

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	20/10/2015
Unique reference number	SC011185
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Calcot Services for Children Limited
Registered person address	Pond View, Wokingham Road, Hurst, Reading, RG1 0SB

Responsible individual	Rachel Redgwell
Registered manager	Mary Smith
Inspector	Emeline Evans

Inspection date	20/10/2015
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

SC011185

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The staff team provide a good level of well-planned and highly individualised care through the implementation of comprehensive placement plans and risks assessments; young people are central in all decisions made.
- The young people thrive in a nurturing, supportive environment where they feel safe. Young people say they feel safe and are safeguarded from harm, as far as is possible, and unsafe behaviours are challenged appropriately.
- Young people are cared for by staff who are genuinely interested in them, and are committed to meeting their individual needs.
- Staff make sure young people are well prepared and confident about their future plans. This helps them to make important choices and move successfully on from the home.
- The manager keeps abreast of current issues in the field of social care, cascading these to the staff team. The staff team reflect on this range of information to enhance their skills.
- Young people know the consequences of risk-taking behaviours and how this impacts on their safety. Staff are persistent in supporting young people to keep safe and work collaboratively with external professionals.

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
<p>Maintain records for each child in Schedule 3. This specifically relates to ensuring a copy of any plan for the care of the child prepared by the child's placing authority is obtained, and of the placement plan for the care of the child.</p> <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a))</p>	17/11/2015
<p>12 The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the standard the protection of children standard the registered person is required to ensure:</p> <p>(2)(a)(i) that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. In particular, ensure that impact risk assessments are completed at the time of referral.</p>	17/11/2015

Recommendations

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

- Review the effectiveness of how children are supported and encouraged to understand their health needs, how to maintain a healthy lifestyle and to make informed decisions about their health. This specifically relates to helping young people to reduce their smoking. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 34, paragraph 7.10)
- Inform the relevant officer or teams within the local authority promptly and in writing of all allegations. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 44, paragraph 9.18)
- Ensure appropriate forms of contact are facilitated for each child and staff have the skills to undertake this. This specifically relates to staff being training in facilitating supervised contact. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 58, paragraph 11.18)
- Review the Statement of Purpose to ensure it is specific for the home and rather than the wider organisation. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.6)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is registered for up to seven young people and is owned and managed by a private organisation. This home caters for young people who have a range of emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home aims to offer a service, which supports young people to reflect on and heal from their traumatic experiences with the overall aim of preparing young people to be ready to leave care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/01/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
01/07/2014	CH - Full	Good
06/02/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress
14/06/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
<p>Secure relationships have been formed between staff and young people this is enabling young people to develop emotionally. Positive role modelling by staff has helped young people to improve their social skills and contributed to raising their self-esteem. As a result, young people are beginning to develop positive relationships with each other.</p> <p>Staff support young people to understand and come to terms with matters from their past which are influencing their emotions and behaviours. Young people benefit from this individualised support, which helps them grow in confidence. There have been some admissions to the home since the last inspection, which have resulted in challenges for the staff team. Incidents of missing from care and risk of child sexual exploitation have been significant concerns. Increased support from staff and external specialist agencies ensures young people are able to understand their risk-taking behaviours and consider reducing them. In some cases, this has resulted in the managers making the decision they are unable to keep a child safe. The manager carefully considers the best steps to take in the interest of each young person. Some young people are just beginning to settle into their new environment; progress is being seen given their starting point upon arrival at the home. They use new skills and, through open discussions and support, are able to put protective measures in place. Support from the members of staff is enabling them to develop an understanding of their past and to reflect upon their choices and behaviour.</p> <p>Young people are confident in speaking out about day-to-day living matters within the home and the wider organisation. A culture of openness provides opportunities for young people to raise grumbles or formal complaints. All forms of complaints are taken very seriously.</p> <p>Staff support young people with contact arrangements and young people benefit from being able to maintain appropriate contact with family, friends and other people who are important to them. Staff support and facilitate some individual contact arrangements. Young people confirm that they understand the contact plans and arrangements that are in place. Staff supervise some contact and they have not had the appropriate training in this area. They are not provided with the skills to ensure these visits are facilitated appropriately and safely.</p>	

Currently staff are managing a relatively new group of young people well. Young people's placement plans provide a good steer on the needs of the young people and the methods being used by staff to meet these. Most young people in the home smoke cigarettes and this is permitted in specific areas on the grounds. However, care planning does not specify current approaches and education by members of staff and other health professionals. There is no detail of strategies being used or measurable targets against which to assess outcomes for young people in reducing smoking.

At the previous inspection, a recommendation in relation to medication arrangements was made. Communication took place with the necessary consultant to ensure the home had clear directions on the medication arrangements for that young person. Medication arrangements are now robust.

The staff team have an awareness of the need for careful and individualised transition planning. The manager has appropriate oversight of referrals to the home and gains information prior to placement. This gives staff an insight into the support needs of each young person. Young people receive positive care, which promotes their independence. They engage in practical skills such as cooking, washing and budgeting to prepare them for later life. Staff make sure young people are well prepared and confident about their future plans. This helps them to make important choices and move successfully on from the home. Young people report they are well supported to prepare to live independently.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Young people report feeling safe in the home. A young person commented, 'I feel safe, there is nothing to not feel safe about.' The relationships young people are developing with the staff mean they feel able to talk to staff should they feel worried or upset. Staff receive regular training on safeguarding and demonstrate a good understanding and knowledge of safeguarding matters. They give young people opportunities to discuss ways to keep themselves safe. There is a culture of openness in the home, this allows for discussion around relationships both with each other and with others in the community. Staff work with young people to address and resolve any issues.</p> <p>There are a high number of occasions when young people are absent without authorisation, or go missing. There is close and effective liaison with the local</p>	

neighbourhood police when this occurs. The home has clear protocols to follow in the event that a young person is missing. These are explicit in what steps need to take to promote each young person's safety. The strategies are pro-active and include steps for the staff to take to dissuade young people from going missing. On occasion, this may mean close supervision and following a young person out of the home if they leave without permission. This is to maintain the safety of young people who are particularly vulnerable. Feedback from a professional included, 'the home shares information and works closely with them (around children who have risks of missing); this helps to fully safeguard young people.'

Young people know the consequences of risk-taking behaviours and how this impacts on their safety. Some young people do present with known risks in relation to child sexual exploitation and/or self-harm. Managers review responses regularly and adapt care planning; young people are fully involved in this process. Staff are persistent in supporting young people to keep safe and work collaboratively with external professionals. This includes drug and substance misuse workers, the local child sexual exploitation team and the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service to encourage young people to reflect on the impact their behaviour has on themselves and others. This provides a network of support to both the young people and the staff team supporting them.

Staff are very proactive in promoting positive behaviour and relationships. As a result, young people predominantly behave appropriately and interact positively with both each other and staff. All members of staff are trained in the method of restraint used by the organisation who runs the home. Emphasis is on de-escalation techniques and the development of mutual respect. There has been limited use of physical intervention by staff. Sanctions are imposed according to young people's behaviour. There is an increasing emphasis on a restorative approach, this is enabling young people to take ownership and have a sense of personal responsibility. Young people agree that they are aware of house rules and do not have any strong opinions about sanctions. Young people's behaviour plans and risk assessments are comprehensive and tailored to their assessed needs.

The management team and staff plan well for new admissions and there is liaison with professionals to anticipate known vulnerabilities when young people are new to the home. However, the completion of impact risk assessments happens on the day of admission and not at time of referral. This does not enable a robust evaluation to determine if they are able to meet the young people's needs and assess if they are able to keep all children safe. The homes procedure states this is to be completed at time of referral; this is not happening in practice.

Allegations or suspicions of harm are promptly shared with external safeguarding agencies. Staff attend relevant professionals meetings and share appropriate information about young people's well-being. This demonstrates effective partnership working. In one instance, discussions in relation to safeguarding were shared informally with the necessary professionals and not followed up with a

written referral. This information is not recorded with the local authority.

There is a robust recruitment process in place and this includes careful selection and vetting of staff working with the young people in the home. The management of health and safety is sound, providing young people with a safe environment. Information supplied during the inspection shows that all health and safety and fire checks are completed regularly and routine servicing and maintenance takes place as required.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The home has suitably qualified and experienced manager who has been registered by Ofsted in this home since December 2013. She provides good leadership and receives support from experienced senior members of staff. Managers clearly prioritise the young people's needs and act upon any concerns. They have clear child focused development plans in place and are aware of the strengths and weaknesses in the home. They are continually utilising the staff skills to develop the team further.</p> <p>Staff are enthusiastic and committed to the young people in their care. They have formed good relationships with young people and speak positively about them. Staff attend a variety of training and this helps them to develop their skills and knowledge. Their practice is also reviewed during annual appraisals and during supervisions. Staff speak unanimously about the good level of day to day support they receive from managers and the quality of their supervision. As a result of the this support, including regular team meetings and comprehensive quality assurance processes, the staff team work cohesively and reflect upon their practice and how they can improve experiences for the young people. The home has enough members of staff to ensure that the young people can be offered close support if they need this. Staffing numbers are increased to meet the needs of particularly vulnerable young people. This includes staffing on a one to one ratio for a young person if needed.</p> <p>Currently, the home's statement of purpose reflects the aims and objectives of the organisation and not the individual children's home. This does not enable placing authorities and carers to be clear about what the home sets out to provide and if placement in that home is the right one for a child's assessed needs.</p> <p>Young people's files do not currently contain a copy of the plan for the care of the young person prepared by the child's placing authority or the placement plan. The</p>	

absence of this information means staff do not have a clear indication of the aims of the placement to be able to effectively support young people during individual one to one time. In addition, managers are unable to have a clear understanding of the progress young people are making in respect of the long term plans for them.

The manager keeps abreast of current issues in the field of social care, cascading these to the staff team. The staff team reflect on this range of information to enhance their skills. The manager has good monitoring systems. Regular file audits, internal monitoring reports, supervision and appraisal of staff; all contribute to a good understanding of the strengths of the service and any areas requiring improvement. She has also self-evaluated the home to determine if and how they are meeting the new regulations. Actions plans were developed and acted upon as a result. An independent visitor undertakes monthly monitoring reports, the staff team effectively uses this, and ensuring action is taken to address any shortfalls.

Young people benefit from highly effective working relationships between staff, parents and professionals from a range of other agencies. This includes consultants, the local authority designated officer, social workers and a range of specialist workers. Information is shared with staff to ensure they have the appropriate information to effectively support the young people's complex needs.

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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