has improved transparency between the home, Ofsted and other relevant parties.

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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