

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	11/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC367551
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Crystal Care Solutions Limited Company Number 05952454
Registered person address	Bank House, Market Square, Congleton, Cheshire, CW12 1ET

Responsible individual	James O'Leary
Registered manager	Andrew Ellis
Inspector	Elaine Cray

Inspection date	11/02/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
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 Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>There have been improvements within the quality of care and management. The new manager has met the vast majority of requirements from the last inspection. Management oversight of decision making and monitoring of the quality of care is greatly improved.</p> <p>The manager and staff have worked hard to improve education outcomes and parts of the requirement to improve education are met; including partnership working with schools and college.</p> <p>Staff make concerted efforts to help young people to attend school and college. Social workers and leaders of schools are positive about the commitment that staff show to engage young people with education. They maintain regular contact and attend meetings to look at alternative ways to motivate and engage young people.</p> <p>Young people say staff talk to them about their challenges and barriers to learning. They are pleased they remain on target to complete their GCSE qualifications but their attendance is still under par. Staff are only able to motivate young people to attend part of their week's education.</p> <p>Rewards and incentives offered fail to impact on the barriers young people find in attending a new school away from their friends and family. Staff and school leaders try different approaches like a reduced timetable and spending more time on catch-up lessons both at school and home. Also to learn informally by going to museums and other educational trips. However, these efforts lack impact as young people continue to have intermittent school and college attendance. They lack motivation to attend and say they do not like school.</p> <p>Since the last inspection two young people have left the home and a new young person has been admitted. Those young people who have left had planned transitions out of the home. The manager and staff support young people to move on positively from the home even when under difficult circumstances. Young people make positive relationships and receive high levels of commitment from</p>	

staff. For example, a more robust response to safeguarding and compatibility issues has led to some young people no longer being able to remain at the home. However, the young person's keyworker and another member of staff have temporarily transferred to support this young person in a new semi-independent placement.

The process of admitting young people is improved and the registered manager is keen to carry out detailed compatibility assessment for the next admission to the home. The manager acknowledges and does not want to repeat some of the dynamics that have emerged over recent months. He has worked hard to positively move young people on and refused new admissions in order to bring stability and clear boundaries back into the home.

Safeguarding procedures and responses are considerably more robust. Staff know how to keep the young people safe due to the in depth individual risk management plans; and because they know the histories of the young people. The registered manager is tenacious at ensuring information is shared and that protocols rigorously respond to risks such as missing from care and child sexual exploitation.

Effective partnership working with the police ensures links between going missing and child sexual exploitation are closely scrutinised. Missing from home protocols are robust and result in an immediate response from the police. Staff and police look for young people, they visit friends' houses and check out links to drug use, supply and possible links to child sexual exploitation. Going missing episodes decrease and young people are safer as a result of the improved partnership working and safeguarding procedures.

Episodes of self-injurious behaviours also decrease as a result of young people living at the home. Staff's perceptiveness about young people's moods and triggers to self-injurious behaviour enable them to pre-empt serious incidents. Staff training in self-injury enables staff to intervene and keep young people safe.

Young people make good progress from their starting points. They have a greater understanding about their own safety. They acknowledge that living a long way from home helps keep them safe from child sexual exploitation and persistent drug and alcohol use. They say they are healthier. For example, they have a better diet and enjoy more positive physical activities with staff and particularly enjoy going bowling. Young people miss their families but say staff are very caring and support them with the upset of living a long way from home.

Leadership is much improved. The new registered manager is a strong advocate for the young people. While he manages two children's home; he is involved within the daily running of this home and maintains very positive relationships with young people. Interactions on this inspection were very positive with a young person enjoying discussing findings from the inspection and how the home can further improve.

Developments in the staffing arrangements means young people enjoy greater stability and permanency. Planned and actual working rotas are now accurately maintained and show significant improvement in the home. A member of staff said: 'The best development is having more regular staff. Means we have more positive relationships with children – they are more settled. The manager is really approachable.'

Managerial oversight of incidents is much more robust. Serious incidents are routinely notified to Ofsted and are closely monitored via the registered manager and the independent visitor. Paperwork is very accountable and shows effective cross-referencing and notification to parents, placing authority social workers, safeguarding agencies and Ofsted. There is good regard for safeguarding procedures and this positively impacts on the safety of young people.

The quality of recording staff supervision is much improved. The registered manager is currently developing a more reflective practice in staff supervision. He aims for this approach to give greater insight into the needs of young people and greater transparency to assessing and improving staff practice.

Improvements in the monitoring of the home mean that the registered manager is aware of the strengths and areas of development of the home. He effectively uses the recommendations made from the independent visitor reports to drive improvement and improve staff practice.

The registered manager is measured and strategic in his approach; with a comprehensive development plan in place. With the exception of full-time education attendance; the home is fulfilling the aims and objectives outlined within its statement of purpose.

Information about this children's home

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/06/2015	CH - Full	Requires improvement
05/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/07/2014	CH - Full	Good
31/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good progress

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>8: The education standard:</p> <p>In order to meet the education standard ensure that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so.</p> <p>(1) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure-</p> <p>(a) That staff –</p> <p>(i) understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>(ii) help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>(iii) raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority;</p>	<p>30/04/2016</p>

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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