

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	14/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC480594
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Crystal Care Solutions Limited
Registered person address	Nelson House, Boat Horse Road, Kidsgrove, STOKE-ON-TRENT, ST7 4JA

Responsible individual	James O'Leary
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Hannah Bates

Inspection date	14/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Inadequate
There are serious failures that mean children and young people's welfare is not promoted, their care and experiences are poor and they are not making progress.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

SC480594

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is inadequate because:

- Staff do not effectively identify risk. They fail to take action to prevent young people harming each another.
- Staff fail to refer young people's allegations of harm to appropriate professionals.
- Partnership working is weak. The home does not work with specialist agencies to put together risk management plans.
- Admission decisions do not prioritise young people's needs as a group.
- Behaviour management is poor. Staff separate young people in order to manage their behaviours.
- The promotion of young people's emotional and physical health is poor. Staff do not actively and consistently seek to secure the support of mental health specialists during times of crisis.
- Bullying commonly takes place and staff have not been effectively trained to help resolve conflict.
- Staff fail to promote young people's education.
- Staffing is inconsistent, with short notice changes in the staff team contributing to significant safeguarding incidents occurring.
- The use of untrained agency staff compromises the home's ability to deliver the therapeutic aspect of the placement.
- Young people's case records fail to reflect their needs and there are key documents missing.
- Leadership and management is poor. The registered person has made decisions in relation to staffing that have impacted directly on young people's experience and safety, without consultation or planning with the appointed manager. There is minimal management review of such decisions to establish

the impact on young people's wellbeing. Previous recommendations have not been met.

- Monitoring of the quality of care in the home is ineffective and is not leading to improvements being made or enabling young people to contribute to service delivery.

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>5. Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met.</p> <p>In order to meet the engaging with the wider system standard, in respect of mental health services, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff</p> <p>(b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs.</p>	25/03/2016
<p>7. The children's views, wishes and feelings standard</p> <p>In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard, in respect of advocacy and acting on their views, the registered person must ensure that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(1) (c) take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p>	25/03/2016
<p>8. The education standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the education standard the registered person must ensure that staff;</p> <p>(a) (i) help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans.</p> <p>(vi) maintain regular contact with each child's education and training provider, including engaging with the provider and the placing authority to support the child's education and training and to maximise the child's achievement.</p>	25/03/2016

<p>11. The positive relationship standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the positive relationships standard, the registered person must ensure that staff</p> <p>(2) (a) (iv) help each child to develop and practise skills to resolve conflicts positively and without harm to anyone.</p> <p>(xi) de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children.</p>	<p>25/03/2016</p>
<p>12. The protection of children standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard the registered person must ensure that staff</p> <p>(2) (a) (i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child’s relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.</p> <p>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person.</p> <p>(b) that the home’s day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm.</p>	<p>25/03/2016</p>
<p>13. The leadership and management standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must ensure that they enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children’s home that—</p> <p>(1) (a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare; and that they</p> <p>(2) (c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child;</p> <p>(d) ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child;</p> <p>(e) ensure that the home’s workforce provides continuity of care to each child.</p> <p>(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the</p>	<p>25/03/2016</p>

<p>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>14. The care planning standard.</p> <p>In order to meet the care planning standard the registered person must ensure that</p> <p>(2) (a) children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose.</p>	<p>25/03/2016</p>
<p>The registered person must maintain records for each child which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1) (a))</p>	<p>25/03/2016</p>

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home is registered to care for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The provision specialises in working with young people who display sexually harmful behaviour.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/02/2015	CH - Full	Good
19/09/2014	Registration visit	

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>inadequate</p>
<p>Young people do not receive consistent individualised care. There are insufficient numbers of permanent staff working in the home, resulting in the regular use of different agency staff. Staffing shortfalls often mean that young people do not know the staff who are caring for them. The frequently used agency staff do not know the young people's histories, their risks or the therapeutic approach of the home. This does not give young people the consistency of care they need in order to be able to overcome past traumas. A therapist said: 'What has been difficult is staffing as this has meant different agency workers being used, who don't know the young people or set up of the house. All the young people have attachment difficulties and so there is no consistency of approach. This has had an impact on all of the boys'.</p> <p>Leaders and managers fail to ensure whether they can fully assess and meet the needs of young people, both individually and as a group, prior to admitting them. Staff separate young people due to being unable to manage their aggressive behaviours when they are together. This means young people do not take part in activities together and a young person reported feeling isolated.</p> <p>The home is a chaotic place for young people to live. On one occasion a young person moved out of the home at short notice due to extreme behaviours which resulted in them being arrested and consequently unable to remain in the home. There are too many changes in staff to promote continuity of care. Staff do not help young people develop healthy relationships; they do not review incidents with them or facilitate mediation. Young people feel that they are not listened to. For example, a young person said: 'I tell staff how I am feeling but they don't get things changed. I don't want to stay here. Me and the other young person are not compatible. I bounce off him, it's not his fault or my fault. We are just not good together.'</p> <p>Young people do not make sufficient progress in relation to their emotional well-being or education. Their care records do not contain any information about their educational achievement or progress. This hinders staff understanding of how to promote their educational development. As a result, young people do not receive the necessary help to reach their full potential. Young people are not supported effectively by staff in relation to their mental health needs. For example, the registered person has not ensured that young people have been assessed or supported by mental health practitioners in a timely way. This includes a poor</p>	

response to suicide threats. Staff do not work effectively with the Looked After Children’s nurse to ensure that they are meeting young people’s health needs. They have not worked with the Looked After Children’s nurse in respect of a young person’s mental health concerns. This has compromised a young person getting prompt mental health intervention.

Permanent staff care about young people and say that they recognise the impact that inconsistent staffing has on their emotional well-being. A young person said: ‘Although my behaviour has been a bit mad, staff care about me’. Permanent staff support and encourage young people to discuss sensitive issues such as gender, sexuality and identity, including helping them access support groups. However, poor consideration of placing young people with diverse needs together in the home has resulted in strained relationships between the young people. Any initial progress made by young people to safely explore their identity has lost its focus.

Young people are encouraged to cook to help prepare them for their future independence. However, the inconsistent staff team, coupled with a lack of proper care planning documents, means that there is a lack of planned or focused independence work. Consequently, young people do not make sufficient progress to learn independence skills.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
<p>Young people do not feel safe and staff are struggling to manage escalating behaviours safely. For example, at times young people experience violence and bullying from each other, and staff are unable to manage these violent incidents without police intervention. Young people have sometimes harmed each other and some young people say they are scared of their peers. The manager and staff did not refer an injury, sustained by a young person during a physical intervention, to the designated officer for the local authority. These weaknesses fail to protect young people.</p> <p>The service has changed its purpose and now works with young people with sexually harmful behaviour. The registered person is not working effectively with the therapeutic team to develop effective risk management strategies regarding young people’s contact with birth families. They do not identify risks, or routinely review and update risk management plans, for example about home contact.</p> <p>Young people are not supported to learn about safe relationships. This leaves gaps</p>	

in their knowledge about staying safe, including risks associated with them going missing or being sexually exploited.

Senior management decision to change staffing at short notice on one occasion, without the involvement of the manager of the home; resulted in a significant incident of young people going missing. This put them at considerable risk of harm'. This places them at considerable risk of harm. A young person said: 'I don't feel safe here; changes in staff has made me feel unsafe. I used to feel safe here but the staff who work here don't know me. I want to move. I don't think this place is healthy for me – it's not doing me any good'.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
<p>The home is not being effectively managed to meet the needs of children living there. There has been a change in the purpose of the home, in August 2015, to a service for young people with sexually harmful behaviour.</p> <p>Managerial monitoring does not identify learning from incidents, or identify improvements. For example, the manager does not review physical interventions where young people have been injured; and communication between manager and senior managers is poor. There has not been close monitoring of the introduction and success of the changed purpose of the service.</p> <p>The home is not fulfilling the aims and objectives set out within the statement of purpose. The approach does not provide a therapeutic environment for young people as stated. Staff are not working effectively together, or with other professionals to deliver the support that young people need.</p> <p>Senior managers are not ensuring that the home is suitably staffed with staff who have been fully trained to deliver its stated purpose. An over-reliance on agency staff to cover shifts, leads to inconsistent care for young people. Arrangements for care delivery lack continuity, consequently, the quality of care does not improve.</p> <p>The registered person's admission decisions have not promoted cohesive group living. Young people can only be cared for in isolation from each other. The registered person does not support staff effectively to care for the young people and ensure their safety. Conflict in communal living has led to an increase in violent incidents, bullying and police involvement in the home.</p> <p>Young people say that they no longer feel safe in the home because they do not</p>	

know the staff well and do not feel protected. A safeguarding incident involving staff practice of physical intervention had not been appropriately managed. The manager does not ensure that young people's case files contain all relevant information to help staff effectively care for and plan their work with young people. This includes keeping them safe. For example, case files are missing vital information such as personal education plans; and evidence of significant risk management decisions about contact between young people and their families, where there are known historical risks.

The manager has been in post since April 2015, and has applied to register with Ofsted. He holds a National Vocational Qualification level five diploma in residential childcare. He recognises the weaknesses within the home in relation to staffing but has not taken sufficient action to address the shortfalls.

Previous recommendations relate to lack of access to advocacy and staff's poor knowledge of safeguarding. This inspection finds continuing weakness in these areas.

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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016