

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	15/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC439535
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Pebbles Care Limited
Registered person address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS5 3BT

Responsible individual	Ms Luiz Guilherme
Registered manager	Ms Kimberley Crabtree
Inspector	Ms Michele Hargan

Inspection date	15/12/2015
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
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC439535

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff establish meaningful relationships with young people. This builds trust and improves young people self-esteem.
- Young people make good overall progress with their social and emotional wellbeing. This results in improved school attendance and willingness to do homework increasing young people's long term prospects.
- Young people's safety and wellbeing improves taking into account their starting points. As a result young people develop increased understanding about how to reduce risk and make more positive choices.
- Staff involve young people with their care planning. This increases young people's understanding about their emotional and physical welfare and how staff can help them.
- Staff make good relationships with parents and professionals keeping them well informed about young people's progress and ongoing needs. This promotes feelings of security and attachment because young people experience staff as acting in their best interests.
- The registered manger is an effective advocate for young people and is also very supportive of staff. This promotes good outcomes for young people.

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
6. In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard with particular reference to the upkeep of the lounge, bathroom, front	27/02/2016

<p>door, garden fencing and removal of rubble from an area of the garden the registered person must:</p> <p>(2)(b) (vii) provide to children living at the home the physical necessities they need in order to live there comfortably.</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child within the home, a record is made which includes the effectiveness and any consequence of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(vii))</p>	27/02/2016
<p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it. (Regulation 45(2) and (b))</p>	27/02/2016

Recommendations

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

Ensure the children's home provides a nurturing and supportive environment that meet the needs of their children, that is a homely and domestic environment. In particular, to ensure young people have access to a garden area that is private and appropriately furnished to cater for the age range of children the home accommodates (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15 paragraph 3.9)

Ensure when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. In particular agree these arrangements in writing with the child's social worker (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 45 paragraph 9.30)

Ensure the registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. In particular to reflect the impact of any newly admitted young person for young people living at the home within the pre-admission assessment Proforma (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 56 paragraph 11.4)

Ensure the registered person undertakes a review that focuses on the quality of the care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64 paragraph 15.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home may only provide care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/10/2014	Full	Good
18/12/2013	Interim	Good Progress
24/04/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>good</p>
<p>It is abundantly clear that staff make meaningful relationships with young people. Staff are mindful of young people's vulnerabilities and they think about the day to day challenges they face. They prevent situations from escalating by providing young people with good levels of supervision and structure. In response young people experience a relaxed atmosphere and predictable routines building feelings of safety and security. A young person said, 'There is not a single member of staff here who doesn't like kids, these guys care. When I came here I knew straightaway it was good.'</p> <p>Staff are good role models for young people. For example, when young people test out the extent of staff's commitment through their behaviour. Staff respond calmly and empathically meeting young people's emotional needs and enabling them to work through their difficulties. This helps young people learn resilience, mutual respect and alternative ways of resolving their concerns. A young person said, 'They</p>	

try and help you.'

Young people make significant progress in their overall wellbeing taking into account their starting points. Staff promote a culture in which education and attendance at school or work based training is the norm. In addition to increasing young people's chances of educational attainment, this helps develop social skills and peer relationships. About the help their child receives a parent said, 'They try to help, they take my child out and about, my child used to say I don't want to go to school and now they go.'

Young people's views, wishes and feelings are meaningfully explored and captured through daily consultation. Well documented key worker sessions provide a rich narrative reflecting young people's experiences. This reflective practice furthers young people's understanding about their experiences of living at the home should they chose access these records now or at a future time. A young person said, 'They let me choose bedding and stuff for me room. There is nothing they could do any better.'

Staff ensure the necessary consents are obtained as part of the admission process. This ensures staff can meet young people's needs appropriately. Young people are informed about their rights and these are also well understood and upheld by staff. As a result, young people are confident that they can appropriately rely on staff. This helps meet young people's emotional development. A young person said, 'That's why I came. It's nice round here, that staff are great, sometimes I don't like them because they say no (laughs).'

Staff ensure young people take part in a range of stimulating and meaningful activities. This helps meet young people's developmental needs as staff convey to them they are worthy of this time and that they enjoy their company. This promotes more secure attachment behaviour and raises young people's self-esteem. A social worker said, 'They take my young person on a good range of activities, been swimming, there's lots of structure and supervision.' A young person said, 'I've been on lots of activities, been ice skating and the cinema.'

Staff promote increased independence for older young people and they recognise the emotional impact of helping them prepare for the transition to adulthood. This was most tellingly observed at inspection during handover. As staff carefully considered how young people felt about having to assume an increasing level of responsibility. Using reflective practice in this way increases empathic understanding about young people's underlying needs and promotes a child centred-care plan. A young person said. 'This home is very different, staff ask you how you are doing.'

The registered person does not adequately ensure the ongoing upkeep and maintenance within some parts of the home. This is most evident within the lounge that is in need of decoration and bathroom that is in need of refurbishment. Aspects of the building are also in need of attention; such as some fencing and the brick

remains of a small building need to be removed. Any drift in addressing maintenance issues is at odds with the ethos and culture of the home which is about valuing and respecting young people. A member of staff said, 'We have been waiting ages to have the decorating done, that's why we ended up doing most of it ourselves.'

While the home has a very large expanse of external green space this is in effect an openly accessible field rather than a domestic, and child friendly furnished garden. Lack of this provision compromises young people's readily accessing home based outdoor activities within a private and appropriately enriching space.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Young people's vulnerabilities reduce as a result of meaningful relationships with staff. Thorough risk assessments make clear what action needs to be taken to keep young people safe. Young people learn that staff are trustworthy and they become more willing to take on board the advice and guidance offered. This helps them to reflect on the impact of their behaviour on themselves and others. A social worker said, 'This home is the only stability that the young person has known. They know when they are out they can ring staff and ask to be collected. The young person trusts staff, that's new behaviour.'</p> <p>Young people learn that their safety and wellbeing is of paramount importance. For example, young people who sometimes go missing receive consistently supportive responses from staff. This builds trust and helps young people reflect on their behaviour leading to their increased understanding about the choices they have. As a result incidents of young people going missing are significantly reduced. A health professional said, 'I think young people are as safe here as possible, staff look out for them and the key workers seem to have very good knowledge and they understand them and that tells me they are interested.'</p> <p>Staff work effectively with other professionals aimed at safeguarding young people who go missing. The registered manager has identified a suitable independent health professional as someone who is available to speak to young people following their return home. This promotes young people's wellbeing as this person has a good understanding about the vulnerabilities that young people can be exposed to. A police officer said, 'Staff try very hard to ensure young people have free time when they are safely able to manage this.'</p>	

For some young people social workers have ensured there are clear arrangements in place regarding access to an independent person after being missing, however, this is not in place for all young people. A lack of a written agreement with this arrangement from all placing authority social workers undermines accountability by the professionals responsible for young people.

Staff sometimes use physical interventions by holding a young person who places themselves or others at significant risk. Staff adopt a proactive approach to this possibility by talking to young people about how best to help them in the likelihood of this event. This recognises the rights and needs of young people who are vulnerable to impulsive responses and helps allay young people's anxious feelings. Consequently, young people understand the home's boundaries and expectations reducing the need to test these out. A young person said, 'Never been restrained and I have lost it, I tell them not do anything the best thing they can do is let me blow off steam and they let me do that. They have helped me with my anger.'

Young people receive incentives aimed at reinforcing positive behaviour and in recognition of their achievements. This increases young people self-esteem and builds meaningful relationships with staff. About this a member of staff said, 'The young person passed their exams in the Summer and we went out for a meal.' Records of sanctions used are in place, however the concerning behaviours are not sufficiently evaluated. As a result, the reasons underlying young people's behaviour are not fully comprehended and reflected on by staff.

Young people are cared for by staff who undergo rigorous recruitment and vetting. This ensures that only those who are suitable to care for young people are appointed. Young people live in a home that that is assessed annually by the registered manager to ensure its location remains safe. This is achieved by consultation with safeguarding agencies. This promotes young people safety and wellbeing. A police officer said, 'Staff always very welcoming from police point of view, they only call us when necessary.'

Young people's right to complain and raise concerns are respected and taken seriously. The registered manager takes responsibility for addressing complaints and young people receive meaningful feedback. Behavioural issues between young people such as inappropriate remarks are appropriately challenged by staff using a restorative approach; such as a key worker session focussing on the issues that underlay the concern. This approach builds empathy, helps young people learn about compromise and how to repair relationships. A health professional said, 'I think that staff care very much and that they are interested in the young people.'

Pre-admission assessment are carried out but they do not sufficiently consider the impact of an additional young person on the existing group of young people. While this was not a specific concern at the time of inspection; the current format does not promote meaningful reflective deliberation aimed at taking full account of existing young people needs at the time of any admission. Oversight in this area raises

young people and staffs anxieties risking relationships difficulties.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The registered manager has been in post since 2013. This person is a suitably experienced individual who is in the process of undertaking a level 5 qualification. Staff feel very well supported and value regular supervision and meaningful appraisal. A member of staff said, 'We get supervision once a month when needed and if we need before that, the registered manager and deputy are very approachable and really supportive.'</p> <p>The registered manager ensures young people's needs are central to the running of the home. As a result young people feel valued because they are consulted about all aspects of their care. For example, the young people's views wishes and feelings are captured within a child friendly care plan completed with the young person. This preserves the voice of young people and promotes child centred care practice.</p> <p>Young people make significant progress in their social and emotional development alongside improved school attendance and aspirations to achieve. This is because they learn that staff are genuinely invested in their welfare. Staff treat young people with respect and dignity helping raise their self-esteem. This enables young people to reflect on their value and abilities and to think more widely about their future possibilities. A visiting professional said, 'They have asked me to visits on an evening because the young person is in school now so I think that is massive improvement.' A social worker said, 'The young person's school attendance use to be low they didn't have any aspirations for the future. At the last education meeting the young person's attendance was 86%, now they are thinking about career in childcare.'</p> <p>The registered manager ensures the continual professional development of staff by identifying their needs with in-house training providers. As a result, a comprehensive training timetable is in place. This ensures staff are sufficiently knowledgeable about the difficulties young people experience that significantly improves care practices.</p> <p>The registered person has a development plan in place that demonstrates a drive for continuous improvement aimed at benefiting of young people. This type of proactive approach helps staff keep young people's needs at the forefront of care practice.</p> <p>Young people receive a service from staff and the registered manager that reflects the homes Statement of Purpose. This means sufficient staff who are suitably qualified are in place. Those who are not yet qualified are well supported by senior</p>	

staff enabling them to complete the necessary induction and to access further training. Ensuring the availability of competent staff promotes improved outcomes for young people.

Staff are good at communicating with other professionals. They provide social workers and parents with appropriate information about the home as part of the admission process and keep them well informed about young people experiences and progress. Young people's safety and welfare is improved because staff work well with other agencies including the police and health professionals. Young people quickly settle in to the home. Their transition is significantly assisted because staff instil a sense of trust in their relationships with young people. This helps young people overcome difficult feelings and any concerns or worries they may have. A social worker said, 'Staff are definitely good at communicating, I always get a reply to e-mails, and I get detailed reports about young people.'

Young people's arrangements to spend time with their families are well supported. This allays anxieties and helps young people preserve their identity. Staff have good relationships with the police and work effectively together to reduce the risk of young people being criminalised because of their behaviour. A police officer said, 'I think we have meaningful discussion with staff that make us aware of young people's vulnerabilities, feels that staff decision making is always in best interests of young people.'

The registered manager challenges others professionals when necessary to ensure young people are not disadvantaged. For example, when it is clear that young people's educational potential is not being realised a proactive approach is employed to secure suitable alternatives. This response improves young people's long-term life chances.

While it is clear that meaningful consultation with young people takes place about the facilities and the care they receive; the impact of this is not represented within the reports completed by the registered manager. Insufficient reflection about these important matters is a missed opportunity to creatively empower young people about any further improvements.

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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016