

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	10/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC431228
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Unique Care Homes Support Limited
Registered person address	Holland House, 1-5 Oakfield, SALE, Cheshire, M33 6TT

Responsible individual	Annily Jameson
Registered manager	Janine Beamer
Inspector	Michael Mulvaney

Inspection date	10/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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

SC431228

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- A resilient and skilful staff group care for these young people. They build good quality relationships. As a result, young people receive a high standard of care.
- Young people have engaged well with education; some young people are moving from specialist resources to colleges in the community. This means that they make friends outside of the home. They are also working towards recognised qualifications.
- Staff work particularly well to promote the wishes and views of the young people, through community meetings and in one to one direct work sessions. Staff discuss and agree with the young people the activities they would like to undertake.
- There is strong partnership work, with external agencies providing support for specific behaviours including behaviours described as sexually harmful. Because of this, there has been a reduction of incidents of this type.
- Young people do not go missing from this home. Some of the young people living in this home have a significant history of going missing from previous placements. Staff engage with the young people to prevent this.
- The registered manager, along with senior management within the provision, is aware that the strengths of the home are in making and building on strong relationships with the young people and using those relationships to begin to help them to recover from their early life trauma.
- This inspection has identified areas for improvement. They include the management and identification of training needs for staff, particularly for children who self-harm. Individual risk assessments are good, but there is a lack of any written group assessment or matching processes.

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):

Ensure that the registered person only accepts placements for children where they

are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. This is with particular regard to completion of an assessment of how the home will promote the welfare needs of each child within the home prior to their arrival. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 56 paragraph 11.4)

Ensure that staff can access appropriate resources to support their training needs. In particular, training which focuses on the management of young people who self-harm. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 53 paragraph 10.11)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The registration of this home allows for the provision of care and accommodation for up to six young people of the same gender with emotional and behavioural difficulties. A private company operates this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
09/12/2014	Full	Good
24/07/2013	Interim	Satisfactory progress
25/04/2013	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 continue to make good progress at this home. Staff are resilient and caring and this builds good quality relationships, it also means that young people receive a high standard of care. Young people speak very highly of the staff commenting, 'I get on well with them' and that their key worker 'always has time to talk to me'. Social workers comment: 'The home meets young people's needs to a very high standard.'</p> <p>Young people have engaged well with education, with some young people moving from specialist resources to colleges in the community. This means that they make friends in the local area as well as working towards recognised qualifications. Others have begun to engage with schooling for the first time in many years. Staff support this progress and motivate the young people to achieve their individual educational targets. Local authorities have recognised the progress that some young people have made in this area and awarded them certificates to acknowledge how far they have progressed in the time they have lived in this home.</p> <p>The staff are particularly adept at engaging young people in activities, especially sport. For some, this has led to participation in disability sports in the community. The young people actively engage with football and table tennis as well as going to the gym and running. This not only keeps them fit and healthy, it provides an opportunity to make friends in the community. A placing social worker commented: 'The home offers a wide range of opportunities and promotes activities which match the young person's interest in sport. This has led to the young person being involved in table tennis tournaments in the locality. They also had a trial for a London based disability football team and these opportunities have developed his self-esteem.'</p> <p>Staff ensure young people make and keep appointments with local doctors, dentist, and opticians. As a result, young people maintain good connections with the services that can support their health needs. Staff have been effective in managing concerns about young people's mental health issues. In particular, staff attended appointments with hospitals and specialists as well as an inpatient admission over several nights, providing one to one support during a traumatic experience for a young person. The registered manager and the organisation's senior management have challenged the services provided in the hospital. This secured a</p>	

more specialist inpatient admission that would better meet the young person's needs. Despite this hospital being many miles from the home, staff visited in order to maintain the very important attachment that this young person has to this home. In order to ensure a safe return to this home, the registered manager and the provider sought more in-depth information from the hospital to ensure that the home could safely meet this young person's needs.

Staff consistently assess the self-care skills of each young person in the home. This helps them to make a judgement as to how to plan for their independence. There is support for young people assessed as being able to move on to a pathway plan. This helps them to develop the skills that will assist towards their eventual move from this home. This will provide them with confidence in their own abilities in the security of their own home.

Staff work particularly well to promote the wishes and views of the young people, through community meetings and in one to one direct work sessions. Staff discuss and agree with the young people the activities they would like to undertake. Consequently, staff are available to support those activities. Staff have supported the personalisation of the young people's rooms and of the décor of the communal areas of the home.

Staff support and facilitate contact, if assessed as being in the best interests of the young people. This helps to promote relationships within the wider community in the area that they lived prior to moving to this home. The contact also maintains the links with their wider family. This promotes young people's knowledge and understanding of their backgrounds.

There is strong partnership work with external agencies providing support for specific behaviours, including behaviours described as sexually harmful. Because of the careful and consistent monitoring of the young people, there has been a reduction of incidents of this type of behaviour. Staff have prepared precise individual risk assessments, which highlight the safe care approach that the staff use to promote and protect the young people's welfare needs. The registered manager has not completed written group risk assessments before admitting young people. This short fall has not had an impact on this group of young people due to the close supervision that is in place to monitor the young people. It is, however, identified as an area for improvement, given the potential distress an ill-matched placement could cause.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young	Good

people are helped and protected

Young people say that they are safe living in this home, they say: 'The staff here work hard to make sure that we are well looked after.' Staff complete detailed risk assessments, which inform their work. Staff are willing and eager to learn from an external agency to develop unique management techniques. These help in handling some behaviours that have led to breakdowns in previous placements. The therapist from this agency commented: 'Staff work consistently well to meet these needs; there is a great deal of follow up from the staff who are very keen to know and understand the therapeutic work that has been completed.' As a result, this staff group better understand the young people's conduct, which has led to improved behaviour.

Young people who live in this home have complex needs and behaviours which can challenge the staff. Staff are particularly mindful that these behaviours are often a result of the neglect and abuse in the early life of these young people. Staff have resilience and support each other to maintain a calm approach. This reinforces their positive relationships with the young people. Staff take time to robustly challenge any poor behaviour. They use a restorative approach to situations where damage happens in the home. This may result in young people helping to repair the damage or pay a small amount towards the repair. They use key worker sessions to discuss these incidents and help the young people to seek alternative ways to behave. These well recorded sessions become a reflective tool for the staff to see how much young people's conduct has improved.

Some young people have needed physical intervention to prevent them from causing damage to themselves, others and the home. Trained staff have intervened 22 times since the previous inspection. This is a reduction on previous periods. The registered manager and staff reflect using the careful recording of each incident. These summaries include the views of the young person on the actions that led to the intervention. This helps the staff to adapt approaches to situations and reduce the need to use restraint.

Young people do not go missing from this home. Some of the young people living in this home have a significant history of going missing from previous placements. The staff are aware of and act on signs that young people may be about to absent themselves from the home. They engage with the young people to prevent this, they will follow young people if they do leave the home to enable them to return quickly. The staff explained the processes that they would use should a young person go missing, which include contacting the police, the young person's family and other agencies to ensure that young people can be located. Staff are particularly aware of the concerns regarding childhood sexual exploitation for this vulnerable group of young people. Direct work has taken place to highlight these risks and placement plans detail the degree of monitoring that takes place to

ensure that this risk is minimised.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager has a level three qualification in childcare and is working towards a level five diploma. She has been in post for over one year. Prior to this, she had 12 years' experience of working in the children's homes. She tenaciously motivates the staff to skilfully meet the very complex needs of this group of young people. The manager provides a high quality of supervision, which challenges and supports the staff to maintain the standard of care that the manager expects.</p> <p>The registered manager is actively involved in reviewing individual progress of young people. She studies the reports and daily information from the staff. This helps to identify trends in behaviour. Some young people have made very good progress because they live in this home. For some, it has provided the stability and security that they have needed to start to manage their own behaviour. This has meant that there have been less sanctions and more positive interaction with the young people.</p> <p>One of the strengths of the home is in making and building on strong relationships with young people. Staff are encouraged to use these relationships to begin to help young people to recover from their early life trauma. They see the skilled and experienced staff acting as mentors, which helps to build the confidence and abilities of new staff.</p> <p>The registered manager works alongside the independent visitor to critically review the services provided within the home. This helps to ensure that the home achieves the aims and objectives in the statement of purpose. This also helps to identify shortfalls in the service. This critical review did not highlight a shortfall in the training plan for staff. Some young people have attempted to self-harm. The provider had not recognised the need to train the staff in the management of this until the shortfall was highlighted by this inspection. The registered manager immediately arranged for the staff to receive training the next day, which minimised the risks in this area.</p> <p>There has been robust challenge to service providers. The registered manager is extremely proactive in this area and works hard with the staff to ensure that young people are getting the quality of service they need. An example of this is the challenge to the services provided by the health care providers. This meant that</p>	

the young person received the treatment they needed quickly.

Placing authorities are pleased with the progress that young people make in this home. One social worker commented: 'Prior to coming to this home the young person was in a secure psychiatric hospital, they were on a high level of medication. There was a great deal of physical intervention used. This has reduced since they have been in this home.' Another external professional commented: 'I have a good relationship with the staff and have good communication, which helps to manage the care plan. Staff contact me via email and telephone to update on progress.'

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. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email 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.

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, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at 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
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015