

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	15/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC481295
Type of inspection	Full
Registered person	Imap Centre Limited
Registered person address	Imap School Barrowmore Estate, Barnhouse Lane, Great Barrow, Chester CH3 7JA

Responsible individual	Martin McKevitt
Registered manager	Stephen Wilkinson
Inspector	Michelle Bacon

Inspection date	15/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC481295

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are well cared for in a safe, supportive and nurturing environment.
- Young people make progress because there is a strong emphasis on their health, education, independence and community-based activities.
- The manager and staff have effective working relationships with parents and placing authorities.
- Young people experience positive relationships with staff and each other.
- The safety and well-being of each young person is at the centre of staff practice.
- Comprehensive placement plans guide staff in how to meet young people's individual needs on a day-to-day basis. However, targets are not measured, so it is difficult to see how the managers and staff track progress.
- Staff actively support young people to participate in the day-to-day running of the home. This enables them to express their wishes on such things as activities and menus.
- The home is achieving its aims and objectives as set out in the statement of purpose. However, it refers to the old standards and there is no staffing list.
- The registered manager does not have a clear record in the form of a register showing when young people have been admitted and discharged from the home. Furthermore, there is a lack of clear transition planning for one young person, and there is the potential for this to drift.
- Although staff receive sufficient training to enable them to provide good quality care for vulnerable young people, they do not receive regular and effective supervision.
- Independent monitoring of the home is undertaken every month. However, the visits often take place when young people are at school, and the reports do not state whether, in the opinion of the visitor, young people are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes their well-being. In addition, the registered manager's monitoring does not analyse and evaluate the quality of care.

- There are a sufficient number of staff members to meet the needs of the young people. However, when there are shortages of the waking night staff, the manager and day staff sleep at the home. There is no staff bedroom, which means the staff sleep on a bed-settee in a communal room downstairs.

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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>16: Statement of purpose</p> <p>The registered person must:</p> <p>(1) compile in relation to the children's home a statement (the statement of purpose) which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1.</p> <p>(3)(a) keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>(b) notify HMCI of any revisions and send a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of revision.</p>	29/04/2016
<p>14: The care planning standard</p> <p>In order to meet the care planning standard the registered person must:</p> <p>(2)(b) plan for, and help, each child to prepare to leave the home or move into adult care in a way that is consistent with arrangements agreed with the child's placing authority.</p>	29/04/2016
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33(4)(b)).</p>	29/04/2016
<p>The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4 and ensure that the records are kept up to date (Regulation 37(2)(a)(b)).</p>	29/04/2016
<p>The registered person must help the independent person if they consent, to interview in private such of the children, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home as the independent person requires. The independent person must produce a report</p>	29/04/2016

<p>which sets out, in particular, their opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being (Regulation 44(2)(a)&(4)(a)(b)).</p>	
<p>In order to complete the quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the quality of care for children, the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive, and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children (Regulation 45(2)(a)(b)(c)).</p>	<p>29/05/2016</p>

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the design of the home provides appropriate accommodation and facilities for staff that sleep in the home overnight ('Guide to Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.26).
- Ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date and stored securely. Case records must be signed and dated by the author of each entry ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3).

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and operated by an independent organisation that provides care and accommodation for up to five young people with learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/11/2015	CH-Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/01/2015	CH - Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Staff provide young people with good quality care that is tailored to meet the individual needs of each young person. They provide a warm nurturing environment that is child centred. Consequently, young people have built trust and feel very settled and secure. One young person recognises the progress that he has made since coming to live at the home. He said, 'The adults are helping me with my confidence...My behaviour has improved. I calm down much faster than I used to.' A professional commented, 'This is an exceptional placement for (name of young person). In our view, this is the best place for him and he has made significant progress. It is so nice to see a child develop as well as he has. Wow - what a change!'</p> <p>Young people benefit from a healthy environment, and they are able to access a range of services that supports their emotional and physical health, including speech and language and sensory assessments. Every Friday evening, the young people take turns to shop and prepare a meal of their choosing for the rest of the group. They are encouraged to make healthy choices in relation to nutritious meals. In addition, they engage in lots of physical activity, such as walking and swimming, so that they remain physically fit.</p> <p>Staff value the importance of education and ensure that young people's daily routines support their participation and attendance in school. Most young people attend the organisation's own school, and staff provide one-to-one support in school. They work effectively with teachers so that young people's learning needs are fully supported. One young person recently achieved an award from his placing authority in recognition of his achievements.</p> <p>Young people are well prepared for moving into the home. For example, a young person who recently moved into the home has established good relationships with the staff because he previously spent time in the home for short breaks. Another young person is currently staying two nights a week, with a plan for him to move into the home on a long-term basis. This ensures that he will receive continuity in his care while building positive attachments. Although the manager recognises the importance of transitional work, so that individual young people are well prepared for change, there is a lack of clear planning for one young person, which means that there is potential for drift with his transition plans.</p> <p>Staff actively support young people to participate in the day-to-day running of the home. Several communication methods are used with them to ensure that they are</p>	

able to express their views and wishes regarding activities, the décor and menu plans. Staff encourage young people to pursue their hobbies and interests. For example, one young person has a keen interest in World War One. He enjoys collecting memorabilia as well as visiting the war museum. Young people participate in a range of social opportunities that enrich their lives.

Staff encourage young people to develop their independent living skills appropriate for their age and understanding. One young person enjoys the responsibility of being able to shop independently. He is also a very good cook and likes to help staff to prepare the evening meal for everyone. This enables him not only to develop appropriate life skills but also to build confidence in his own abilities.

Young people benefit from well-managed contact with their families. Staff work positively with family members to ensure safe and meaningful contact. A professional said, 'They (staff) are really good with his parents and they make them very welcome.' This enables young people to sustain important attachments.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safeguarding vulnerable young people with complex needs. They work effectively with parents and placing social workers to promote young people's welfare and safety. Risk assessments highlight specific risks and ways in which these may be minimised. This provides some young people with the opportunity to take reasonable risks as they grow and develop.</p> <p>There are no incidents of young people going missing from the home. Clear procedures are in place should an incident occur, and these are known and understood by the staff. Excellent levels of supervision ensure that young people's safety is maintained both inside and outside the home.</p> <p>Staff are well trained in behaviour management. They take an extremely positive approach to managing young people's behaviour, and their use of re-direction and de-escalation is very effective. As a result, staff do not use sanctions or physical interventions to manage young people's behaviours. Staff monitor young people's behaviour and help them to develop strategies to manage their anxieties safely. For example, one young person said, 'I try to get away from situations that upset me, like going outside.' The young person really likes living at the home because he is being supported to manage behaviours that previously had an impact on his progress.</p> <p>Staff recruitment and vetting procedures help protect young people from</p>	

unsuitable people having access to them. The home has a record that summarises all the checks carried out on individual staff. This ensures that the manager has oversight of the checks carried out on those employed to work in the home.

Young people live in a physically safe environment where they are protected by good health and safety procedures. Staff carry out regular health and safety checks around the home. Individual evacuation plans are in place, and young people regularly practise how to leave the home safely in the event of a fire.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>The home is managed by an experienced and suitably qualified manager, who has been registered since September 2014. However, leadership and management requires improvement because the home is not being efficiently managed. That said, this has had minimal impact on young people as they have continued to make good progress. The manager's monitoring is very formulaic: it does not fully evaluate or analyse performance or practice to identify where improvements need to be made and how these will be achieved.</p> <p>Although the home is achieving its aims and objectives, as set out in the statement of purpose, this makes reference to the old standards and there are no details in relation to staff working in the home. Furthermore, it does not specify that arrangements are in place for shared care or ways in which the needs of those young people living in the home long term are taken into account. This was raised as a requirement at the last inspection.</p> <p>Comprehensive placement plans guide staff in how to meet young people's individual needs on a day-to-day basis. Currently targets are not measured, so it is difficult to see how the manager and staff track progress. For example, one young person's communication profile states that he is working towards phase 3 PECS (Picture Exchange Communication System). However, it is unclear from his records whether he is on target to achieve this. More recently, the manager has introduced a key worker role into the home. This person will be responsible for maintaining detailed plans that capture the progress of all young people. The manager acknowledges that this role is still very much in the early stages of development.</p> <p>Independent monitoring of the home is completed monthly, and reports are forwarded to Ofsted as required. However, the visits often take place when the young people are at school, which means that consultation with them is rare. Furthermore, the reports do not state if, in the opinion of the visitor, young people are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes their well-</p>	

being.

Young people benefit from the consistency of care provided by a stable staff team. The team offers a good balance of gender and age to meet the young people's needs. Discussions with staff confirm that they enjoy working in the home and they work well together. They have access to a good range of training opportunities to ensure that they are up to date with the skills and knowledge required to work effectively with the young people. New staff undertake a comprehensive induction programme, which includes regular supervision. However, there has been a lapse in the regularity of supervision for the manager and other staff. This is important as it provides them with the opportunity to reflect on their performance and practice.

There is a sufficient number of staff to meet the needs of the young people. However, when there are shortages with the waking night staff, the manager and day staff sleep at the home. There is no staff bedroom, so they sleep on a bed-settee in a communal room downstairs. This means that they are not provided with appropriate accommodation and facilities when they are required to sleep in.

Since the last inspection, the manager has introduced a new comprehensive medication system. The new system is much more robust and reduces the chance of error. This ensures the welfare and safety of young people.

Young people are provided with a good quality of care that promotes their needs well. Consideration is given to the matching of young people prior to admission to ensure that all of their needs can be met. However, the registered manager does not have a clear record in the form of a register showing when young people have been admitted and discharged from the home. This is not having a negative impact on the young people.

At the last inspection, the registered manager was asked to ensure that the fire records were kept up to date. This has been addressed, so it is much clearer to see who took part in the drill. However, the manager and staff do not consistently sign all records, such as risk assessments, when these have been updated. Furthermore, one young person's missing from care risk assessment stated that his legal status is Section 20 and then on another page said that it is Section 31. Although this does have the potential to cause confusion, the registered manager did take remedial action to address this. It was identified during this inspection that two incident books were in use, one of which the manager said was for staff to record accidents in. However, a further three accident books were also in use; one of these was solely for staff use, but an accident relating to a young person has been recorded in this book. This means that young people's records are not well maintained. It is evident that there are a number of weaknesses in the administrative operations that require the registered manager's attention.

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 children looked after 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 that 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 whom 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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