

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	12 April 2016
Unique reference number	1155761
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Stephen Lund
Inspector	Nicola Lownds

Inspection date	12 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A This is the first inspection since registration.
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 and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected, their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded, and 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

1155761

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is inadequate because:

- Leadership and management of the home are ineffective. There is a failure to provide good quality care. The registered manager has a limited understanding of the legislation concerned with operating a children's home. He fails to make sound decisions about the care that young people receive.
- The child protection policy does not adequately safeguard young people. Staff have failed to follow it. The management and scrutiny of safeguarding concerns are weak. The registered manager fails to deal effectively with disclosures of abuse and injuries sustained in the home.
- There is no structure and order to information recorded about young people. Care plans and records do not clearly describe the young person's needs. Staff fail to encourage young people to express their views about their care and their experiences of living in the home. There are no systems in place to demonstrate how staff listen to young people or how the registered manager uses their views to develop the home.
- Leaders fail to support staff to develop their approach and response to the behaviour of young people. Monitoring systems that review the quality of care are ineffective. Leaders fail to recognise weaknesses and to identify learning that will improve the care that young people receive.

The children's home strengths

The responsible individual demonstrates a positive approach to developing the home and is now starting to improve the quality of the service.

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>The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>6. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>2(b) ensure that staff—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) protect and promote each child's welfare; (iii) treat each child with dignity and respect; (iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background; <p>In particular, that young people's information and care plans clearly describe their needs; and that records are maintained in good order with respect to the young person.</p>	25 May 2016
<p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard</p> <p>7.—(1) The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <p>(c) take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>2(a) ensure that staff—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (ii) help each child to express views, wishes and feelings; (iii) help each child to understand how the child's views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account and give the child reasons for decisions in relation to the child; (iv) regularly consult children, and seek their feedback, about the quality of the home's care; <p>In particular, that young people are consulted about their care and the home they live in, and that records capture this.</p>	25 May 2016

<p>The positive relationships standard</p> <p>11.—(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(x) are provided with supervision and support to enable them to understand and manage their own feelings and responses to the behaviour and emotions of children, and to help children to do the same;</p> <p>In particular, that the registered manager identifies concerns of poor practice and provides staff with supervision to manage their emotions.</p>	<p>25 May 2016</p>
<p>The protection of children standard</p> <p>12. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(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>(iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;</p> <p>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies;</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>In particular, that the registered manager adheres to safeguarding procedures, manages safeguarding concerns effectively, reports to the local area designated officer (LADO) and keeps informed of outcomes for young people.</p>	<p>25 May 2016</p>
<p>Leadership and management standard</p> <p>13.—(1) Leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture that—</p> <p>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p>	<p>25 May 2016</p>

(b) promotes their welfare.

(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—

(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;

(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;

(g) demonstrate that practice in the home is informed and improved by taking into account and acting on—

(ii) feedback on the experiences of children, including complaints received; and

(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.

In particular, that the home is led by a skilled registered manager who embeds effective monitoring systems that improve the care provided to young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is newly registered with Ofsted. It is run by an established private company that provides services to vulnerable people.

The home is registered to provide care for up to three children and young people of the same sex with emotional or behavioural difficulties.

There was one young person living in the home at the time of the inspection.

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>The home lacks effective management oversight. Not all staff have managed to develop positive relationships with young people. The few relationships that the current young person in placement has engaged in have become intense and controlling. Staff have not established structure and boundaries for the young person.</p> <p>There is not enough being done to encourage the young person to gain access to education. The personal education plan is out of date and the registered manager has not resolved this weakness. Overall, there is a lack of persistence in successfully securing and planning education provision for young people.</p> <p>Staff have made some efforts to encourage one young person living in the home to structure their day but this has been largely unsuccessful. Some engagement by the young person in arts and crafts activities is evident. Despite this, some young people have, in the past, chosen to stay in bed during the day or watch television with little intervention from staff.</p> <p>Staff have failed to support one young person to integrate into the local community and build healthy relationships with other young people. With the exception of a dance group the majority of activities that the young person enjoys such as shopping, cinema and ice-skating are all undertaken with staff support.</p>	

Staff describe the young person as 'isolated'.

The staff team fails to develop appropriate relationships with young people; boundaries are blurred. Staff have accepted one young person posting pictures of staff members on social media sites without intervening to prevent such abuse of privacy. Leaders do not provide staff with sufficient information to care for young people. The care plans and records are not up to date. These documents do not include all known information about how to best care for the young person. There is no system or order in the recording and storing of electronic or paper files. Young people do not have a voice. The team does not actively seek the views of young people on a regular basis to improve the quality of care.

Staff have not attempted to build positive relationships with young people's parents. The level of communication that staff have with parents is poor. Significant information about their child is not passed onto them in a timely manner. This includes a failure to inform parents when their child was admitted to hospital following a significant incident of harm. Staff compile weekly reports about young people and send them to the social worker. There is no regard given as to the wishes of parents. A parent said, 'I have asked to be informed, but I don't get told things that I should know, like when she goes missing or is in hospital'.

Professionals feel that staff have assisted one young person to make progress during their time at the home. Their attendance at a health appointment is an achievement, as well as a reduction in physical interventions from previous placements.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Inadequate
<p>There are widespread failures in safeguarding practice. Staff fail to understand their responsibilities to safeguard young people. The management of disclosures of abuse is weak and does not protect young people from harm. Staff do not work collaboratively with other professionals to safeguard young people.</p> <p>On one occasion the delay in reporting young people who are missing increased their vulnerability and failed to protect them. 'Missing' protocols are not robust, as staff fail to ascertain where the young person has been and their known associates. Staff have been unsuccessful in helping young people to understand the risks they place themselves in and about their personal safety.</p>	

Leaders do not take appropriate action when concerns about staff are reported to them. None of the staff took responsibility for reporting to the local area designated officer (LADO) the injuries a young person sustained during a physical intervention. This lack of transparency and statutory duty to report concerns puts young people at increased risk.

Staff are not equipped with strategies to manage risks to young people. Risk assessments are not robust. Risk assessment documents fail to identify all of the associated risks for the young person. They are not up to date and important information is omitted which places young people at significant risk.

There is a failure by staff to work effectively with other agencies. Significant delays occurred in reporting a serious life threatening incident to social work professionals and parents.

Relationships with the local police force are effective. However, this is not replicated with agencies out of the local area.

The registered manager does not support the staff in their efforts to be proactive and creative in finding ways to engage with young people. Staff are unclear what to do when young people refuse to engage with specialist agencies about child sexual exploitation, drug and alcohol misuse, and youth offending.

The level of detail in records about young people going missing and behaviour that becomes challenging is explicit and of a good quality. However, the monitoring of these records by the registered manager is poor and not completed in a timely manner. The registered manager fails to identify significant concerns and opportunities for learning and fails to advocate for good-quality care for young people.

Records show that physical intervention has occurred once in this home. Physical intervention is not used as a routine method to manage challenging behaviour. At times, staff have called or made threats to contact the local police for assistance. Leaders have not established a protocol with the local police for this level of involvement.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
This is a newly registered children's home. The registered manager is qualified and	

has sufficient experience for the role. Prior to the inspection, the registered manager informed Ofsted that he is resigning from his post. A new manager has been appointed by the company and plans to apply to Ofsted for registration.

Throughout the inspection, the current registered manager did not demonstrate his knowledge of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015. Specifically, he was not clear on his responsibility to monitor the quality of care within the home. As such, there are no clear quality monitoring systems in place. More recently, the responsible individual has stepped into this role and has started to develop a more robust system for the future.

The monitoring of safeguarding and behaviour incidents is poor. Leaders fail to recognise the need for independent scrutiny of a physical intervention. This is particularly pertinent as one young person sustained injuries during an incident; these are yet to be investigated. The registered manager failed to recognise and challenge inappropriate language used by a member of staff towards a young person during an incident.

The quality and regularity of staff supervision has improved over time, as the responsible individual has taken on more responsibility from the registered manager. All staff say that they feel supported by the responsible individual and have the opportunity to reflect on the care they provide to young people.

The registered manager does not actively challenge the staff team's values and the care of young people. Staff have allowed a young person to post pictures of staff members on social media sites. Staff have not identified the concerns about allowing this practice to continue. No guidance has been developed for young people and staff to ensure social media is used appropriately.

Staff in the home do not have a strong leader to enable them to deliver care to the standard described in the home's statement of purpose. The responsible individual recognises these weaknesses and continues to rebuild the home on its ethos and aims as described in the statement of purpose

Leaders do not act with determination when challenging agencies that are not providing the level of service that young people require. Leaders did not challenge the drift in a young person's educational provision prior to them leaving the home. The responsible individual demonstrates a positive approach to improvement. She recognises some of the weaknesses and is taking steps to remedy them.

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 'Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards'.

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