

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	25/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC022448
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered person	Nugent Care
Registered person address	99 Edge Lane, Edge Hill, Liverpool, L7 2PE

Responsible individual	David Ballard
Registered manager	Marie Higgins
Inspector	Shaun Common

Inspection date	25/11/2015
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
outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good

SC022448

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Effective assessment prior to and upon admission leads to robust care planning that is reflective of young people's diverse and individualised needs. Care plans are delivered leading to good quality care and good outcomes for young people.
- Young people's views and opinions are central to the running of the home and carefully considered in all decision making.
- Transition planning is of a high standard. Young people are very well supported to move into appropriate community placements.
- Young people feel safe, have confidence in staff to keep them safe, and effective safeguarding systems support their feeling of security and wellbeing.
- Young people make good progress in education. Review has led to new processes and systems being implemented, which has improved outcomes for young people.
- Monitoring systems are comprehensive and integrated. These enable continual review and evaluation of the quality of care provided. This supports young people's progress.
- The Registered Manager works in effective partnership with placing authorities and commissioned services. This ensures that young people receive the care and support they need to nurture their development.

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 ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a sanction in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the effectiveness and any consequence of the use of the measure (Regulation 35 (3)(vii))	31/12/2015
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive regular practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33 (4)(b)(c))	31/03/2016
The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report directly to HMCI. (Regulation 44 (7)(a))	31/12/2015

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 facilities and resources to support their training needs; specifically, provide all care and teaching staff with appropriate training in identifying and managing those at risk of being drawn into terrorism in line with the Governments' 'Prevent' agenda (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- establish appropriate links with the police and/or relevant agencies/professionals in order to discharge responsibilities set out in the Governments' 'Prevent' duty guidance (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 52, paragraph 10.3)
- ensure sanctions used are restorative in nature; specifically, that sanction records evidence the use of restorative approaches where this is appropriate (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 46, paragraph 9.38)

- staff should work to make the children's home an environment that supports children's physical health; specifically, that available gym facilities and exercise equipment are appropriate to the needs of young people (The Guide to the Quality Standards, Page 33, paragraph 7.3)
- ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, review administrative support in education to allow increased teaching and support time for young people (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, improve access to printing facilities in education (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, develop a range of vocational opportunities for young people in preparation for them moving to training and employment. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The centre is operated by a voluntary organisation. It is registered as a secure children's home and is approved by the Secretary of State to provide secure care and accommodation. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

The centre can accommodate 12 young people of either gender from 10 years to seventeen years of age in two purpose built living units. Admission of a young person under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State.

This inspection has the purpose of informing the Secretary of State on the continuing suitability for this provision to operate as a secure unit to restrict children's liberty.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/06/2015	SCH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
28/01/2015	CH - Full	Good
30/10/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
16/04/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
22/10/2013	CH - Interim	Good Progress
17/04/2013	CH - Full	Good
03/10/2012	CH - Full	Adequate
02/05/2012	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Managers scrutinise referral information carefully and consult with health professionals. Consequently, staff have a very good understanding of each young person's needs, background and history at the point of admission. Young people are not admitted unless managers are confident that they have the capacity to address and meet identified needs. Care planning is strong. Each care plan makes specific reference to the background, culture and individual preferences and needs of young people. The home is good at monitoring the progress made by each young person. This includes a multi-agency forum where care and health staff work jointly to improve the experience of young people and ensure that barriers to achievement are recognised and overcome. For example, where young people have been the victim of abuse, counselling is arranged. Where young people have been the victim of crime high levels of support are provided to enable them to cope with the impact of being a witness at court.</p> <p>Transition planning is of a high standard. Staff are pro-active in their efforts to ensure that discharge plans fully support young people to move on to appropriate placements. Staff ensure that each young person has continued access to high quality education and health care in the community. They share information fully so that future carers have a good understanding of successful strategies to manage risk and support young people to be safe. Staff also appropriately challenge placing authorities where plans are delayed or incomplete.</p> <p>Very effective liaison with advocacy groups, parents, guardians and independent reviewing officers ensures that the voice of the young person is heard in all decision making. Young people are supported to develop independent living skills by care and education staff who help them to learn a range of self-care skills prior to discharge. Transition planning is further strengthened by good family contact arrangements. As young people become more stable, they are able to improve their relationships with their families. Two social workers and a parent each stated that the home goes 'above and beyond' in its efforts to promote and support family contact. Another social worker has written to the home to thank them for being, 'extremely helpful in facilitating contact.'</p> <p>Staff understand and recognise that the behaviours of young people often stem from anxiety or misunderstanding and respond accordingly. This reduces confrontation and hostility. Positive practice ensures that the home has a generally calm and settled atmosphere. Staff are good at providing positive reinforcement when young people display good or improved behaviour. They are quick to praise and reward young people. Staff and young people interact in a very warm and</p>	

affectionate manner. Staff are comfortable when young people are tactile, ensuring appropriate boundaries. This provides reassurance and helps young people to feel cared for. Mealtimes are sociable, pleasant occasions. Where some young people experience anxiety in social situations, staff work effectively to reduce, and then help young people overcome these anxieties.

Young people make a positive contribution to their home. They use the complaints system to raise any concerns and to make suggestions for improvement. Each complaint is responded to individually by a manager. Action is taken where appropriate, to ensure that young people can see that their views are respected. For example, an additional community activity was arranged when a young person raised concerns that her mobility programme was not well organised. Weekly young people's meetings are also used well as part of consultation. As a result, they have been involved in the choice of soft furnishings, menu and activity planning. Young people are routinely consulted about the home's incentive scheme. As a result, the rewards available motivate them to develop improved social skills. Staff are good at giving young people responsibility, such as acting as a 'buddy' to new admissions and being a representative on the school council. This means young people feel valued and respected and grow in self-esteem when given positions of trust and responsibility. The home environment contributes to the welcoming and nurturing atmosphere. It is pleasantly decorated. Young people's art and creative work is displayed throughout the home. This further enhances self-esteem.

Young people enjoy a varied programme of interesting and stimulating activities. Staff work hard to ensure that young people have a choice of activities and that activity planning reflects the expressed preferences of young people. Staff encourage young people to read for pleasure outside of education. Where young people have a favourite author education and care staff ensure that their books are made available. Staff are good at providing creative and artistic activities. Young people take pride in their achievements. For example, they have recently made cushions that they keep in their rooms, making them more homely. Young people have also knitted scarves and sewn glove puppets. In doing so they have learned new skills. Some young people enjoy completing jigsaw puzzles and board games. Staff encourage such activities. Their enthusiasm helps young people to maintain their concentration. Physical activities, such as basketball and badminton are also enjoyed by young people. Where young people are admitted to the home with particular interests, the home supports them well. For example, a young person with an interest in kickboxing has been provided with equipment so that she can develop this hobby. However, the home is not always pro-active in providing exercise and fitness activities or equipment that are attractive to female residents. As a result, some young people say that they have become significantly less fit since moving to the home. One young person said, 'The activities are good but there is not enough fitness stuff for me.'

Health care arrangements are significantly improved and have developed since the

last inspection. Improved commissioning arrangements mean that the home is able to provide a wider range of services tailored to the physical, emotional and mental health needs of each young person. The GP and nurse ensure that all physical health needs are well met. They also take a lead in undertaking a very detailed assessment of health needs at the point of admission. Good quality assessment results in the development of structured treatment plans and clear guidance for staff. Young people have access to specialist therapies, including dialectical behaviour therapy (DBT), which helps them to grow in emotional resilience and become better able to manage their feelings and emotions. A social worker commented that the sessions with one young person were, 'Very effective and helped her to reframe her thinking around previous risky behaviours.' A young person stated, 'I didn't think the therapy would help me but I was wrong! It done more than help me; it made me feel like a different person.'

Staff have also benefited from the input of psychologists and mental health specialists in developing strategies to support young people. Regular, multi-disciplinary meetings including a psychologist, care staff and managers ensure that information is shared fully and that developing health needs are quickly recognised and responded to. Staff report that they feel well supported because they are quickly able to access advice and guidance from specialist health professionals, which assists them to delivery good quality care or young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people told inspectors they feel safe and they did not raise any concerns about bullying or their safety. They feel able to talk to staff members if they have any concerns or worries, confident that staff will take positive action. Young people are always closely supervised so the opportunity for bullying is minimised. However, where incidents do occur, staff address and challenge these and ensure appropriate actions are taken. This includes for example, ensuring victims are supported and feel safe and know action is being taken, and helping perpetrators understand the effects of their actions and using sanctions where appropriate.</p> <p>There have been a number of child protection matters since the last inspection. All are clearly recorded and have been managed in line with procedures. The local authority confirmed that managers at the home refer any concerns to them for consideration in a timely, open and transparent manner. One recent matter referred by the manager presented professional debate with, and challenge from, the local authority. The multi-disciplinary strategy meeting hosted by the local authority concluded the matter did not meet the threshold for enquiries under</p>	

section 47 of the Children Act 1989. The Registered Manager carefully considered all information available in making decisions about this matter and shared this with the local authority. She made a reasonable judgement with subsequent decisions based on a formal review of all available information. The manager is working with the local authority to finalise outcomes. All staff receive safeguarding training, which supports them to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and respond appropriately to any arising safeguarding concerns.

Links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and the Local Authority are well established. The Registered Manager is a member of a sub-group of the Board. There are quarterly meetings between the home and local authority that enable external and independent scrutiny of the home's practices to promote the safety of young people.

Managers have yet to establish links with relevant agencies or deliver awareness training to all care and teaching staff relating to the Governments' 'Prevent' agenda and the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015. The manager has plans in place to progress this matter, but these have not yet been implemented.

Staff manage behaviour well and are good role models for young people. The young people know and understand the incentive scheme that is in place. This has levels that go from bronze to platinum. Young people can progress through the levels earning increased rewards and privileges for positive behaviour. Sanctions are used where behaviour is negative. Sanctions are relevant to any misdemeanour and are recorded with young people's views about the measure used. Managers monitor the effectiveness of sanctions though staff do not always record this as required. This has no impact on practice. Inspectors saw some good examples of restorative practices that help young people understand the impact of their behaviour on others, but because records do not always show what has been undertaken, the home is not evidencing an area of practice it does well.

Physical restraint is used in line with regulations. The numbers of incidents have been high since the last inspection. This is mostly attributed to three young people with highly complex needs, presenting significantly challenging behaviour. The Registered Manager is keeping more information about physical restraint and this has enabled a detailed analysis of trends and patterns. It shows that incidents of restraint reduce for young people during their time at the home. Managers monitor restraint incidents very closely. Incidents are viewed shortly after they occur using closed-circuit television (CCTV). Further and more detailed scrutiny takes place at weekly meetings. This process ensures practice is appropriate and any learning is identified and taken forward with staff. Records of incidents are well kept that include debriefs of young people and staff that show the support provided. A nurse sees young people as soon as possible after every incident to check on their welfare and wellbeing.

Single separation is used in line with Government guidance and is well recorded.

Records clearly show the reasons why single separation is used are usually for short periods of time and demonstrate that young people are closely monitored to keep them safe. They evidence that as soon as possible, young people return to normal routines. The home has a 'managing away' policy and associated records. This is where young people are a risk to themselves or others and as a result are managed outside their normal routines by staff and away from other young people. Again, practice and records clearly show the reasons why this approach has been taken and is for the minimum time required with the objective of ensuring young people re-join their peers and their normal routine as soon as is safe to do so. The manager is currently working on further developing these records to demonstrate all work undertaken with young people during these periods.

The home has policies relating to the searching of bedrooms, communal areas and individual young people. These set out the procedures, required authorisation levels and how these are to be undertaken. Records are kept of all searches, anything found and any actions required, or that have been taken. Individual searches of young people are risk-led and undertaken with sensitivity to young people's needs. A pat down and use of an electronic wand is the normal level of search used. If a 'dressing gown' search is required due to increased risks this is always authorised by a senior manager. These types of searches are rare.

Vulnerability and risks of suicide and self-harm are robustly assessed at the point of admission. Plans are devised, very regularly reviewed and implemented by all staff to help keep young people safe. Risk assessments are of a good quality. Any risks to a young person are clearly documented, known by staff and followed to help keep young people safe.

Work is undertaken with young people about the risks of sexual exploitation. Key worker sessions and therapeutic input are effective. They help young people to understand how to develop and maintain safe relationships in the community with the aim of minimising the risk of sexual exploitation. Staff are very good at sharing information with placing authorities and social workers where potential risks are identified, particularly in relation to sexual exploitation. This information is shared in a timely manner with appropriate agencies during a young person's stay and before they return to community settings to help keep young people safe.

There has been once incident of absconding since the last inspection. This incident occurred when a young person was taken by escorts to a court hearing. Procedures were followed leading to the young person's quick return. Records show that statutory guidance was followed.

There is a robust recruitment process that is followed for all new staff. Records confirm that relevant checks have been undertaken before new staff start work, helping to ensure they are the right people to work with vulnerable children.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2007. She is an experienced, skilled and competent practitioner and holds appropriate qualifications. The one recommendation made at the last inspection has been fully addressed. Records of single separation incidents are now robustly kept. This demonstrates commitment to improvement.</p> <p>Young people are the focus of the service. The Registered Manager ensures that their individual needs are central to the culture and ethos of the home. Weekly managers meetings review young people's progress. These multi-disciplinary meetings evaluate and celebrate young people's achievements. This structured and integrated approach enables the manager to retain an overview of young people's progress. It ensures that care plans reflect individual needs and that any changes are disseminated to the wider staff team. This management oversight supports consistent practice so that young people make good progress. The effect of staff practice on young people's progress is examined through weekly 'care plan' tracking documents. The Registered Manager analyses this information to ascertain if any deterioration in young people's behaviours is linked to the actions or inactions of staff. This comprehensive evaluation means that staff and managers are accountable for young people's on-going development.</p> <p>Staff receive good quality training that incorporates their learning needs, the development of the service and focuses on young people's safety and protection. This means that training programmes reflect young people's individual needs and ensures that staff have appropriate skills, knowledge and qualifications. Staff say they feel supported in their role and praise the continued 'commitment, passion and dedication' of the Registered Manager. For some staff, formal supervision meetings are frequent and effective. These encourage staff to reflect on their practice, recognise young people's progress and consider their responsibilities for the continued development of the service. However, some staff do not receive supervision as regularly.</p> <p>Internal monitoring processes are a considerable strength and an area that has significantly developed since the last inspection. The Registered Manager utilises a range of robust systems to gather relevant data. The monitoring systems highlight young people's progress, evaluate the quality of care provided by the centre and inform the wider development of the home. The Registered Manager assesses the service by reviewing patterns and trends. She shares findings from monitoring with partner agencies, commissioned services and care staff during regular formal meetings. Reports are detailed and comprehensive. They incorporate the views and opinions of relevant professionals and the young people. This excellent practice is seamless and ensures that the provision continually evolves to meet</p>	

young people's needs. This means that young people receive personalised, well-planned and reflective care.

The centre has a clear Statement of Purpose. This document specifies the aims and objectives of the home and emphasises the nurturing ethos of the environment. Placing authorities, parents and other agencies confirm that they understand the purpose of the centre. This means that the suitability of young people's placements can be verified before admission and this increases the likelihood of placements being successful.

Partnership working arrangements between the centre, placing authorities and specialist commissioned services are effective and professional. Professionals associated with the service praise the 'drive and perseverance' of the Registered Manager and staff team. One social worker said, 'The change in the young person's behaviour has been amazing. I did not think they could make so much progress in such a short period of time. I think it's because the staff never give up and are very committed.' When the actions of others fall short of acceptable standards, the Registered Manager is confident in challenging practice. She advocates for young people and ensures that they receive good quality care and support from all of the professionals involved in their care.

	Judgement grade
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good
<p>Since the last inspection, action has been taken to address serious staffing issues.</p> <p>Young people's educational needs are assessed within three days of admission to the home. Time is taken to enable a young person to settle in before this process is completed. The assessment identifies young people's baseline levels in reading, writing and numeracy. Additional learning needs and further support arrangements are also recorded. Staff work diligently to identify a young person's learning and achievement prior to their time at the home and in most cases previous involvement with education has been poor.</p> <p>Young people often arrive at times of crisis in their lives and with low self-esteem and confidence. Most have poor coping strategies and attitudes to learning are negative so work to engage them positively in education is prioritised and paced sensitively to ensure the agreed learning programme is right for each young person. This is, in most cases, achieved successfully. They gain in self-confidence and ability and improve their interpersonal and communication skills through an effective and personalised curriculum.</p>	

Nearly all learners achieve functional skills accreditation in English and mathematics, as well as Awards Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) awards in a range of subjects including humanities, science, food technology, music, Physical Education (PE) and Art. More able young people work towards GCSE qualifications when appropriate. Good successes have been recorded this year at the Koestler Awards in both art and music. In 2014-2015 of the 40 young people living at the home, all left with at least one core subject qualification at a higher level than when they arrived. The change in the qualifications scheme from AQA awards to ASDAN accreditation has been successful, providing a better fit for specific needs of the young people and their variable lengths of stay. The change has not been without its challenges for the staff team. The lack of administrative support for the education department has meant that the education manager and teachers spend significantly more time, often over and above their core work time, to complete important administrative tasks. This detracts from their key responsibilities.

The education manager has successfully reviewed and consolidated new processes and systems to ensure consistency and improve outcomes for young people. She has made significant progress in prioritising key areas to improve and enhance current practice. Root and branch reviews have been undertaken in, for example curriculum planning and timetabling; tracking and monitoring attendance and achievement; data collection and analysis; teaching and learning practice, and observation and professional development. She has been supported well by the school improvement adviser. Staff have worked equally hard to ensure programmes reflect the range of learning needs and to deliver positive outcomes for young people.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. No satisfactory or inadequate teaching was observed. There is outstanding features demonstrated in most subjects, and specifically in music, English, ICT, science and mathematics. These findings correlate closely with the lesson observation profile recently undertaken by an organisational review. Lessons are well planned and ensure a good balance of core teaching and extension activities for more able learners. Lessons are pitched to address the range of learning needs in the classroom and, with very small groups currently, this is achieved effectively. Teachers explain the aims and focus of the lessons well and stimulating starter activities ensure young people settle down quickly to their work. Young people are encouraged to ask questions and extend their knowledge by using additional resources available to them. In most lessons they were inquisitive, enjoyed discussions and sharing ideas. They respond well to positive feedback which motivates them and contributes to their progress. Teachers and teaching assistants (TAs) have high expectations for positive engagement in lessons and also that work is completed to a good standard. Resources are of a consistently high standard and well matched to enhance teaching and learning.

Teaching assistants (TAs) provide good learning and pastoral support in lessons, bringing a breadth of experience and expertise. Relationships between TA's and young people are based on trust and care. One-to-one learning support on the residential units for those young people unable to attend education is under developed and a small number of young people are not always receiving appropriately tailored learning activities when out of education.

Individual work files in classrooms are of variable quality but reflect each learners journey accurately and the range and scope of learning that has been achieved during their stay. The files are generally tidy, well organised and marked regularly. Marking is completed frequently and generally gives constructive and clear comments which young people value.

Personal learning files are compiled for each young person which describe the learning journey, and includes assessment information, behaviour and attitudes to learning and monthly reports about achievement and progression. These files are comprehensive and move on with each young person when they leave. Daily observations are also recorded by the education manager. Each young person has a key teacher who they meet with on a weekly basis where they discuss progress and any concerns and issues they may have about their time in education. This ensures any issues regarding their studies are picked up swiftly and supportive action is arranged.

The curriculum is appropriate and provides a good range of academic and practical subjects. All subjects enable opportunities for young people to achieve accreditation at entry level, level 1 and level 2. More able young people work towards GCSE qualifications in mathematics and English when appropriate. Core curriculum subjects are prioritised and good attention is given to support young people develop functional skills in mathematics, ICT and English. Literacy and numeracy skills have been well embedded in science, humanities, music and art. The small size of groups limits the range of physical education activities taking place. Trampolining is very popular and young people achieve British Gymnastics Association awards in this activity. Female specific activities in PE such as dance and keep fit are not yet available, although funding has been secured to redesign the large sports hall to enable a more female friendly curriculum.

Vocational work in education is underdeveloped; little has changed since the previous inspection. Young people's vocational skills are prioritised in some practical sessions such as food technology and music but opportunities to develop more formal employability skills are weak. Discussions are ongoing to develop work experience opportunities in the centre such as gardening and horticulture, and catering and hospitality but progress is slow.

The refurbishment of classrooms has been achieved to a high standard. Rooms are well designed and very well managed. Displays are highly effective, interesting and attractive and students work is used well to demonstrate their learning and

creativity. The use of information learning technology (ILT) is good overall. Electronic boards in classrooms are well used and the quality of resources and presentations used in lessons are of a consistently high standard. Given the difficulties in accessing resource facilities close to the teaching areas this is to be applauded. There are no printing facilities close to classrooms so young people and teachers are unable to reproduce resources or complete work swiftly to enhance learning. Accreditation in ICT functional skills has also faltered because of the lack of printing facilities available during lessons.

Attention to health and safety is good, particularly in practical subjects. Risk assessments are completed on a daily basis and most young people use equipment sensibly and safely. Display of young people's work is used well throughout education and regularly updated to celebrate effort and achievement. A stunning rainforest display at the entrance lobby, recently produced by young people, graphically demonstrates strong and creative art and craft teaching and skills. Equality and cultural diversity is covered cross curriculum and detailed in schemes of work although this is not always evident in wall displays or in work files. On occasion activities are used to encourage discussion and increase knowledge about for example, important figures in black history, religious celebrations around the world, and exploration of international food.

Staff receive joint training with the residential teams on a range of generic issues such as managing restraint, behaviour management and safeguarding. They undertake specialist training on topics such as child sexual exploitation and working with children with complex emotional and behavioural needs. However, training in identifying and managing those at risk of being drawn into terrorism in line with the Governments' 'Prevent' agenda has not been undertaken. Teaching staff are encouraged through annual appraisals to develop links with sister schools in the locality to keep track in their specialist subject areas and accreditation and qualification approaches.

A student council is active and highly effective in ensuring young people's views and ideas about education are heard and acknowledged. Learner voice questionnaires are used periodically throughout the year to capture individual ideas and complaints. Actions taken are recorded and fed back through the student counsellor representatives. Currently work is in hand to survey young people about how the education library can be better managed and utilised by them.

Young people have access to a range of enrichment activities after the education day, at weekends and during holiday periods. Long holiday periods when education is closed are filled by well-structured programmes of activities organised by the head of education and delivered by residential staff. These programmes are supported by a range of external tutors who offer skills and expertise in a broad range of activities such as street art, craft, drama and dance. An external careers company provides careers lessons periodically throughout the year and these have been successful. They include discussions about careers options, job searching,

interview techniques and building curriculum vitae. Individual sessions are also available for those older young people who are close to transition to further education or training placements.

Attendance continues to be very good at 96% over the last three months. Nearly all young people are respectful of staff. In most lessons young people participate well and the atmosphere is calm and purposeful. Behaviour is generally good and managed well by teachers and TA's. Care staff provide good and swift support to teachers on those occasions when individual young people become agitated or disruptive and need to leave lessons for time out. Offensive language by a minority of young people is challenged persistently by staff but not always successfully.

The head of education is a key member of the senior management team and involved in the broad range of discussions about strategy, planning and development. Communication has improved. Information about young people is shared daily across the unit and this ensures good working relationships between education and residential staff.

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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