

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	14 April 2016
Unique reference number	1231066
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Natalie Pink
Inspector	Guy Mammatt

Inspection date	14 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since the last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

1231066

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- The manager admitted a young person with a learning disability, which is in breach of the home's conditions of registration.
- The manager and the operations manager did not complete an admission risk assessment at the time of placing a young person. As a result, the manager cannot demonstrate how she assessed that staff can meet the young person's needs and that all the necessary services to support her are in place.
- The young person's educational needs are not sufficiently met. The young person receives tuition through an online virtual school for seven and a half hours a week and is supported by care staff for the remainder of her timetable.
- A member of staff employed prior to 1 April 2014 had not completed the necessary care qualification by the 1 April 2016 as required by the Children's Home Regulations 2015.

The children's home's strengths

- Staff help the young person to reduce her risk-taking behaviour.
- Staff give good health advice and support to the young person. Staff promote the young person's cultural identity and take the time to have helpful discussions with her.
- Staff make sure that the young person maintains contact with her family and makes friendships with other young people that live locally.
- The manager leads the team well. She ensures that supervisions and appraisals are conducted accordingly, and that staff's recruitment and training records are effectively organised.
- The feedback from family members and placing authority representatives is positive. They have seen positive changes in the young person since she moved into the home.

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>8: The education standard</p> <p>In order to meet the education standard, the registered person must ensure that staff</p> <p>(2)(a)(iii) understand the barriers to learning that each child may face and take appropriate action to help the child to overcome any such barriers;</p> <p>(iv) help each child to understand the importance and value of education, learning, training and employment;</p> <p>(ix) and help a child who is excluded from school, or who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of exclusion or non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible.</p>	31 May 2016
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <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; with particular reference to documenting thorough admission risk assessments.</p>	31 May 2016
<p>16: Statement of purpose</p> <p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose; with particular reference to ensuring that it is operating within its conditions of registration. (Regulation 16 (5).)</p>	31 May 2016
32: Fitness of workers	31 May 2016

<p>(4) For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained:</p> <p>(a) the level 3 diploma for residential childcare (England) ('the level 3 diploma')</p> <p>(b) a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the level 3 diploma.</p> <p>(5) The relevant date is:</p> <p>(a) in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls two years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home, or</p> <p>(b) in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32 (4 (a) (b)).)</p>	
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Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for one young person who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17 February 2016	Registration	No judgement

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
<p>The arrangements for meeting the young person's educational needs require improvement. At the time the young person came to live at the home, the manager did not have a school placement confirmed. As a result, the young person did not have an education timetable for the first four weeks of her placement. She now engages on a part-time basis through a virtual school to complete maths and functional skills. Staff support the educational progress of the young person at all other times. This arrangement requires improvement, as the staff are not educationalists. It restricts the young person's social interaction and may result in her learning being compromised.</p> <p>The young person receives good health promotion advice. She is engaging well with a clinical psychologist to help her psychological well-being. The young person has check-ups with the dentist, doctor and optician to pursue existing health issues and to sustain good health. As a result, she has increased her interest in her personal appearance and hygiene and now washes and eats more appropriately.</p> <p>The young person maintains regular contact with her family. Staff help her family to stay in touch and the young person benefits from the continuation of their emotional support. She has also made some friends in the local area, and they provide reassurance and solidarity to each other. Staff supervise the friendships to ensure that they remain appropriate.</p> <p>Staff frequently engage the young person in discussions, which are led by her needs. The openness and willingness of the staff in talking with her are strengths of the care provided. These build a trusting relationship and contribute to the young person's increased self-confidence. A placing authority team manager states that she is 'impressed with the young person's progress' and her mum comments that 'the turnaround is amazing'.</p> <p>The young person freely explores her personal identity and cultural beliefs. Staff support her with her fashion and dietary choices. The young person has personalised much of the home and cares for three pet hamsters in her bedroom. She accesses the internet, has a mobile phone and uses social media. The young person is engaging well with this placement. She has applied for a job and joined a therapeutic horsemanship programme.</p> <p>The young person reports that she feels safe at the home, that she can talk to staff and that she likes living there. She states that, in her opinion, the home is</p>	

good, but would be excellent if she could have more pets.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>The young person has significantly reduced her risk-taking behaviour. There have been no incidents of her self-harming, going missing from care or staff using physical restraint since the young person moved into the home. This progress is a substantial improvement from her recent history at her previous homes.</p> <p>Staff follow good, detailed strategies that minimise the risk to the young person and help her to learn to manage her emotions. Staff are flexible in their approach and tailor their care to support the young person's needs.</p> <p>The manager responds promptly to safeguard the young person, in response to assessments made by therapeutic professionals. Staff implement the placement plan strategies effectively to ensure her safety. Staff also have a good knowledge of supporting young people on the autistic spectrum with an additional learning disability. As a result, staff are able to recognise the young person's signs of distress early and intervene to ensure her well-being.</p> <p>The manager reported a child protection concern to safeguarding agencies, to ensure the safety of the young person. Staff have contact with the local youth intervention team so that the young person can build positive relationships with them. The manager has arranged for the young person to have an advocate, enabling her to have someone independent to talk to.</p> <p>The manager ensures that the staff's recruitment records are well organised and complete, which helps to deter unsuitable individuals applying to work in the home. The necessary physical and environmental checks of the premises are conducted at appropriate timescales. Staff ensure that medication is stored safely and recorded accurately.</p> <p>The manager has undertaken a thorough risk assessment of the location of the home. It includes an initiative with the community police officer to meet other local children's homes providers regularly. This arrangement helps to share information about the area and has formed a network that can respond promptly to concerns.</p>	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>Leaders and managers have not adhered to the statement of purpose, with regard to the home's conditions of registration. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. However, a young person with a learning disability has been admitted. Staff demonstrate, from their previous experience, that they do have the skills to meet this young person's needs and the placement move has not been detrimental. An application to vary the conditions of registration is required.</p> <p>The manager and the operations manager did not complete an admission risk assessment when they considered the young person's needs and the services that would be required to support her. This omission is not consistent with the approach described in the statement of purpose and does not provide a thorough assessment to determine if a young person's placement will be suitable.</p> <p>The deputy manager does not have the necessary qualifications for a residential care worker's role. He was employed by the provider prior to 1 April 2014 and has not completed the appropriate care qualification by the relevant date as set out in the Children's Home Regulations 2015.</p> <p>The manager has been registered with Ofsted since March 2015 and has been in post at this home since it was registered in February 2016. She has the necessary skills and experience for the role. The manager is dedicated to her role and is passionate about her responsibilities to the young person. An education professional states that she wishes more young people had a manager like her fighting for them.</p> <p>The manager works collaboratively with other agencies. Safeguarding issues are discussed with the local authority when required and care planning needs are followed up appropriately. The team manager at the placing authority has been 'very impressed with the professionalism of the manager and care staff'. The independent reviewing officer is reported to have said that they are pleased with this provision and that it is benefiting the young person.</p> <p>The independent monitoring of the home is conducted at the required monthly intervals. The manager ensures that the monitoring is used to good effect and that actions are not repeated in consecutive reports. She has a development plan to continually improve the service provided to young people and their families.</p> <p>The manager and staff ensure that the home is well maintained and that it</p>	

provides young people with homely and welcoming accommodation. The manager controls the environment well, to ensure that the young person is not overwhelmed by officialdom, and feels that it is her home.

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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