

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	04/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC431807
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	SWAAY Child and Adolescent Services Limited
Registered person address	c/o, 591 London Road, SUTTON, Surrey, SM3 9AG

Responsible individual	Gerard Berry
Registered manager	Andrew Roberts
Inspector	Chris Peel

Inspection date	04/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>Considerable effort has been made to develop effective procedures and practice in the home to improve the experience of young people and this has largely been successful. The manager has driven this change, supported by a staff team that wants to help those in their care to progress. However, he has had to prioritise those areas needing most attention and staff turnover has constrained the improvements made.</p> <p>The manager is aware of the areas that are still below the standards he expects and has drawn up a development plan that sets out how these will be addressed. This includes the refurbishment of the property. Many areas, including some young people's bedrooms have benefitted from redecoration and the purchase of new furniture. They have had an input into the choices made and one young person was proud to show me where he had helped to make repairs. There are still two areas that require considerable attention to make the whole house feel 'loved', the lounge and stairway, which is why a recommendation remains for this.</p> <p>The two other recommendations have been met in full: a 'home book' and the children's guide now contain information about the role of advocates and the Office of the Children's Commissioner as well as contact details. Also, supervision is a more regular and better structured means for staff to get the support they need to do a demanding job.</p> <p>There have been improvements made to meet the requirements made at the last inspection, although some have still more room for improvement. Safer recruitment practice now includes a specific question to referees about why applicants left their employment; complaints are logged and followed up well so that those who have made them are aware of progress being made and the outcome. The manager is keen both to capture the wishes and feelings of young people so that they can be acted on and to consult them about proposed changes. House meetings are a primary route for these objectives but young people who have grievances about their peers' behaviour have not all been comfortable challenging them in this forum. One believes that concerns about rude comments and threats have not been met with an adequate response and gave this as a reason for wanting to move. This 'was news' to the manager, but he gave</p>	

suggestions about how the issues could be safely addressed.

The young person with the concerns only had one recorded key worker session on file in three months and it is highly likely that this has contributed to his strength of feeling about not being heard 'loud and clear'. The recording format specifically states that young people should be able to raise issues and provides for actions to be taken forward; this needs to be consistently practiced.

The manager is addressing the quality of case files and recording practice with key workers, including regular sessions with a member of staff who has this responsibility. Case files are now well ordered and logs for significant incidents and sanctions kept. This has highlighted further issues, though: the format for sanctions does not meet all the requirements of regulations and there are no procedures in place to monitor their use within timescales if the manager is away or for those imposed by the manager to be overseen by some-one else.

Notifications required by regulation 40 are occasionally delayed when the manager is away and a means for ensuring this is not overcome should be found.

Two young people have been admitted since the last inspection, moving from other homes run by the same provider. Impact risk assessments take account of the circumstances of the move, the needs of the young person referred and those of current residents. This leads to good planning making for all concerned, including for support through the initial stages. Young people were helped to make the transition well with visits being undertaken and the key worker for one also in the process of transferring to continue this role. This will maintain an important relationship and provide some consistency for the child.

Establishing relationships in which young people can develop trust with known adults is a linchpin in the work being undertaken with them. The turnover of staff has made this difficult to achieve for some but there are signs that a corner may have been turned with recent recruits remaining in post longer than previous ones and at least one member of staff taking into account the impact on young people of career decisions.

Young people are maintaining progress in various aspects of their lives, particularly in regard to educational attainment. A recent end of term report for one indicated considerable application and capacity to make progress in a number of subjects and he was rewarded by the school as a result. He has also been made a prefect. Another has made a successful transition from a relatively sheltered small class setting to college where he has 30 or so other students studying with him. This has only been possible with the involvement of a college support worker who helps keep him keep focussed and assists in dealing with problematic behaviour.

Comprehensive placement plans are reviewed every three months that regularly mark the progress young people make and areas that require continuing or additional input. Child-friendly versions are produced and occasionally used by young people to contribute to the planning process. Behaviour risk assessments have not been updated after placement moves or serious incidents, however continuous assessment of risks is a feature of staff discussions and they are aware

of strategies to manage them.

Levels of sanctions and young people going missing are low. The level of supervision is a contributory factor to this but so is the skill of staff. One young person commented, 'staff step in if they think things are going to go wrong; they can tell if something is on your mind and they will ask what it is.'

The atmosphere of the home is positive and staff morale has improved along with the décor all adding to the progress and positive experiences of the young people.

Information about this children's home

The service is a four-bedded children's home registered for boys with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home is owned and operated by a private organisation that specialises in the assessment and treatment of male adolescents who have experienced abuse. The organisation also provides educational and therapeutic training.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/06/2015	CH - Full	Requires improvement
05/02/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
03/06/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
13/01/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress

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 meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard the registered person must ensure that staff ascertain and consider each child's views, wishes and feelings, in particular through key work sessions, ensuring these are adequately recorded (Regulation 7 (2)(1))	04/02/2016
The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1, specifically the outcomes that the home seeks to achieve (Regulation 16 (1))	04/02/2016
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control or discipline a record is made of the measure, and that within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so has spoken to the user about the measure and signed the record to confirm it is accurate, and within 5 days adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)-(c))	04/02/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that damaged and worn out décor and furniture are replaced as soon as is practical to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations 3.9 p15)
- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and effective, including those imposed by himself (Guide to Children's Homes Regulations 9.36, page 46).
- The registered person should have a system in place so that all serious events are notified, within 24 hours, to the appropriate people and that there is no

delay to Regulation 40 notifications due to his absence (Guide to Children's Homes Regulations 14.13, page 63).

What the inspection judgements mean

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

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, young people and their families. In addition the inspectors have tried to understand what the children's home knows about how well it is performing, how well it is doing and what difference it is making for the children and young people who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the *Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards*.

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