

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	28 April 2016
Unique reference number	SC487702
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Fonjock's Social Work Practice Limited
Registered person address	Orchard House, 1 Old Convent Orchard, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP33 3PQ

Responsible individual	Caroline Fonjock
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Rosie Davie

Inspection date	28 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC487702

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The responsible individual, who is the director and co-founder of the organisation, spends much time in the home.
- In a short time, children's patterns of offending reduce.
- Children at risk of exploitation accept help.
- Children rarely go missing, representing a significant improvement for those individuals.
- Children who have not been involved with education for significant lengths of time receive and accept help to engage with some learning or work experience.
- Children maintain regular contact with families and those who are important to them.
- One child represented said that he likes the home and feels safe.
- Staff work well with other agencies, who say communication is good and effective.
- Placement plans and risk assessments are clear. The information held demonstrates that plans are individualised.
- Staff attend regular team meetings, have access to training, and receive regular supervision.
- The manager has left and this means that the home is without a registered manager.
- Staff and the responsible individual make clear records of incidents in the home. On one occasion there was a serious event, but this was not shared with Ofsted.
- The home does not have the required register of children.
- The location risk assessment should be more specific.
- All staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour and relevant recording should reflect this.
- The arrangements for consistently promoting confidentiality in the office require a rethink.
- The Regulation 45 report is due for completion and submission to Ofsted.

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
The registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if there is no registered manager in respect of the home. (Regulation 27(1)(a))	29 July 2016
The registered person must notify HMCI without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child, which the registered person considers to be serious, with specific reference to children arrested from the home because of behaviours in the home. (Regulation 40 (4) (b))	20 May 2016
The registered person must maintain in the home a record in the form of a register showing in respect of each child: (a) the date of the child's admission to the children's home (b) the date on which the child ceased to be accommodated in the home (c) the child's address immediately before being accommodated in the home (d) the child's address on leaving the home (e) the child's placing authority (f) the statutory provision (if any) under which the child is accommodated. (Regulation 37, Schedule 4 (1))	20 May 2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the location risk assessment includes the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location, and strategies for managing these, with specific reference to the play park in front of the home and the opportunities for access to the main road from the back door. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- Ensure that all staff understand the factors that affect children's motivation to behave in a socially acceptable way. All staff should encourage an enthusiasm for positive behaviour through the use of positive behaviour strategies, in line with the child's relevant plans, and ensure that strategies used are recorded to evidence their effectiveness. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.13)
- Staff should ensure that each child understands the home's procedures and policies for respecting their confidentiality, with specific reference to the use of the office. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.12)
- The processes that the registered person puts in place to enable a review of the quality of care (Regulation 45), should allow for a report to be generated at least once every six months. The generated report should be sent to Ofsted and the placing authorities of all children in the home who are children looked after. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This independently owned home is registered to care for up to three children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

First inspection

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>In a short time, children make good progress from their starting points. Staff cajole and encourage children to be involved in, and take part in, the running of the home. As a result, they improve their capacity for taking personal responsibility for their personal space, their appearance, and their ability to contemplate the prospect of living with increased independence.</p> <p>The staff patiently persevere, and some appropriately challenge the children who say: 'You are not my parent. I will not be doing what you say.' The result is often that the child does eventually do as asked. Examples include education and work experience.</p> <p>Both children living in the home have significant previous histories, reflecting difficulty attending and engaging with education. Partner agencies, fully aware of the presenting issues, work with the home towards turning this around. Holding in mind the importance of education, the staff work creatively to identify each child's individual interests. They then involve and motivate the children in order to complement the educational/work experience opportunities provided by other agencies. Recognising that children have individual learning styles, the results are that there are degrees of success, representing some progress for that individual. For example, one child has completed a home-based project on animals, while the other takes part in a photography-based work placement. One child said: 'I have not been to school for a long time and I will not go. But here I know that the staff are trying to do things to help me think about education and what I want to do in the future.'</p> <p>Some staff and some children have good relationships. One child said: 'Yes, the staff here are all OK so far.' Nevertheless, children overtly and indiscriminately challenge the adults working in the home. They sometimes smoke in their bedrooms, swear and make threats. Some tenacious staff persevere to make clear that these behaviours are not acceptable. However, other staff are less clear, resulting in mixed messages. Additionally, records show that staff only occasionally log the range of positive and negative consequences implemented. This means that the effectiveness of strategies used is not clear to all team members, and therefore does not consistently help children to learn from the impact of their behaviours.</p> <p>Children are registered with health professionals, such as GPs, dentists and opticians. Where children show reluctance to attend, or seek to conceal</p>	

attendance, the staff manage these situations well, including challenging local services if required. This means that the staff are willing to advocate to ensure that partnership agencies fulfil their responsibilities to promote welfare.

Families and those who are significant to the child are welcome to visit and are in regular contact. One parent said: 'The staff keep me up to date with what is happening.' This helps children to maintain their identity while ensuring that there continue to be adults involved in their lives who know them well and can contextualise some behaviours.

Staff encourage the children to take part in a range of events out of the home. While success with energetic activities is limited, the children benefit from, and enjoy, trips to local attractions, such as the zoo and ice-skating. This helps to keep children engaged and reduces social isolation.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Detailed risk assessments compiled by the responsible individual help staff to understand and be more aware of the dangers posed both outside and within the home. For example, aware of the potential for misusing drugs, staff liaise with key agencies about managing and reducing these risks. In addition, routine checks around the home and efficient fire prevention systems help to reduce the likelihood of an emergency requiring external assistance.</p> <p>One child stated clearly that he feels safe living in the home. He was clear about who he would contact should he have any concerns about his care or about staff behaviour.</p> <p>Children feel listened to. Complaints raised by children or their families are looked into quickly. This means that the responsible individual is aware and responsive to working in partnership with those involved to ensure that service delivery is effectively transparent.</p> <p>One agency says: 'Staff are constantly trying.' As a result, incidents of missing are infrequent, representing a dramatic improvement in personal safety and reduction in risk of exploitation for both children.</p> <p>Staff do not use physical intervention to manage risky behaviours in the home. The provider chooses not to offer training for staff in this area, and instead offers</p>	

training in de-escalation strategies, with some success.

Offending in the community has reduced, representing a notable improvement for those children. Incidents do occur in the home. Staff and the responsible individual document these well, showing the action taken to reduce the likelihood of reoccurrence. In one incident sampled, an emergency call made to the police resulted in one child's arrest. While the provider had appropriately consulted and liaised with all other key stakeholders, she had not notified Ofsted, thus representing a shortfall, but with no direct impact for children on this occasion.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>The home opened in September 2015. The registered manager resigned shortly after the children arrived in 2016. The responsible individual, aware of the impact of this and the need to appoint a manager for the home urgently, intends not to admit any new children until there is a named individual identified and ready to begin the process of registration. She spends significant amounts of time in the home helping the staff to deal directly with the children. This means that she makes substantial effort towards achieving positive outcomes by role modelling the approach outlined in the statement of purpose.</p> <p>The responsible individual is ensuring that systems set up in the home are clear for staff and are accessible. Structured placement plans and detailed daily records provide information about progress and the work completed with children. However, boundaries around children's access to the office are not sufficiently consistent, and therefore have the potential to compromise confidentiality.</p> <p>External monitoring arrangements provide an impartial overview of the arrangements for promoting the quality standards. However, the processes for internal monitoring and review are under construction and the children's register is not ready. Because this is a new service, these shortfalls have no direct impact for the children in placement.</p> <p>Good quality relationships with partner agencies, such as the police, the youth offending team, virtual schools and placing local authority social workers, help to ensure that systematic support is available for the children. Those agencies say: 'Communication is good.' The responsible individual is proactive and quick to involve organisations when she feels that there is potential benefit for the children. This means that agencies working with the provider can expect regular feedback about what is going well and what needs to improve, in order to progress the overall experiences for each individual placed.</p>	

The home's situation on the outskirts of a city centre means that it is within easy access of health, leisure and recreational facilities. The location risk assessment provides relevant general information and references information from the local crime rates. However, it does not address the particular position of the building. This means that staff may be unaware of the potential risks linked to the play park adjacent and the main road visible from the rear of the building.

Recruitment processes are thorough, ensuring that only those who evidence suitability work directly with the children. Staff experience a structured induction, receive regular supervision and access training, such as on safeguarding and fire safety. This helps them to understand and consider their work with the children. One member of staff said: 'The ethos of the home is that every intervention matters and that's what we are trying to do. Training is good and supervision is a good place to reflect on our role.'

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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