

## **Children's homes inspection – Full**

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>8 March 2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>1183136</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Richard Slater</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Judith Longden</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>8 March 2016 and 9 March 2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

**1183136**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- The home has only been registered for a short time but the child has already made good progress in her education, health, and life skills.
- Staff create a very caring and nurturing environment that provides a solid foundation for positive and trusting relationships between them and the child.
- There have been no serious incidents, or damaging or risk-taking behaviours such as absence from the home. Staff are well trained to deal with any such incident should it arise.
- Staff have a wide range of skills, each bringing something different to the team that has been created around the child.
- The manager is very experienced, well qualified, and motivated, providing continuous improvement to the home and the care given.
- Shortfalls are identified in the external monitoring of the home and in the quality of record keeping. Two recommendations are made to address these issues.

## **What does the children's home need to do to improve?**

### **Recommendations**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Staff should understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4).
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. This relates to the frequency and quality of the visits undertaken ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5).

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This home is operated by a national charity and provides care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

This is the first inspection following re-registration of the home. Previously it was registered as a satellite provision of another, larger home close by.

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
N/A		

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>This is the first inspection of this home following re-registration. Previously it was a satellite provision of a larger home close by. Currently, one child is placed at this home. She has made good progress in the short time she has been here. Her attendance at school is excellent and her grades in a number of subjects are improving. She was recently recognised and rewarded for being in the top 100 pupils in her school. This progress is underpinned by good communication between the staff and school, and regular attendance at parents' evenings and meetings to help her choose subject options. She and the staff have aspirations for her future and believe she can achieve to a good standard.</p> <p>Her health is good: she does not smoke and her general health and well-being are improving through the provision of healthy, varied meals and regular exercise. Primary healthcare needs are addressed well, ensuring that minor ailments are treated appropriately and that regular check-ups are performed.</p> <p>She mixes well with her peers from the organisation's other home nearby, enjoys a range of joint activities and goes on trips out with them, as well as activities undertaken by herself with staff. This provides a range of enjoyable experiences and opportunities for learning. For example, a trip to the cinema involves accessing the computer to identify the film and timings, planning the bus trip using the timetable and managing the budget for the activity.</p> <p>Although not yet ready for independence, she is learning life skills to help her to take responsibility in the home and community. She cooks, sorts laundry, makes her bed and cleans her room. These activities provide useful skills for when she is older.</p> <p>Staff provide a very caring and nurturing environment and have adapted well to providing care for a younger child, having previously supported older young people preparing for independence. This nurturing care provides a good foundation for building positive, strong relationships and trust between the child and staff. A social worker commented in a questionnaire: 'There is lots of emotional warmth and nurture here.' Staff are committed to providing a range of good, positive memories for her, which enables her to develop confidence and to improve her self-esteem. Memory books and photo albums provide a lasting memory for her of her time here.</p> <p>Care planning is good. The registered manager has appropriately challenged the</p>	

local authority to provide an updated care plan, and this has recently been received. The home's own care plan is detailed and outlines the care needed to meet the child's needs. Good, focused work sessions enable staff and the child to address the objectives of the care plan and to follow up on any actions from review meetings. For example, at a recent review meeting, it was highlighted that she had previously had difficulty handing homework in on time. The staff made this part of her incentive plan and in January all her homework was handed in on time. Some records and files are somewhat disorganised and require sorting and updating. This exercise will provide the child with a better understanding of her care when she wishes to access her records.

The registered manager is reviewing the future placement of young people to this home, ensuring that thorough risk assessments of shared living are undertaken and that there is an appropriate mix of young people. The manager is committed to ensuring that the current child is settled and making good progress before a new young person joins the home.

The child is consulted on all aspects of her care and how the home operates. This is done through key work, regular house meetings and her attendance at review meetings. She makes good use of the advocate who visits the home, which ensures that her wishes and feelings are heard.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>There have been no serious incidents of poor behaviour, no physical interventions, no missing episodes, no complaints and no allegations. This is because the child is happy here, feels safe and is looked after by a very caring and nurturing team who make the experience of living here a positive one. Consequently, there is no need for any poor behaviour or a desire to leave the home. Some behaviours by the child, such as being rude or not wanting to hand in her laptop, have been dealt with effectively and with appropriate consequences being implemented. Good behaviour is encouraged, using incentives and rewards. These also provide a target for the child to aim for.</p> <p>Staff understand what to do in the event of any incident, such as being missing, or aggressive behaviour, because they are trained in these areas and have the opportunity to reflect, in staff meetings and in supervision, on what they would do should such an incident arise. The safeguarding training, in particular, has recently been revised, providing a more bespoke and appropriate training course for staff. Staff understand what to do if they are worried that a child is being abused or has been abused. Relationships with the relevant safeguarding agencies are well</p>	

established. These activities keep the child safe.

The home is well maintained, clean and is kept safe and appropriately secure. Fire, maintenance and health and safety checks are carried out regularly, ensuring that the home is safe. Regular fire drills are held, which means that the child and staff know what to do in the event of a fire. Robust and detailed risk assessments are implemented, ensuring that the building and the home's activities are safe.

Very good, detailed risk assessments for the child ensure that staff are aware of any potential risks and how to reduce these. This ensures that she is able to take part in activities and enjoy the experiences offered, while remaining safe. When activities are undertaken with the young people from the other home, a robust anti-bullying assessment ensures that everyone enjoys a safe activity and that they are able to form positive relationships where bullying is not a concern.

No new staff have been appointed, as a number of relief staff have become permanent members of staff. Previous inspections of the organisation have highlighted robust recruitment practices that help to protect children and young people from the risk of harm and abuse. Lone working has been thoroughly risk assessed, ensuring that the child benefits from good, safe care from strong role models, and does not feel overwhelmed by the number of adults in the home.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The registered manager is very experienced and appropriately qualified. As well as managing this home, he undertakes the management of another registered service. He is very ably supported by a deputy manager. She is very competent and taking on additional responsibilities as a result. This ensures that the home is managed very well.</p> <p>The manager clearly understands the strengths of the home and the progress made so far. He said: 'We need to build on that progress and the positives in the home.' He is also aware of the challenges ahead for the home and the service as a whole. He continues to make improvements to the service, including undertaking a fundamental overhaul of training and how it is delivered, ensuring that there are sound foundations for the future development of the service and staff team. One member of staff said: 'I really like the long-term vision of the organisation.'</p> <p>The staff team is excellent and there is a good mix of skills and experience, providing a range of role models for the child. One member of staff said: 'We all bring something different.' This has built a very effective team around the child.</p>	



The manager stated: 'This is what residential care should be about.'

A new staff rota is to be implemented in the coming months, providing long-term staffing arrangements. This will enable staff to plan more effectively for activities for the child, ensuring that the right staff can support the activity. It will also enable more effective planning of supervision and training events.

Staff benefit from good training that continues to improve in its quality and range. The manager has introduced a new checklist document which ensures that staff in various roles are fully competent in what they do, and this improves the care for the child. Staff benefit from regular supervision and attend staff meetings to share any concerns and to learn from good practice. Communication between staff is good, ensuring that there is consistency of care.

Monitoring by the manager and deputy manager is good. An improved monthly checks mechanism enables the manager and deputy to discuss trends and patterns and to address any concerns, as well as identifying the progress of the home and the child. An independent person also visits the home to monitor the care and welfare of the child. Currently, this is not as regular as it should be and, additionally, the visits are insufficiently robust to identify concerns or to highlight progress made.

Partnership working is very good, enhancing the care provided and the knowledge of the staff team. The manager is currently helping to organise a provider conference that will have a number of partners and organisations providing a range of inputs on various topics, such as sexual exploitation, legal highs, missing from home and radicalisation. This will help to improve the skills and knowledge of the team and will provide valuable networking and partnership opportunities.

## 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'.

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