

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	04/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC436826
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	CASC (Barrow) Limited
Registered person address	125 Ramsden Square, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1XA

Responsible individual	Hilary Southward
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	04/11/2015
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

SC436826

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Specific risks to young people are well understood which allows thorough and detailed risk management plans to be put in place to help address risk taking behaviours and reduce risks.
- Risks in relation to child sexual exploitation (CSE) significantly reduce for young people placed at this home and young people are well educated in respect of exploitation and online safety. The home has comprehensive risk assessments for CSE but needs to ensure that the most up to date assessment is on file for each young person.
- Some young people show significant improvements in their attendance at their identified educational provision. Where young people are not in education they are supported to maintain a routine and to look for work.
- There are successful transitions into independence or planned returns to family care for young people who have been placed at this home. This is a particular strength for this home.
- Positive engagement with health professionals ensures that young people receive all relevant and individual support in order to meet their identified health needs.
- Young people generally engage positively in activities and with the wider community, a particular strength is charitable fund raising.
- Staff are enthusiastic about supporting young people to pursue their interests and help them to participate in activities which develop those interests.
- The staff team are stable which allows the young people to benefit from consistent care and develop positive relationships.
- Leadership and management are robust and the staff team feel well supported by their managers.
- Staff show resilience through times when young people are struggling to settle and their behaviour is persistently challenging. They offer support to the young people and to each other and maintain a focus on the positive where possible.
- Safer recruitment procedures could be improved by implementing a system for ensuring all documents relating to recruitment are kept within the home.

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>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure –</p> <p>(2)(e) 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. Specifically that each young person at risk of CSE has an up to date risk assessment on file</p>	11.11.15
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in schedule 2 (Regulation 32 (3)(d))</p>	11.11.15

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately-owned children's home is registered to accommodate and care for four young people of either gender aged between 11 – 17 years. Young people accommodated experience emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home accepts emergency placements and can offer care to young people on a short, medium or long term basis.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/11/2014	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
29/05/2014	CH - Full	Good
06/02/2014	CH - Interim	Inadequate Progress
23/05/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
<p>The home provides care to young people that is individual to their needs and which helps them to progress and have positive experiences. For the young people currently placed this is not their preferred placement and they would rather be placed within a family setting. Staff help young people to understand why this may not yet be possible and offer support to help them address the areas of behaviour which are a barrier to family or foster placements.</p> <p>Both young people are relatively new to the placement and over the summer months displayed some very unsettled and at times challenging behaviour. The home has had a positive impact in this area and behaviour is gradually becoming more settled, particularly since one young person has re-engaged in education. Staff have shown resilience and commitment to the young people through a difficult time and this has strengthened relationships between staff and young people.</p>	

The staff team have worked hard to develop positive relationships with the young people, and young people reported, and were observed, to have positive relationships with staff. The quality of keyworker support is high and young people benefit from this close relationship.

Young people are supported to personalise the home and one young person is enthusiastically planning renovation, reinvention and redecoration of several areas of the home. This is encouraged and assisted by the staff who recognise the importance of making the young people feel they truly 'belong'.

Contact with key people in the young people's lives is promoted. This is not limited to family members and includes friends and their families from their former schools and previous foster carers. Young people are encouraged to bring their friends to the home and are developing a designated living area for social use.

Young people make good progress across a number of different areas including health and education. Where young people are not making progress this is understood and addressed. One young person is not making progress in respect of her emotional development and the registered manager has challenged the placing authority to provide the required support and to deliver life story work to enable her to make sense of her past.

The home work hard to ensure that education is appropriate to young people's needs. For one young person this has meant a bespoke educational placement which has enabled her to re-engage with education and make good progress. Where young people have not settled in their education provision the home have supported the young person to try different provisions and apply for jobs.

The views of young people are actively and regularly sought. They are consulted in most aspects of the day to day running of the home and have a strong voice in how they would like their care to be provided. The young people have been listened to in respect of their views on recording information and are now permitted to view all contemporaneous records about themselves made by staff which allows them to feel less disempowered.

Moving on is well managed with some recent successful transitions back to family care and to independence. Planning and preparing for independence is robust and flexible according to the needs and views of the young person.

Young people are encouraged to celebrate their own culture as well as understand different culture and diversity issues, which helps them to be accepting of others and compassionate towards those who need help and support. The young people have been involved in fundraising for MacMillan and Children in Need charities and have a 'disability night' planned to raise their awareness of disability issues.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>The home has robust systems in place to manage young people's episodes of missing from home. Although young people do go missing relatively frequently these episodes are usually of a very short duration and young people remain in the local area. The home have strong links with the local police force and work jointly when there are missing episodes. Where there have been more significant missing episodes strategy meetings have been held to address and reduce the risks. Following episodes of missing from home safe return interviews are conducted by an allocated worker from a children's charity who the young people and the staff have a positive relationship with.</p> <p>Young people who came to the home with high child sexual exploitation risks have shown a reduction of risk in this area. Their internet use is limited and monitored and they are educated in on-line safety and about child sexual exploitation. Although child sexual exploitation is a risk, neither young person is currently a victim of this, therefore the risk is being well managed. Whilst such risks are well documented and understood and risk assessments are completed, the home needs to ensure that the most recent child sexual exploitation risk assessment is on file and available for staff to refer to when necessary.</p> <p>Self-harm is a specific area for one young person and the risk for this is not reducing. Staff understand the young person's emotional issues well and know what support is needed in order to help her understand and be able to manage her own emotions. They have liaised closely with the placing authority to try to ensure that life story work is undertaken but due to a number of changes of social worker this has not taken place. When serious incidents have occurred safety plans have been put in place and reviews have taken place to assess the suitability and safety of the placement.</p> <p>Behaviour management is consistent with a strong focus on rewarding the positive. Sanctions are rare, but when used are relevant to the behaviour the sanction is imposed for. Young people are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and this is successful in some instances. Staff are effective in their use of de-escalation techniques and have a good understanding of what works with each young person. There have been no incidences of physical restraint since the last full inspection.</p> <p>Young people in this placement have low risks in relation to drug and alcohol misuse and offending behaviour.</p> <p>Due to the risk of self harm for some young people room searches are carried out. The searches are carried out sensitively and with an explanation provided to the young person in order to respect their dignity. The searches do not take place</p>	

routinely but are carried out when staff believe the risks to be heightened.

The young people live in a safe home environment. Fire drills are carried out regularly and all fire safety equipment is in place. COSHH materials are safely stored and activity risk assessments are in place.

Staff are carefully selected and vetted which prevents unsuitable people being recruited and therefore placing young people at risk. Safer recruitment training has been undertaken by the manager. The staff recruitment files do not contain all the relevant information relating to the safe recruitment procedure and this is an area to be addressed.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>Leaders and managers effectively prioritise the needs of young people. Decisions about admission are made carefully with good planning around the needs of the young people currently in placement and whether these could be met alongside any new admissions.</p> <p>Young people make progress across most areas of development with the support of staff. Where they are not making progress this is identified and addressed. The home is proactive in its challenge of the local authority where necessary work is not undertaken with young people or services are not in place.</p> <p>Staff are supported through supervision, training and appraisal. Induction is in depth and adequately prepares staff for working with the young people. The training programme is extensive and training is sourced that is specific to the young people's needs and presenting issues. All staff are either qualified to NVQ level three or are currently undertaking this qualification.</p> <p>Staff are supported to be a cohesive and consistent team. A challenging time over the summer period has stretched staff but ultimately improved their team work and resilience.</p> <p>The home is achieving its aims and objectives as set out in its statement of purpose. Managers make good use of any advice and feedback from the independent visitor and share this at staff meetings as well as incorporating actions into a development plan. There is a development plan in place that clearly identifies area to be progressed and improved.</p> <p>Young people receive good quality all round support due to the home engaging</p>	

positively with external agencies such as host authorities, health services, police and education. When young people are let down by other agencies, for example when identified work is not undertaken, the home challenges this. The home are also proactive in ensuring that return home interviews take place following missing episodes and that strategy meetings take place to review risk management following serious incidents.

Case records are of a good standard and a plan is in place to make all records electronic and cease having a designated office space with extensive paper files which the young people report makes the home less like a 'normal' home.

The current registered manager is on extended maternity leave and the deputy manager has stepped into this role for the duration of her absence. The deputy is appropriately experienced and has the level five management qualification. An application for her to become registered manager for the period of absence is being processed.

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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