

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	18/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC402370
Type of inspection	Interim
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	Paul Brosnan
Registered manager	Kimberley Taylor
Inspector	Judith Longden

Inspection date	18/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>Since the last inspection a new registered manager has been appointed who, with the head of care, has transformed the service, resulting in significant improvements in the progress and experiences of young people. They have also met the four requirements and addressed the six recommendations from the last inspection. This means young people are safer, their behaviour has improved, staff are supported and there are good relationships between staff and young people.</p> <p>Young people have made substantial progress in all areas of their lives, especially in relation to their participation in a range of activities. These activities are tailored to the individual and reflect their interests and hobbies. The registered manager said: 'It is no longer a case of a one size fits all service with everyone having to participate in group activities.' Activities include playing rugby, ice hockey, cadets, horse riding, wheelchair basketball and football. Some young people are members of local community clubs such as the youth club and brownies. One young person, who wishes to become an actor, has joined a local theatre group. These activities promote the social skills of young people, encourage peer friendships outside of the home and enable them to feel a part of the wider community.</p> <p>Young people are now fully involved in the planning of meals, devising menus, budgeting and shopping for food. Young people also learn about a healthy diet. Some also help to prepare and cook the food. As a result, young people learn new skills and are able to exercise their choice in what they eat.</p> <p>Staff recognise the improvements and progress young people have made; one commented there had been 'massive improvement'. Another said: 'They are so busy all the time and this works well as it is enriching their lives. It also means it is a nice place for staff and this helps to build relationships.' One young person explained how they have utilised the 'me and my key worker' booklet as an opportunity to build relationships. She said: 'I write down all my favourite stuff and then ask my keyworker the same questions like, what superpower would you have and what is your favourite food. This helps us form relationships.'</p>	

Several young people have moved on since the last inspection. The manager has devised a new transitions document that records all the options, actions taken, identified barriers and how to address them, and the young person's views and decisions. The transition is then reviewed to identify any learning from the process. Consequently, transitions for young people to new placements or back home are as smooth as possible. Preparation for moving on is now implemented at a much earlier stage; the manager has devised a pre-pathway plan that identifies the young person's aspirations and options and how these may be addressed. The manager said: 'We want to be ahead of the game and ensure future moves are as smooth as possible.'

Young people new to the home are made very welcome. They have the opportunity to visit the home and meet staff and other young people, which helps them to settle quickly. Excellent placement and care plans clearly identify the aims of each placement and how these can be met. These plans are constantly reviewed to meet changing needs.

Since the last inspection there has been a significant reduction in all forms of incidents. Staff have completed training to enable them to understand behaviours and appropriate responses. Further support from the on-site therapist provides them with the emotional vocabulary to manage and understand feelings as well as the behaviour itself. The number of physical interventions has reduced. This is because staff are able to identify underlying behaviours and triggers that may lead to such incidents and this enables them to use alternative techniques and strategies. The monitoring of interventions is robust; in addition to the manager's regular review of incidents, any physical intervention meeting a threshold in terms of duration of intervention or type of hold is referred for extra scrutiny by the safeguarding lead for the organisation. Any training or additional staff support needs are identified and then actioned by the registered manager.

Additional support from other agencies is sought for young people to help them understand their emotional well-being and aggressive behaviours. Where the desired support is not available, staff are tenacious in seeking alternatives. For example, when support from child and adolescent mental health services has not been available, the manager has sought for the organisation to joint fund private mental health services in order to support a young person effectively.

Staff have attended training on understanding sanctions, and further training is being sourced in how to implement restorative justice. The use of sanctions has been reviewed by the staff team and, as a result, there is more use of key work to discuss behaviour than punitive sanctions. One member of staff said: 'I feel empowered to manage behaviour better and have a variety of tools to use.'

Individual risk management plans and impact risk assessments are now in more detail, and a number of improvements have been made in how risks are reviewed. The manager has implemented a complete overhaul of the missing from home paperwork, ensuring more accurate recording and reporting. Good liaison with the

police has ensured a joint understanding of when absence is escalated to missing from home, and that appropriate procedures are followed. Return interviews are chased by the manager and records are kept of the interviews. Information from these records helps staff to identify triggers and patterns and enables them to reduce the risk of further incidents.

Incidents of criminal behaviour have recently reduced following a slight peak in assaults and damage to the home. Staff work closely with the police and youth offending service to help reduce the risks of such behaviour. Some young people have chosen to voluntarily undertake a course with the youth offending service on understanding the consequences of criminal activity. This will enable young people to make informed choices about their actions.

Issues and risks around radicalisation and extremism have been explored, with training for staff and senior managers in the organisation. Further training is also planned to explore the practical aspects of keeping young people safe from radicalisation. One young person has been identified as an ambassador in this area and is undertaking training with the staff team and feeding back to others. In addition, staff actively promote an understanding of other cultures; the registered manager said: 'We are empowering young people and staff with education on other cultures and removing ignorance.'

The registered manager has identified the importance of ensuring staff know they are valued. The quality and frequency of supervision have improved and the manager is able to track and monitor the supervisions to ensure they are completed and of good quality. Night staff also now receive regular supervision. A new care review meeting enables individual staff to discuss with the manager any issues outside of the regular supervision. Following staff requests, a new rota has been implemented after discussion with the staff team about the various options. Constant review of the new rota ensures any issues are highlighted and changes implemented. The hard work of staff is recognised through the use of thank you cards and the 'care worker of the month' reward. Senior staff have all been enrolled on the level 5 diploma in leadership. These new initiatives demonstrate a level of investment by the organisation in the whole workforce. This has resulted in a happier staff team which one member of staff described as a 'well-functioning community or family'. This has also had a positive impact on the young people, who comment, 'it is really settled now, it is good here.'

Information about this children's home

The service is a residential school that is registered as a children's home to provide care for 54 children and young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The service is owned by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/05/2015	Full	Requires improvement
13/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/05/2014	Full	Adequate
21/01/2014	Full	Adequate

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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