

## **Children's homes inspection - Full**

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>15/12/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC481443</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Post Vacant</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Tracy Murty</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>15/12/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>

**SC481443**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is requires improvement because:**

- Some young people continue to present challenges to staff and other young people in relation to their anti-social and potentially risky behaviours. Their lack of engagement results in insufficient improvements to their health, social skills and education, and particularly in relation to drugs misuse.
- Staff and managers have not dealt consistently or sufficiently with incidents of bullying. There are systems for the recording of and intervention in bullying incidents, but these have not been applied in sufficient detail. There has been no significant adverse impact on young people as a result of this shortfall to date, but the potential exists for young people to receive inappropriate support and care in this area.
- Not all staff have received regular formal supervision at the organisation's specified timescales. Given the pressures of work and the demands of their roles, it is imperative that they receive such support on a regular basis to discuss the care provided to young people and the emotional impact on staff.
- Where damage has been caused to furniture or other areas of the home, this has not been repaired or replaced in a timely manner. This does not then provide a consistently well-maintained or welcoming home environment and could present safety issues if not addressed.
- Where young people's behaviour is of concern, consequences and sanctions have not been consistently applied. Consequently, staff are less able to work to reduce or eradicate any concerning behaviours, which results in some young people being less able to learn more socially acceptable ways to deal with any negative behaviours or feelings they may experience.

### **The children's home strengths**

- Staff and managers have helped to secure educational placements for two young people. For those young people who do not have formal educational provision in place, or who refuse to attend, staff have introduced clearer structures and routines during the day. This is in order to encourage them to engage with staff and take part in learning activities.
- Leaders and managers have made improvements to records, including their auditing and quality assurance, which has had a positive impact on how the

home is being run.

- The interior conditions of the home have received particular attention, with the involvement and support of young people. Work continues, but the home has a much more homely and welcoming feel than previously.

## 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>6 The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>6. In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular reference to supporting young people with complex drug misuse issues, the registered person must:</p> <p>(1)(a)(b) ensure that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and outcomes it seeks to achieve for children and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p>	15/01/2016
<p>6 The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>6. In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular reference to repairs to damaged furniture, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>(2)(c)(i) ensure that the premises used for the purpose of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child.</p>	15/01/2016
<p>11 The positive relationships standard</p> <p>11. In order to meet the positive relationships standard, with particular reference to young people who display unacceptable behaviours, the registered person must ensure that staff:</p> <p>(1)(a)(b) help children to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on mutual respect and trust, and an understanding about acceptable behaviour</p> <p>(2)(a)(i) meet each child's behavioural and emotional needs, as set out in the child's relevant plans</p>	15/01/2016

<p>(ii) help each child to develop socially aware behaviour</p> <p>(iv) help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone</p> <p>(v) communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding.</p>	
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## Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff understand what they must do to prevent bullying of children by other children. Ensure that staff are able to recognise and address different types of abuse such as peer abuse in day to day relationships in the home. Ensure that procedures for dealing with allegations of bullying are in place and staff have the skills required to intervene, protect and address bullying behaviours effectively. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 39, paragraph 8.16)
- Ensure that systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 13.2)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home is registered for five young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. This is a recent variation, a reduction from accommodating six young people, in order to provide care for four young people in the main house and one young person in the semi-independent flat in the grounds of the home.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/10/2015	Full	Inadequate

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<p>Some young people refuse to engage in their formal educational provisions. They also refuse to engage with staff in relation to ensuring that their health and emotional needs are met. For those young people with drug misuse issues, this has led to them not making sufficient or positive progress in addressing and reducing such concerning behaviours. It further undermines the staff's and manager's ability to provide the level and type of care that they require. Some young people are not currently fulfilling their potential and staff cannot support them to achieve their goals.</p> <p>Some young people continue to display anti-social and potentially risky behaviours, both within the home and when out in the community. They display a lack of respect for both staff and other young people living in the home. They often refuse to adhere to boundaries or to work constructively with staff to address their concerning and anti-social behaviours. This has a negative impact on both their ability to develop more acceptable behaviours and also impedes staff members' ability to work with them in a planned and constructive manner at all times.</p> <p>Placement and care plans reflect the current and changing needs of young people. Staff and managers have, since the last inspection, ensured that all relevant plans and documentation have been secured from placing authorities to assist them in their work. Managers have further requested meetings with some placing authorities to discuss the specific concerns and issues for some young people and challenged local authorities about any concerns relating to their performance. This has led to much closer working and a clearer understanding of the risks and support needed for young people.</p> <p>Since the last inspection, two young people now have formal educational provision in place and their attendance is very good. The health needs of young people have also been addressed and there are now written plans to support their physical and emotional needs. Managers now demonstrate a clearer understanding of the impact that the quality of care is having on young people's progress and experiences. For those young people who refuse to engage in education or where a provision is being sought, staff have put in place plans to support them during the school day to engage in learning activities. The engagement of most young people has improved, but some continue to refuse to engage with staff or other agencies to consider and address their educational and other needs.</p> <p>Young people have access to and support from independent advocacy services.</p>	



Staff have supported them to make formal complaints about any concerns they may have about the care and support they receive. Young people demonstrate an understanding of their rights and of the complaints procedures of the home and their placing authorities. One young person stated: 'I now have an advocate and have been helped to make a complaint. I am really pleased about this and feel I am being listened to.'

Since the last inspection, staff and managers have worked hard to make improvements to the internal décor of the home and the semi-independent flat in the grounds of the home. Work continues, but the home and flat now present in a much more welcoming and homely manner. Young people have been fully involved in agreeing paint colours, new furnishings and carpets for the home. In the new year, a local graffiti artist has been commissioned to do some work in the games room with young people. This reflects managers' and staff's commitment to improving the home conditions and in involving young people in this.

Fire risk assessments and night-time evacuation plans reflect the need for certain areas of the ground floor to be locked during the night. The reasons for this have been explained to young people and continue to be subject to regular review and consideration. Managers ensure that any issues relating to the care or support provided to young people is discussed and recorded in regular meetings. Staff also encourage young people to read and consider relevant plans and documentation relating to the care they receive. This enables them to feel valued and that their views are listened to.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<p>Staff and managers have not responded in sufficient detail to incidents of bullying between young people in the home. Systems exist for the recording of and response to such concerning behaviours, but these have not routinely been applied. Senior managers have identified this as an area requiring improvement, but further work is required to ensure that all reported or suspected incidents of bullying are dealt with robustly. This is in order for such concerning behaviours to be eradicated and to further protect young people from such negative and damaging behaviours.</p> <p>Some young people continue to present with extremely challenging and potentially risky behaviours. Their refusal to engage with staff in a constructive manner undermines their ability to make positive progress and potentially places them and others at risk. Where young people have caused damage to interior areas of the home through their challenging behaviours, repairs or replacement of damaged</p>	

furniture or other items have not been completed in a timely manner. As a result, certain areas of the home present in a less than welcoming manner and do not provide young people with furniture to meet their needs at all times.

Some young people continue to go missing from care. Staff and managers follow relevant joint missing from care protocols and work closely with placing authorities and police. When young people return from being missing from care, staff now ensure that the placing authority arranges for an independent return interview to be carried out. Management oversight of these incidents is more robust and demonstrates an awareness of the reasons and potential risks for some young people.

Staff and managers now have more detailed and relevant plans and risk assessments for all young people. There is clearer and more robust evidence of managers having devised and implemented a range of monitoring and tracking systems within the home. Records for young people have been updated and present as more comprehensive and reflective of their current and changing needs. Information has been sought and received from placing authorities and used to inform risk assessments and other plans. This is an improvement from the last inspection and demonstrates how managers now more robustly monitor and respond to concerns and issues relating to the care provided to young people.

Each young person has a clear and detailed contact plan. These clearly set out what the agreed contact arrangements are and enable staff and managers to support young people and placing authorities in meeting these arrangements with family members and significant others. Young people report feeling well supported by staff in relation to contact arrangements. A parent of one young person stated: 'The staff are really good at supporting contact with my child. They keep in regular contact with me by phone and support our contacts well.'

Since the last inspection, staff have undertaken training in relation to radicalisation. Staff demonstrate a more detailed awareness and understanding of the risks for young people and have begun to implement mobile phone contracts with them. This is in order to better support and have oversight of the potentially concerning behaviours and actions of some young people in relation to their use of social media and social networking sites on the internet.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
Since the last inspection, the registered manager has left and interim management arrangements have been put in place. Senior managers are currently in the	

process of recruiting a new permanent manager for the home. The departure of the previous registered manager and the lack of a permanent new manager are being well managed, but need to be addressed as a matter of urgency, in order to provide continuity and consistency of management support for both young people and the staff team. The home is currently being managed by a very experienced and competent interim manager, with many years' experience of working in residential settings. She has, in a very short period of time, introduced new systems to assist staff in caring for young people and has been instrumental in ensuring the successful completion of the requirements and recommendations set at the last inspection.

Some staff report their frustrations at not being able to provide the level or type of care they would like to for some young people, due to their continuing refusal to engage with staff and their anti-social behaviours. Staff consulted with during this inspection reported feeling well supported by the interim manager and in having faith in her ability to support them and young people effectively. Not all staff have received formal supervision on a monthly basis since the last inspection. Given the challenges presented for staff in their roles, the need for them to receive regular and supportive supervision is very important.

New systems have been put in place in relation to sanctions and consequences for young people who fail to adhere to agreed rules or boundaries. Staff have not, however, systematically or routinely followed or applied these. Where young people persistently present with verbally abusive behaviours and language to staff and other young people, no formal consequences or sanctions have been put in place or recorded. This prevents some young people from developing socially aware behaviours and in understanding or accepting the consequences for such unsociable behaviours.

The interim manager has considered the staffing rota for the home and made changes to ensure that there are sufficient staff on duty at all times. The interim and deputy manager have focused their attention on ensuring that there is much more robust and effective monitoring and management oversight of all aspects of how the home is run and the quality of care provided to young people. This process has been fully supported by the responsible individual for this home.

One placing social worker commented: 'Since the interim manager has come into post, communication is much better and there is more clarity about roles and responsibilities.' An independent reviewing officer for one young person also commented: 'The interim manager presents as very competent and knowledgeable from my dealings with her so far.'

## 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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