

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>7 April 2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC429702</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>The Ryes College Limited</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Aldham Business Centre, New Road, Aldham, Colchester CO6 3PN</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>James Fischer II</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Sharon Broadley</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Trish Palmer</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>7 April 2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Good</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>

## SC429702

### Summary of findings

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

- The staff know and understand the individual needs of the young people and are committed to working with them.
- Staff understand the importance of education and encourage and support young people to attend.
- The young people have a good relationship with a dedicated and stable staff team.
- The young people say that they feel safe in the home and that staff listen them and help them.
- There are a wide variety of activities for young people, both in the community and the home and staff support young people in maintaining hobbies.
- Staff challenge young people's negative behaviours and discuss these in key work sessions.
- There are comprehensive care plans in place which support staff in working with the young people.
- Staff understand the importance of regular contact for young people and their families and support this.
- The young people are involved in choosing décor for the home and are encouraged to personalise their bedrooms.
- The young people say that staff respect their dignity and privacy.

## 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
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. Regulation 24 (b)	16/05/16
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person is required to — (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	20/05/16
6: The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, the registered person must— (c) ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. In particular, ensure that they are maintained to a good homely standard.	16/05/16
The registered person must ensure that each employee completes an appropriate induction. (Regulation 33 (1)(a))	23/05/16

### Recommendations

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

- Young people should have the opportunity to comment and sign their placement plan. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, page 18 paragraph 3.31)
- The home's staff should recognise and celebrate the achievements of their children. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, page 31 paragraph 6.7)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is one of three children's homes run by a private organisation, which also operates one school. The home provides accommodation for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties as well as learning disabilities.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13 January 2016	Full	Good
15 June 2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
23 January 2015	Full	Good
10 June 2014	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## 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 people have built good relationships with a stable staff team who support them to progress. One young person commented that: 'It's alright here. I go out on activities with staff. I have really improved.' Another young person said: 'I have not been here long, but I do like it here it's really good.'</p> <p>Young people have begun to make progress since moving into the home. All young people are engaged in education, two in full-time and one starting to transition into longer hours in school and who will be sitting his GCSEs in the summer. Staff understand the importance of education and have been proactive in seeking appropriate provisions. One young person commented: 'I'm doing well at school'. Another young person remarked: 'I'm looking forward to going to school'.</p> <p>The young people have regular key work sessions where they can discuss all aspects of their lives.</p> <p>Staff have a good knowledge of the young people, why they are in care and what their current needs are. Staff respect the young people and treat them as individuals. One young person commented: 'Staff always knock before coming into my room'.</p> <p>The young people have individualised care plans, which support staff in working with them in all aspects of their lives. However, the evidence trail of the young people's involvement is limited and there is no evidence that young people are involved in these or that social workers are in agreement with the home's care plan.</p> <p>Young people have weekly incentives, which are individualised, and they can earn extra money or rewards. There was no evidence of how the young people work towards these goals or how staff recognise and celebrate achievements. There was some evidence of recognition when young people have done something well, but it was sporadic and difficult to find. Sanctions are fair and proportionate and young people are encouraged to comment on any sanction given.</p> <p>Staff spend quality time with the young people. Due to the school holiday, young people were spending time with staff, playing board games or in the park. There was a calm atmosphere in the home, and all young people engaged well with staff.</p> <p>The young people's health needs are promoted. They are registered with the local GP, dentist and optician and are supported to attend regular health appointments. The home also works closely with the looked after children nurse, sexual health and drug and alcohol workers.</p>	

The young people are given the opportunity to access a wide variety of activities, both in the home and out in the community. Young people are supported and encouraged to participate in activities which are individual to them, as well as group activities. One young person attends the local youth club and another has joined a youth football club. One young person commented: 'I do different activities like roller skating and playing Monopoly with staff'.

The young people attend young people's meetings, although these have been sporadic in recent months. Staff use these meetings to get feedback from young people about the home.

The home has recently undergone some redecoration, and the downstairs looks bright and welcoming with photos of the young people taking part in various activities. The television in the lounge is very small. The home has purchased a larger television and is waiting for it to be put on the wall. Staff spoken to say that they feel this will encourage the young people to spend more time downstairs watching films together, rather than going to their rooms. Before leaving the home, a young person had been involved in writing graffiti on the doors and banisters on the landing. Although these have been covered over, they do need repainting. One young person was proud to show off his bedroom, he had recently moved bedrooms at his request and had been able to have his new bedroom redecorated with his choice of colours.

Another young person's room was in need of having the wardrobe repaired, and there were dirty cups, plates and bowls around his room. The spare room is not suitable to have any admissions until it has been completely redecorated and refurbished.

The young people are supported and encouraged in developing their independence skills in line with their care plan, age and understanding.

Staff understand the importance of contact with parents and siblings. Staff supervise contact in line with the young people's care plan. One parent commented: 'I can ring and staff will tell me what's going on, but it would be good to have a monthly report about how X is progressing'.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The young people know how to complain and they feel listened to. One young person commented 'I can talk to staff, they would listen'. Another young person said: 'If I was unhappy about anything I would go to staff. Staff listen to me, but when I feel angry I go to my room and turn my music up, it calms me down. Staff will check I'm alright.' An advocate also visits the home regularly, giving young people the opportunity to speak to an independent person.</p> <p>Staff understand the importance of reinforcing boundaries. Staff were observed</p>	

challenging a young person when he began to swear while playing a board game, and another when he made inappropriate comments.

There have been some recent issues around bullying in the home. The manager has undertaken discussions with the perpetrator and the victim together, giving each young person the opportunity to talk through the incident. One young person commented: 'I used to be picked on, but I don't now because X moved. I used to feel upset. I told the staff and they told him off, which made me feel better.' Another young person said: 'X has now moved out, I was pleased about this. Staff dealt with it properly. Staff stop bullying and check you're OK.' Both young people commented that they were a lot happier now. Staff do record incidents of bullying, but it is difficult to track and follow the outcomes of any incidents.

There have been 24 physical interventions since the last inspection, 23 of these pertain to one young person who has since left the home. All holds have been appropriate and recorded. The young person had the opportunity to comment and the manager has completed fuller debriefs with him. Due to the level of holds, the manager consulted the trainer who helped to complete a comprehensive strategy to work with this young person.

Comprehensive risk assessments are in place for the young people out in the community and in the home. There are good, concise behaviour support plans, which outline triggers, and strategies that work, as well as those which should be avoided. These are in three stages up to crisis point. There is also a behaviour recovery plan for staff to follow after an incident. Staff understand the importance of helping young people in managing certain risks, according to their age and understanding.

All health and safety checks have been completed. There is a comprehensive location risk assessment in place to further safeguard the young people.

Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding and are vigilant around the issues of potential child sexual exploitation, although some staff felt that the training could be expanded to give them a greater understanding. Staff have completed internet safety training, and staff speak to young people in young people's meetings and key work sessions about how to keep themselves safe. The staff have also produced a good guide for young people around keeping themselves safe on the internet.

The local authority designated officer commented: 'I have no concerns about this home; the responsible individual is responsible for safeguarding and works well with us.'

The local police community support officer regularly visits the home to build positive relationships with the young people and staff. He also attends the managers meetings when appropriate.

There has only been one incident of a young person going missing since the last full inspection. Young people spoken to were very clear that staff would call the police if they went missing, but that they would also go and look for them.



All medication is stored and recorded appropriately. Consent for medical treatment is in place for each young person. The manager challenged the local GP regarding the need for him to give consent for staff to administer household medication and is waiting for him to return the consent forms.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>
<p>The manager has been in post since 2012 and has the relevant qualifications and experience to run the home. She was on leave during the inspection, and managers from two sister homes were supporting young people and staff.</p> <p>Staff receive regular supervision, which they reported to be supportive. All appraisals are up to date and look at staff development.</p> <p>The manager has a good understanding of the young people's needs. There is good evidence that she is in contact with social workers and other agencies to support them. The home's clinical therapist also supports the manager and staff, looking at behaviours and supporting the staff with strategies to manage these.</p> <p>Staff meetings have been sporadic in recent months, although training has taken place instead. A member of staff felt that the need to talk about the young people and their behaviours is important and although training is helpful, it should not replace staff meetings.</p> <p>The home is maintained downstairs to a good standard, but as reported the upstairs needs some work. There are door alarms on the young people's bedrooms to alert staff during the night if they leave their room, but no consent forms from young people or social workers are in place.</p> <p>There is evidence that recruitment checks are in place and staff do not start working in the home until all checks have been verified. Staff complete mandatory training during the first few weeks, but there is no formal induction plan for staff to work through during their probation period.</p> <p>Staff know the strengths of the home and feel supported by the manager. A member of staff commented that, 'The manager works shifts and really knows the kids. She is good at matching referrals and wants to have someone in as soon as a young person leaves.'</p> <p>There was no evidence of the manager monitoring the care practice, so that she can evaluate how changes can be implemented to improve the running of the home. Paperwork did not seem streamlined, making it difficult to access relevant documents.</p>	

## 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 that 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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