

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	11/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC484402
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Footsteps To Futures Limited
Registered person address	20 Wheatley Drive, Carlton, Nottingham, NG4 1FE

Responsible individual	Joseph Rafter
Registered manager	Joseph Rafter
Inspector	Judith Longden

Inspection date	11/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>Although still a relatively new provision, this home is going from strength to strength. Visitors to the home report that it provides, 'a warm, welcoming and a lovely atmosphere' and that 'outcomes for the young people are excellent.'</p> <p>Young people's increased engagement in the on-site psychological and therapeutic service has improved their emotional and mental health. They are making good progress in understanding their feelings and emotions and building their confidence and self-esteem. They continue to build trust with the staff that is based on sound relationships. They are increasingly taking more responsibility for their actions and as a result, they are becoming more independent. Young people can identify the progress they are making, one stated that she no longer mixes with the wrong crowd and is becoming increasingly independent because staff now trust her more.</p> <p>Young people are effectively engaging in their education because the home provides a stable environment that supports their progress. Staff and young people have high aspirations for the future career opportunities of young people.</p> <p>A new reward programme encourages young people to improve behaviour, engage with others and learn life skills. Rewards range from small items to large rewards such as spa breaks. This gives them something exciting to aim for. They negotiate their rewards every evening with staff, improving their communication skills and enabling them to reflect on their day and progress they have made.</p> <p>The care provided is excellent. Staff are warm, caring, nurturing and committed to the full involvement of young people in their care and in establishing a real sense of community within the home.</p> <p>Young people take part in regular community meetings in the home where they share their views, raise any concerns and discuss the operation of the home. They are consulted about possible new placements ensuring their opinions are heard. They have helped to design leaflets about the home that provide essential information to stakeholders, placing authorities and young people.</p>	

Young people new to the home are made to feel very welcome by staff and young people. The home is more welcoming and less institutionalised in its appearance than it was previously. This helps them to settle quickly. One young person, new to the home, was very clear in her initial placement review meeting that she, 'wants to stay here because it is a stable home.' The registered manager has recently reviewed placement planning documentation and risk assessment formats to ensure that as much information is made available at the earliest opportunity. This is as a result of learning gained from a recent placement that was found to be inappropriate; staff could not meet the complex needs of the young person as they had insufficient information. This demonstrates effective learning by the registered manager and staff. When a more appropriate placement was identified, the registered manager ensured full information was made available to the new home to ensure no repeat of this situation. This helps young people by identifying appropriate placements.

Young people are kept increasingly safe because of the work done with them whilst living at the home. For example, one young person's risk of sexual exploitation has significantly reduced as a result of positive engagement and learning to keep herself safe. Excellent reflection and quick action by the registered manager, to safety issues raised by the independent visitor, has ensured that necessary steps have been taken to address identified shortfalls. The managers' in-depth review of incidents, including debriefs with staff and young people, identifies learning and improves practice. For example, the manager has identified that staff would benefit from a refresher session on the use of physical intervention. He commented: 'this is not because we cannot do it, but to build staff confidence in using it as we do not use it often.'

Staff are extremely well supported through a raft of different forums. They benefit from regular managerial supervision, support meetings with the in house psychologist, team meetings and reflective practice meetings. The process of supervision has improved with the introduction of a new format that encourages staff to be more interactive in their supervision. This is enabling better review of their practice. The support meetings with the psychologist enable staff to reflect on their work and the impact it has on them as practitioners. Reflective practice is an improving feature of how staff work. They use it as a tool for assessing incidents and learning from events as well as a way to review their own practice and development. Staff are developing their skills and becoming increasingly involved in the development of the service, especially in the review and update of policies. This promotes their understanding of the ethos of the home and the underpinning therapeutic model.

The revision of the rota has resulted in a longer handover period that enables staff to have more time to reflect on their shifts and make records more effective. The change in shift pattern provides more consistency for young people with staff being able to work with them all day, rather than changing midway through the afternoon.

The registered manager utilises a range of effective tools to monitor the progress of young people and the development of the service. This includes a peer review as part of the therapeutic community model, using other providers to inspect and report on the service. Outcomes for young people are regularly monitored and the psychologist and registered manager are currently developing a tool to track longer-term outcomes. The registered manager encourages feedback from young people, parents and stakeholders and has recently established a compliments book for the home.

Managers and leaders are clearly enthusiastic in sharing their knowledge and skills and equally keen to learn from others. Effective partnership work supports the needs of young people and promotes sharing of good practice across other homes. The registered manager and psychologist effectively challenge placing authorities and other services, such as education and mental health, to ensure the best resources are available to meet the needs of young people. The registered manager continues to develop a number of initiatives to improve practice. This includes developing a new induction package, more bespoke training, and a review of the recruitment process.

The registered manager has addressed the shortfalls identified at the last inspection resulting in a more robust recruitment processes and a strengthening of medication practice. No requirements or recommendations have been made as a result of this inspection.

One member of staff summed up the improvements in this home stating: 'It is a really nice environment to work in, it is brilliant. It is nice to have enthusiastic people working with young people. The support from management and the support kids receive is excellent. It is a great place to be part of.'

Information about this children's home

This home operates a therapeutic community model. It is run by a privately owned company. It provides care and accommodation for three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/09/2015	Full	Good

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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