

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	26/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC047894
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Care Focus Limited
Registered person address	Care Focus Ltd, 3rd Floor, 24 Chiswell Street, LONDON, EC1Y 4YX

Responsible individual	Jean Lloyd
Registered manager	Paula Warren
Inspector	Fiona Littlefield

Inspection date	26/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
<p>This home was judged Good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Improved effectiveness.</p> <p>The registered manager has addressed the recommendation and requirement raised at the last inspection. Arrangements for supervising staff have been agreed and put into action. External monitoring visits now take place on a regular monthly basis.</p> <p>Young people continue to benefit from the care of a committed and creative staff team who apply consistent boundaries. Young people are involved in plans for their next move, to begin life in a foster family, or to return to mainstream schooling. Staff are committed and purposeful in helping them prepare for the future. Daily routines are organised around the school day and young people who had been school refusers now achieve high rates of attendance. All young people study a range of vocational and academic courses to GCSE level. This has greatly enhanced their self-esteem and indicates excellent progress given their starting points.</p> <p>Many young people come with a history of risk taking behaviours. Staff work creatively to build confidence so that young people know how to keep themselves safe, using every opportunity to help them to learn. For instance, young people go into the community with staff and learn to feel secure and in control. Other young people follow pathway plans, where they take charge of their domestic tasks. As they acquire independence skills, they broaden their options. This sense of progress is very important to them. One young person said: 'I am moving on. I am grateful and I have made progress but I never want to come back. I'm a city girl. I don't do the country.'</p> <p>On occasion, young people will show challenging behaviour. However, the incidents of negative behaviour continue to decline as young people develop strong relationships with their key workers and attend therapeutic sessions. The ethos of the home is to help them to reflect on and take responsibility for their behaviour. The social worker for one young person said: 'She is our star pupil. She has had a very tough journey but we are now planning for her to come back. I am sure there will be challenges in the future but she is so engaging now.'</p>	

Staff and managers are aware that young people can feel isolated. They work intensively to develop strong partnerships with external agencies. Social workers are very positive about staff willingness to work with the local authority.

Staff understand the importance of maintaining family relationships under difficult circumstances. The parent of one young person said: 'She is calmer now but it was very difficult for her when she left the city. We get to see her and the staff support this.'

The management team is purposeful and reviews the progress of each young person closely. They use a range of weekly and monthly reports, which provide information on each young person. In addition, the manager provides an internal monitoring report that comments on trends in significant issues, such as incidents of restraint.

The home and gardens provide a comfortable and homely base for the young people. A programme of re-decoration is planned and, where possible, staff will include young people in decisions about décor.

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a group, run by an independent provider. Staff offer care and support for up to four young women. Teachers provide education within the setting. Direct therapeutic support is available for each young person to access.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/11/2015	Full	Good
24/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/12/2014	Full	Good
11/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress

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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