

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	02/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC010090
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Partners in Care
Registered person address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire, LS5 3BT

Responsible individual	Luiz Guilherme
Registered manager	Hayley Thistlethwaite
Inspector	Graham Robinson

Previous Inspection date	12/01/2016
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 sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>The home only received its full inspection in January 2016, so there has been little time to specifically judge if young people have continued to make measurable progress since then. However, indicators picked up during the inspection provide some evidence to show that all young people in the home continue to progress.</p> <p>For example, the home has remained stable and calm, with no serious behaviour management issues taking place. All young people have either a full-time educational placement at a community based school or a place at a local college. Apart from some minor illness, those in school have attained full attendance and are progressing well with their education. This is a significant development based on their starting points.</p> <p>Young people are willing participants in joining in with a range of activities, many of them being community based. For example, one young person spoke about the arrangements in place to celebrate her birthday, another spoke about starting to follow the local football team. Young people plan activities with staff on a weekly basis, which in part, are designed to promote fitness.</p> <p>Young people report good relationships with staff and are settled into long-term placements. Prior to being admitted to the home, they lived and experienced lifestyles where they were very much at risk. They have adjusted to the boundaries placed on them and as a result, all are now living much more socially acceptable lifestyles, where risk is minimised.</p> <p>Care plans and risk assessments are individualised and revised regularly to keep them current. When read collectively, they along with other documents such as monthly welfare and progress checks, provide insight into the areas of progress being achieved by young people. For example, two young people have histories of being missing regularly prior to admission. Neither have gone missing from this home.</p>	

Since December 2015, there have been on-going staffing issues that triggered an investigation by external managers. This was concluded in February 2016 and resulted in censure for some staff. A second investigation, generated by new information being presented, is about to be concluded. This has proved to be a difficult period for the management and staff of the home and it is to their credit that managing these internal staffing issues has not impacted negatively on young people or impeded their progress.

Following the previous inspection, three requirements and one recommendation were made with a target date for completion given as the end of March 2016. Part of the inspection looked to review the progress being made. One of the requirements has been fully addressed, which has led to an improvement in staff sharing knowledge about potential dangers that may affect young people.

Progress has been achieved with the other two requirements and the recommendation. For example, all staff have received specific training regarding their responsibilities linked to whistleblowing and professional boundaries. The home has also introduced new strategies to work with young people with regard to smoking cessation. Referral procedures have been adjusted and tightened in an effort to ensure education arrangements for young people about to be placed, are implemented quicker.

However, as these have either yet to be tested or fully embedded into the working practices and ethos of the home, the two requirements and one recommendation have been repeated. The timescale for completion has been adjusted accordingly.

One new recommendation has been made which links to those being responsible for the running and management of the home. This is to ensure that staff develop greater consistency in following the home's policies and procedures. It is to assist all those working in in the home to better understand their own role and responsibilities and to ensure clear lines of accountability are in place and understood by all.

Despite the difficulties highlighted, the home continues to be well organised and managed. There is a commitment to look for continued improvement, along with a willingness to reflect on practice and make suitable adjustments which reflect the changing needs of young people as they journey through the home.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to accommodate up to 5 children of mixed gender aged 10 to 17 years old. A separate annex in the grounds of the home can accommodate a young person in a sole occupancy environment. The home specialises in the care of children who present with emotional and behavioural problems. It is operated by a private organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2016	CH - Full	Good
16/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
01/12/2014	CH - Full	Good
25/02/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory 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>10: The health and well-being standard</p> <p>In order to meet the health and well-being standard, in particular reference to smoking, the registered person must ensure that staff enable</p> <p>10 (1)(b) children to receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being</p> <p>10 (1)(c) children are helped to lead healthy lifestyles</p>	31/05/2016
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>Children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular that staff</p> <p>12 (2) (a)(vii) are familiar with and act in accordance with, the homes child protection policies</p>	31/05/2016

Recommendations

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

- When commissioning a placement in a children's home the placing authority must establish how the home will support the child's educational needs. In particular staff must actively challenge the local authority on behalf of young people to ensure that they are provided with meaningful and considered educational alternatives. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 22 paragraph 5.6)

- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Everyone working at the home must understand their roles and responsibilities and what they are authorised to decide on their own initiative. There should be clear lines of accountability. Each home must have clear arrangements in place to maintain effective management when the manager is absent, off duty or on leave. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 54 paragraph 10.20)

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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