

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	07/12/2015
Unique reference number	1159763
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Cristopher Beattie
Inspector	Ms Debbie White

Inspection date	07/12/2015
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	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

1159763

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- All young people have made progress from their starting point and have good educational outcomes.
- Relationships with staff are good and young people are consulted and feel listened to. Transitions into the home are well planned.
- Young people have good experiences on a day-to-day basis. Care planning is good and young people are able to participate in a wide range of meaningful activities available.
- Young people are and feel safe. Behaviour is managed positively and risk management is appropriate to the age and needs of young people. The home provides a safe environment.
- Leadership and management is strong. The registered manager has a very good oversight of young people's care and the home's operation.
- The staff team have undertaken a robust induction and are settling into their new roles. Professional relationships and inter-agency working is developing and families feel included and supported.

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 compile in relation to the children's home a statement ('the statement of purpose') which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. In particular, provide accurate details of the home's admission criteria and specific therapeutic services provided. (Regulation 16 (1))	31/01/2016
Ensure the independent person produces a report which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4) (a) and (b))	31/01/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure the registered person has a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of Regulation 16, Schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should detail all the elements listed in this paragraph. (The Guide to Quality Standards, page 53 paragraph 10.8)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides care and accommodation for seven children with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Education and therapy are available on site. The home, learning centre and therapeutic services are operated by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A	N/A	N/A

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
<p>Young people are settling into their new home and are forming trusting bonds with staff. They have all moved some distance from their family home, which is a difficult adjustment for teenagers. Staff are skilled at engaging and supporting young people and meaningful relationships are emerging. These bonds provide young people with stability and feelings of positive emotional well-being.</p> <p>Young people receive personalised care that is based on their assessed needs. Written care and residential plans are overall good and it is evident young people are consulted about and involved in their support plans. There are some very good examples where young people's written plans are in a format that they understand. This encourages active involvement and respects young people's level of understanding. A young person said, 'I know my plans, I can talk to my key worker.'</p> <p>All young people have made progress from their starting point, especially in educational outcomes. All have previously experienced difficulty attending school and since coming to live at the home they have 100% attendance. This is a significant achievement for each young person. A parent said, 'I know my child is in the best place, he is doing really well, especially at school. I am so proud of him.'</p> <p>Staff at the home work closely with school staff to offer high levels of bespoke, individual support. Regular meetings and joint working ensures consistency for young people and school attendance is celebrated and rewarded. A teacher said, 'All the young people have previously refused school but they have all bought into education, which is very good. We have an ethos that all young people have potential and aspirations and the young people are responding to this.'</p> <p>Young people are healthy and live a healthy lifestyle. They have access to the healthcare services they need and attend for routine medical appointments. Meals are healthy and young people engage in lots of exercise and outdoor activities. This ensures they meet their developmental milestones.</p> <p>Young people are offered in-house therapy that provides additional support and guidance. The therapist assigned to the home is spending time with the young people to forge informal relationships that help them feel relaxed and able to engage. This approach prepares young people for future planned therapy that can feel daunting. The registered manager said, 'The therapist has settled in really well</p>	

and she is part of the team. She has been working long hours getting to know the young people. This is very good for them, they are at ease with her.'

Young people are consulted and listened too and their views are taken into account. They meet regularly as a group to talk about living at the home and any changes they would like to make. This includes them in community decision making and gives them an opportunity to contribute their thoughts and ideas.

Each young person also has an identified key worker with whom they have one to one time to talk about any concerns or worries they may have. This provides young people with private time with an adult carer they can trust.

Young people's transitions into the home are well planned and they are supported during their move. Pre-admission assessments seek to identify each young person's needs to ensure placements are appropriate. Communication with placing authorities, social workers, parents and young people help prepare each young person.

Introductory visits and information about the home in the children's guide helps young people acclimatise to their new home. These measures support young people through what can be a difficult time. A reviewing officer said, 'The transition for my young person was very good. This was a difficult move for him and he has been very well supported.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Young people live in a safe environment and their safety is seen as a priority. All staff have completed their child protection training and know what to do if they are worried about a young person's safety or welfare.</p> <p>The registered manager has good links with the local authority designated officer and there are agreed protocols in place for staff to seek guidance and advice about keeping young people safe. This joint working promotes good outcomes for young people. An independent reviewing officer said, 'Staff at the home are very good. My young person is a lot safer now he is living away from his home area.'</p> <p>There have been some instances where young people have left the home without permission. The rural location of the home increases the risks to young people going missing, particularly at this time of year where adverse weather conditions are common. The locality risk assessment was reviewed as part of this inspection to ensure all reasonable measures are taken to keep young people safe.</p>	

The risk assessment is informative and of a high quality. There is clear guidance within the document that alerts staff to potential risks alongside clear recorded strategies to minimise these risks. Robust procedures about how to respond when a young person goes missing are known to staff. Consequently, all staff know to look for young people immediately. A social worker said, 'It is early days but I feel my young person is safe. This is a good home.'

The registered manager has good links with the local police who understand that young people living at the home are vulnerable. The police response to missing young people is very good, which reduces the likelihood that missing young people come to harm.

Positive behaviour management is a strength. The registered manager and staff team have formulated a creative incentive scheme that involves all the young people. There are different 'leagues' incorporated into the scheme, which means there is a variety of ways young people can earn rewards. This ensures they all achieve a level of success.

All the young people are enthusiastically taking part in the scheme and proudly showed me their awards and told me about various treats they have received for good behaviour. This innovative approach is clearly positively impacting on young people.

There have been occasions where restraints on young people have been used. Staff are very clear on what grounds a young person may be restrained and the home's records clearly show that restraints on young people are only used as a last resort.

Individual behaviour management plans detail preferred restraints and full debriefing sessions with young people and staff explore each incident to ascertain the impact of the measure used. The registered manager meticulously reviews every incident and closely monitors any trends or patterns. These measures ensure that young people's welfare is safeguarded and their dignity is intact.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The registered manager is an experienced practitioner who has the right qualifications to undertake his role. Although he was registered as the manager at this home in July 2015 he was previously a registered manager at another children's home operated by the same provider. He has a very good inspection history and is a skilled leader who puts young people at the heart of his practice.</p>	

All young people have made progress from their starting point and the registered manager has a good oversight of each young person's care plan. All young people have had their statutory review and staff have actively contributed to the meetings. This ensures young people are suitably placed and their needs are met. A reviewing officer said, 'My young person's review went very well. There are good plans in place. I am kept up to date and I am pleased with my young person's progress.'

Professional relationships are good and there is very good communication between the home, social workers, independent reviewing officers and parents. This enhances young people's care and support. The registered manager acts as an advocate for young people, ensuring their rights are protected.

The registered manager is very skilled at monitoring. He has a very good oversight of the home and closely audits practice and significant events. He has recognised potential problems that come with setting up a new children's home and addresses any shortfalls with confidence. He regularly communicates with the staff team to ensure the home meets its aims and objectives and outcomes for young people remain good.

External monitoring of the home inspects the required elements as stipulated in regulation and the visitor consults with young people, parents and social workers. This provides an independent view of the home's performance and young people's progress. However, the visitor is not including in their report their opinion as to whether young people are effectively safeguarded or that the conduct of the home promotes young people's well-being. This is a key element of independent visits to the children's home to ensure young people's welfare is promoted.

The staff team are settling into their new roles and team morale is good. All have completed their induction and statutory training that equips them with the baseline skills they need to meet young people's needs. There has been some leavers since the home registered, including the deputy manager, which has impacted on staffing rotas. Consequently, there are some shortfalls in staffing adequacy.

The registered manager and senior staff have endeavoured to ensure there is a suitably experienced staff member to take charge on each shift; however, there is currently no workforce plan that details the management and staffing structure to ensure there is a designated person in charge at all times. In particular, when the manager is absent. This has had minimal impact so far. Nevertheless, should there be further staff changes a lack of suitably trained and experienced staff could potentially compromise stability for young people.

Overall the Statement of Purpose is well written and gives an overview of the services provided for young people. The statement sets out the model of care that includes on-site education and therapeutic services. There is however some uncertainty about the actual services provided.

Under the education section of the statement the list of needs for young people attending school includes mental health issues. There is no explanation of what this means and the current conditions of registration do not include caring for young people with mental disorders. Additionally, the statement says the home has 'Child and Adolescent Mental Health Specialists' who are part of the therapy team and two 'Child and Adolescent mental Health Practitioners'. It is not clear who these practitioners are and currently there is only one therapist working at the home. These statements are misleading.

There are currently no young people placed who fit the criteria of having mental health issues and therefore all young people currently living at the home receive the care and services they need. However, improper information provided to placing authorities can potentially result in young people being inappropriately placed.

The registered manager is good at managing significant incidents and notifies Ofsted and other professional agencies of any concern's relating to young people. This shows he is an open and transparent practitioner. Sharing information this way ensures young people are very well supported.

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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