

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	29/10/2015
Unique reference number	1155768
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Mrs Barbara Layton
Inspector	Dawn Bennett

Inspection date	29/10/2015
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	Outstanding
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.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

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Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Manager's, staff and young people are proud that they have successfully moved into their new home and created a warm and welcoming environment.
- Outstanding child centred practice ensures young people flourish.
- All staff practice is reflective and specifically tailored to the individual needs of young people.
- Excellent proactive partnership work with professionals and other agencies results in each young person achieving positive outcomes and personal goals.
- Young people's safety is promoted at all times. There has been a significant decrease in police involvement, incidents and physical interventions for one young person since moving into the home.
- Educational progress is exceptional given young people's starting points.
- Effective management ensures young people's complex needs are fully met.
- There are a small number of shortfalls. The registered manager's review of the quality of care provided by the home is not evaluative. Independent interviews do not always take place after a young person has been missing. Young people do not always have access to a computer.

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
In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating – (a) the quality of care provided for children; (b) the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and (c) any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. This specifically relates to the evaluation of the review. (Regulation 45 (2))	01/04/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure each child has an independent return interview following every missing from care incident. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45 paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that children have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning. Unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why this should be inappropriate. In such cases, the home should consider whether and how it can support the child to access a computer and internet safely. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29 paragraph 5.19)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a newly registered local authority operated home. It provides care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

This is this service's first Ofsted inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
02/07/2015	Registration	N/A

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
<p>Young people make outstanding personal progress in most areas of their lives because they are supported by a staff team who are resilient and work with them to address their very complex and changing needs.</p> <p>Young people learn new life skills and experience positive, well planned change. They have recently moved, with their whole staff team, into a new house. Everyone was actively involved in the move; shopping, decorating and assembling furniture. One young person lead on the purchasing and installation of electrical devises. Both young people are pleased with the house and enjoying the new location. As a result, they are now living on the edge of a city and experiencing more independence, accessing new resources and enjoying different activities.</p> <p>Young people have excellent well established, meaningful relationships with staff. The staff team attend regular meetings facilitated by a mental health practitioner where they reflect on young people's early childhood experiences and use this to meet their current attachment needs. The practitioner stated: 'Despite the level of difficulties the young people present the staff, I feel the team are open minded about the approach and have embraced it even under very testing times for them. I have heard many good examples of supportive empathic care of the young people and for one young person in particular who has displayed high levels of challenging behaviour, it appears the teams efforts are now paying off as there has been some steady progress made by this young person after years of longstanding emotional behaviour difficulties and multiple placement breakdowns.'</p> <p>Young people lead healthy lifestyles and make significant progress in changing historical patterns of behaviour. Staff work effectively with a number of partner agencies and professionals. The relationships they have developed with the young people and the insight they have gained into their behaviours have resulted in young people feeling confident in their ability to keep them safe. A psychotherapist stated: 'Staff have committed to working with me and the young person using dyadic developmental psychotherapy. Thus far this has involved meeting regularly to discuss the therapy, trauma and attachment generally and the young person specifically. I appreciate that releasing two staff to do this work is difficult but I'm pleased that staff want to work closely with me and to be a part of the therapy with the young person. This will enhance relationships still further and help to make the young person feel more secure.'</p> <p>Staff support and promote school attendance, academic success and social</p>	

involvement through after school clubs and school trips. This results in young people making excellent personal progress. For example, one young person has been away without staff support on a school camping trip. Prior to moving house another young person was not attending or engaging with education. Since moving the staff team have successfully supported her to start and regularly attend a new educational placement. Education staff stated: 'The staff team have been fantastic with sharing information to help us support the young person in her transition and now her current placement.' For this young person this has been an outstanding achievement and one that she states she is 'proud' of. The house is not yet linked to the internet and young people do not have access to personal computers or lap tops. This hinders them in achieving even greater academic outcomes.

Young people feel their views and opinions are listened to and acted upon. One young person's feedback to the local authority has resulted in her being involved in making a film about the care they provide. The Marketing Account Manager stated 'I was really impressed with the young person and how she grew in confidence each time we met her and throughout the filming. By the end of the day we were laughing and joking and she was coming up with what she wanted to say rather than being prompted. It's clear that she feels comfortable and supported by the staff at the home. She says in the interview that they're always there to help, no matter what.'

The staff team have excellent insight into the needs of young people living away from home. They promote family relationships. One young person described a very recent and successful contact with a member of her family who she had not seen for a significant period of time. She stated: 'Staff sorted the contact out for me and prepared me. It went well. They are now talking about regular visits.'

Young people develop new friendships and enjoy meeting up and attending social events with them. They also expand their interests by attending a range of activities and hobbies. They have participated in Zumba, swimming, Cadets and one young person holds a season tickets for local basketball games. During school holidays they plan day trips and short breaks away. Staff are particularly proud of a young person who has been away on an adventure holiday on his own for the first time and also planned his first trip abroad. The young person stated: 'I recently planned and went on holiday abroad. I planned it with my key worker. I chose Barcelona because I am a football fan and I also love Spanish food. It was brilliant. I am already thinking about ideas for 2016. Either America or Italy.'

Young people develop the practical and social skills they require as they move towards adulthood. Staff use good parenting skills to ensure young people's development is appropriate to their age and abilities. For example, learning to book their own opticians appointments. Opening and managing a bank account. Cycling to visit family. These experiences increase young people's self-esteem and develop their sense of belonging.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>The successful progress and safety of young people is given good priority. The local authority and registered manager have been proactive in responding to a young person's very complex needs. For example, staffing has been increased to ensure the needs of young people are met. Risks are monitored and regularly reviewed. Staff effectively use the information they gather to keep themselves and young people safe. They help young people learn skills to cope with and change their historic behaviours. As a result, incidents of self-harm, damage to property, injury to staff, police involvement and the use of physical interventions have decreased. The resulting stability is enabling staff to begin to support the young people to achieve in other areas of their life. One young person stated: 'My behaviour is much better I feel settled here. There is only one other young person here who I know well. I also know all the staff. I feel safe most of the time and this is a big thing for me.'</p> <p>The registered manager and staff team promote the well-being and safety of young people at all times. Their working knowledge of safeguarding, missing from care and child sexual exploitation procedures is supported by regular good quality training. This ensures they are able to meet the individual needs of young people and work effectively in partnership with other agencies.</p> <p>Staff are well informed and aware of warning signs that might indicate a young person is unsettled. When young people go missing staff act quickly and work effectively in partnership with external agencies. Staff spend time with young people to ensure they understand risks and learn skills to keep themselves safe. Both young people acknowledge the concern they cause to staff when they return late from unsupervised time or go missing. They also recognise the lessons they have learnt from staff input. Young people who are been reported missing from care do not always have independent interviews when they return in line with the statutory guidance.</p> <p>Staff effectively support young people to learn new strategies to cope with anxieties and significantly reduce inappropriate behaviours. A social worker stated: 'The young person has been well supported through the most challenging of times since returning to a local authority placement and the commitment and support offered to her by the staff group at the home has been exceptional. I met with the young person in the last month and observed her to be the most settled I have seen her in 2 years, she related well to the staff on duty and looked relaxed and at ease in her home environment.'</p> <p>Staff are also proactive at managing the effects young people's behaviours can</p>	

have on each other. A young person's psychotherapist stated: 'The young person has been very happy at the home despite the difficulties with the other young person there. This has been handled well by staff and they have given a great deal of thought about the impact of her behaviour on him.'

Young people and the staff team are proud of their new home. They have all worked together to create a very safe, welcoming and homely environment. Damage is quickly repaired. Worked continues to mirror the personalities and interests of the young people in their environment.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager is experienced and holds a level 5 diploma in leadership in children and young people health and social care, NVQ 3 in health and social care with children and young people and a degree in leadership and management. Staff and young people feel supported by her. A young person stated: 'she makes you feel like you are part of something. She is a really good listener and never gets angry.'</p> <p>The registered manager and staff team monitor young people's progress and the impact of their care on their outcomes. They use reflective practice, the team around the child and clinical input to challenge their own practice and introduce new strategies to better meet young people's needs and ensure they continue to achieve outstanding outcomes.</p> <p>A consistent stable staff team provides young people with excellent continuity of care and stability in placement. The team moved to the new home with the young people. This supported young people to experience a positive change in circumstances and help them quickly settle in.</p> <p>Staff are appropriately qualified or in the process of undertaking training. They have a wide range of experience. They develop their practice through detailed induction, established training, structured team meetings and regular supervision. Staff are positive about the environment they work in, the support they receive from managers and the excellent progress of young people. A strength of this service is the continual development of the staff team. For example, four staff are undertaking level 1 dyadic developmental psychotherapy training and two more are completing nurturing and attachment training.</p> <p>The registered manager and staff team use development plans and internal and external quality assurance systems to monitor and improve practice and outcomes</p>	

for young people. The registered manager has just completed the first quality of care review which she has shared with Ofsted. The format is good and the data it contains is very detailed. However, the evaluation of the data is not robust and does not reflect the insight the registered manager, deputy and staff team clearly have of the service's strengths and weaknesses.

The registered manager and staff team have good relationships with partner agencies. All are positive about the quality of communication and partnership work. A social worker stated: 'The team rise to the challenges of the corporate parent and advocate strongly on behalf of the young person. They have established excellent partnerships with the social work and health and well-being teams drawing upon the professional support and expertise to care safely and effectively for the young person. As a team who have a sound understanding of the young person's complex needs they have recognised the importance of establishing stability in education and escalate concerns appropriately within their own management structure ensuring that the independent reviewing officer is kept alerted.'

The registered manager is proactive in acting on behalf of young people and this results in positive change. For example, pursuing an alternative educational placement when an existing provision could not meet the young person's needs. The registered manager is currently addressing why return interviews, contracted out by the local authority, are not taking place after a young person has return from a missing episode. She has invited a representative to the next staff meeting.

Overall, the registered manager and staff team continue to settle into the new home and familiarise themselves with their new location. They continue to re-evaluate and improve their practice and the service. They value the input of other professionals and agencies in this process. They also continue to work to keep a safe, stable and secure environment where young people are able to continue to make outstanding progress in areas of their lives.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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