

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>22 March 2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>1155775</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Stacey Brook</b>
<b>Interim manager</b>	<b>Jeanette Escott</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Nick Veysey</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>22 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>Requires improvement</b>

**1155775**

## **Summary of findings**

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

- The young person lives in a friendly and supportive children's home that is making a positive difference to her life. She is safer, happier, healthier and more confident than when she first moved in. She is making very good progress at school, building positive relationships with the staff and, with their help, finding beneficial ways to manage her emotions. The staff provide her with stability and consistency, which are helping her to feel emotionally secure, and promote her welfare.
- The young person receives a good quality of care that is tailored to her individual assessed needs. The staff are skilled and enthusiastic, and work cohesively to promote her best interests.
- The young person feels safe and is protected from significant harm. The staff have a good understanding of her vulnerabilities in relation to her previous experiences and disability. They use effective protective measures to manage the risks to her safety, including abuse, sexual exploitation and aggression. Concerns about her welfare are always taken seriously, shared with the appropriate people and thoroughly investigated in line with the statutory guidance.
- The young person lives alone and would benefit from further opportunities to spend more time with other young people to promote her social development, including learning the skills to make friends and understand about appropriate relationships.
- The lack of detailed and analytical monitoring is limiting leaders' and managers' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. This limits leaders' and managers' ability to prevent shortfalls and take effective action to secure improvements. The failure to talk to the young person regularly about the quality of care she receives impedes a proper understanding of how the home is making a difference to her life.
- The staff are not benefiting from regular practice-regulated supervision that reviews their performance and identifies their development needs. The current training programme is not sufficiently tailored to the young person's assessed needs in relation to sexual abuse.

## 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 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p><b>7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard.</b></p> <p>In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard the registered person must-</p> <p>2(a) (iv) regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care.</p> <p>In particular, ensure that the independent person, who monitors the home under Regulation 44, makes every effort to see children and seek their views about the home.</p>	30 April 2016
<p><b>11: The positive relationships standard.</b></p> <p>In order to meet the positive relationship standard, with particular reference to encouraging children to build and maintain positive relationships with other children, the registered person must ensure that staff-</p> <p>2 (a) (ii) help children to develop socially aware behaviour;</p> <p>(iv) help each child to understand, in a way that is appropriate according to the child's age and understanding, personal, sexual and social relationships, and how those relationships can be supportive or harmful; and</p> <p>(v) help each child to develop the understanding and skills to recognise or withdraw from a damaging, exploitative or harmful relationship.</p> <p>In particular, provide each child with suitable social experiences to meet other children and opportunities to make friends. Also, support each child to understand how to build and maintain appropriate friendships with other children.</p>	30 April 2016
<p><b>13: The leadership and management standard.</b></p>	30 April 2016

<p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person is required to-</p> <p>2(a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose; and</p> <p>(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>In particular, ensure that staff receive practice-related supervision with appropriate experience monthly, as set out in the home's statement of purpose; that staff have training, confidence and expertise in supporting with children who have been sexually abused and show inappropriate and harmful sexual behaviour; and complete a thorough and evaluative review of the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	
<p>The registered person must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care report was completed. (Regulation 45 (4)(a))</p>	<p>30 April 2016</p>

## Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the independent person carrying out monitoring visits under Regulation 44 makes a rigorous, informative and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. (The Guide to the quality standards, page 65, paragraph 15.5)

## **Full report**

### **Information about this children's home**

This children's home is run by a large national provider of children's social care services. It provides care and accommodation for one child with emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>Good</b></p>
<p>The young person receives a good quality of care that is making an important difference to her life. Since moving in, she has become increasingly safer, happier, and healthier. She is taking part in meaningful education and enjoyable activities. She no longer has inappropriate caring responsibilities for other children and is flourishing as an individual. Her confidence and self-esteem are growing, and she takes pride in her appearance and achievements. She manages her feelings more constructively and is more able to accept staff's help when she is struggling.</p> <p>The staff have created a friendly, warm and safe environment where she can feel at home. She has positive and trusting relationships with staff, and she feels valued and respected. They encourage her to express her views and to take part in decisions about her life. She makes choices about the running of the house, what to eat and how to spend her time. She enjoys doing things with the staff team, including playing games, listening to music and singing, doing art, decorating Easter eggs and going to the park.</p> <p>The young person struggled when she first moved in. The staff's commitment and perseverance helped her to settle. They made it clear to her that they were interested in her welfare, cared about what happened to her and wanted to help her. Her social worker said: 'The staff worked really hard to help her settle. She lately appears more confident and gets on well with the staff.'</p> <p>The staff are developing a detailed understanding of the young person, her individual needs and views, the risks she faces and how best to help her. They consistently follow her placement plan to ensure that she receives good individual support and guidance that meet her needs. They work very well with social workers, teachers, health workers and therapists to make sure that the young person has the right support from the right services at the right time. She is currently living a long way from her family home and the staff ensure that she has easy access to health, education and therapeutic services in the local area. They also support her to see and speak regularly to her family safely, in line with the placing authority's plan.</p> <p>The staff clearly recognise the importance of education to young people's future and the value it adds to the quality of their lives. The daily routines and activities</p>	

encourage the young person's participation in education and promote learning. She has opportunities to learn about the world around her and to develop her skills, for example in cooking and baking. She enjoys school and copes remarkably well with a lengthy journey there. Her attendance has significantly improved to 98%. A recent school report says that she is 'safe and secure within the school environment, and is flourishing socially and academically.'

The young person lives in a healthy environment that actively promotes her physical health and emotional well-being. She is healthier, enjoys a good, balanced and nutritious diet, and takes plenty of physical exercise. She has recently started swimming lessons. She is developing a good understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle and is making positive choices about her health, including choosing to attend health appointments. Staff take prompt action when she is unwell, ensuring that they obtain the medical attention, assessment, treatment and advice she requires. They have a good understanding of her emotional needs and deliver personalised care that is reducing her anxieties and feelings of anger. They have helped to improve her self-esteem and sense of identity. 'Pamper nights' and good personal care routines are helping her to feel good about herself and take pride in her physical appearance. She is choosing to wear more suitable clothes for her age. She loves getting dressed up to go out for a meal. The staff work sensitively with her around her physical development.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The young person lives in a safe and supportive home. The staff's good and consistent safe care practices have helped her to become safer since she first moved in. She feels safe and able to talk to staff about her worries. Her social worker said: 'She has good relationships with the staff. At first, she showed a lot of anger, but now feels calmer, safe, and is starting to talk about her previous experiences.' The staff listen, take her concerns seriously and act decisively to reduce any risk of harm to her or other young people. They share their concerns appropriately with her social worker and the safeguarding agencies, including the police. Investigations of suspicion of harm are handled fairly, in accordance with the statutory guidance.</p> <p>The staff give the young person's welfare the highest priority. They have a good understanding of the level of her vulnerability. They use well-informed</p>	



assessments to guide them to use effective and suitable measures to protect her from specific risks, including risks associated with her learning disabilities and experiences. They consistently apply these protective measures. Consequently, the young person does not go missing from home. She is protected from self-harm, abuse, exploitation and inappropriate sexual behaviour. She no longer shows her anger through aggressive behaviour.

The staff provide the young person with the right level of structure and routine that is helping her to feel emotionally secure. They work together well to apply clear and fair boundaries consistently. This means that she knows what is safe and acceptable, and how she will be looked after by the staff. Her social worker said: 'The staff are very supportive and have developed a positive way of working with her that means that she is managing her behaviour.' They listen to her, try to find a solution to the immediate problem and understand the underlying cause. They calmly and assertively challenge unacceptable behaviour. She has the chance to talk about what happened and to reflect on the choices she made. This approach is effective in helping her to understand about socially acceptable behaviour, while giving her the opportunity to feel calm and work through her worries. As a result, she is feeling less anxious and building positive relationships with staff.

The young person is receiving suitable specialist support around her previous experiences of trauma from a qualified psychologist. However, the staff have not had training opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills in working with young people who have been sexually abused and are engaging in inappropriate sexual behaviour. Building expertise and confidence in these areas means that staff are better equipped to understand her experiences, needs and behaviour, and to provide insightful support that further aids her recovery.

The young person spends the vast majority of her time, including at school, with adults. She has few chances to meet other young people of her age and to make friends. This impedes her social development, and her ability to develop socially aware behaviour and understanding about how to build and maintain appropriate relationships with other young people. She does not have the variety of social experiences to help her to understand that relationships can be supportive or harmful, and the skills to recognise and withdraw from exploitative or damaging relationships.

The staff are carefully vetted and selected. This ensures that they have the experience and skills, values and motivation to support young people, and prevents unsuitable people from working at the home.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<p>At the time of this inspection, the registered manager was on maternity leave. The temporary management arrangements have not ensured that the home is run effectively. Improvements are required in relation to the supervision of staff, training and the monitoring of the quality of care.</p> <p>A new acting manager with suitable experience and qualifications took over at the start of March 2016. She has started to develop an understanding of the home's strengths, the young person's progress and the priorities for improvement. However, overall, the quality of the monitoring of the home is weak. The monitoring by the independent person does not provide an in-depth analysis of the home's effectiveness in safeguarding the young person and promoting her well-being. For example, the independent person does not evaluate the success of the strategies for promoting positive behaviour. Neither does the independent person review the young person's placement plan to assess its compliance with the placing authority's plan, how well it is being put into practice or how relevant it is to her assessed needs. Moreover, the reports do not include evidence of routine consultation with young people, parents, social workers and other agencies about the quality of the home. On three out of four of the monitoring visits the independent person did not talk to the young person about living in the home. The visits took place when the young person was at school. Neither has a detailed review been completed of the quality of care that is provided.</p> <p>The lack of comprehensive monitoring and schematic consultation is limiting leaders' and managers' ability to understand the impact that the quality of care is having on the young person's progress and experiences. It is limiting leaders' and managers' ability to use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided at the home.</p> <p>The culture and ethos of the home reflect a strongly child-centred approach and commitment to promoting and safeguarding the young person's welfare. The house is suitably located and designed, and provides a homely domestic environment. It is a comfortable home, which the young person has very much made her own, and it reflects her character and interests. Her artwork and family photographs are displayed around the house.</p>	

The staff work together as a supportive and cohesive team. They have a clear understanding of their roles and how to support the young person. They are enthusiastic and resilient, and show a strong commitment to improving the young person's life. However, they are not receiving individual practice-related supervision at least once a month, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. Although they are well supported by experienced senior staff and the acting manager on a day-to-day basis, they do not have a regular opportunity to have formal face-to-face discussions about their work and development. Some of the staff are new and relatively inexperienced, and this type of guidance and support is essential to make sure that their performance is at an acceptable standard and to build their confidence. Some staff have not completed their training programmes in accordance with the home's training plan. Also, the training plan does not identify staff's development needs in relation to working with young people who have been sexually abused.

## 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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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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