

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	25 April 2016
Unique reference number	1183173
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Joseph Monaghan
Inspector	Joanne Vyas

Inspection date	25 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	Good

1183173

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Staff work in partnership with parents, carers and external agencies to ensure that young people are provided with holistic, well-planned and effective care.
- Young people feel safe and secure. Risk-taking behaviours such as going missing, self-harm, damage to property and drug misuse have significantly reduced since moving into this home.
- Young people learn independence skills that will help them to successfully transition into adulthood.
- The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home. He has plans in place to address any shortfalls. He provides good leadership and support for staff. Staff are qualified and competent. They build strong relationships with young people.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This specifically refers to making a record of conversations with referees when verifying references ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1).

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is newly registered, belonging to a private provider. It is registered for three young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Young people like living in this home. A young person said, when asked what he likes about the home, 'I like everything.' They make good progress, especially in reducing risk-taking behaviours and developing independence skills.</p> <p>Young people move into the home in a planned way, ensuring that they settle quickly. A social worker said, 'Planned move, which was positive. Good transition, [which] went well from day one. He likes it at the home. Overall, he has built up a good relationship with staff. He trusts them and can talk to them.' Careful placement matching ensures that staff are confident that they can address each young person's needs.</p> <p>Young people benefit from regular contact with their family and friends. They are able to maintain good support networks, which support them when they leave care. Staff also work in partnership with parents, which means that parents feel involved in the care of their child. A social worker said, 'Staff work closely with the birth family. This is really important to the young person. They keep Mum up to date and consult with her. Mum will come to the home. She has never done this before. Mum has felt included. This has benefited her son as he believes she is now interested as she hasn't always presented in this way.'</p> <p>Young people are well supported to find appropriate education, employment or training. A social worker said that the staff, 'have been proactive in supporting him in securing education and employment. Education has been a challenge for him. Staff have empowered him. They've been creative about education, employment and training.' Young people are engaged in education or other opportunities such as work experience, The Prince's Trust or apprenticeship or trainee schemes.</p> <p>If young people are not attending employment or training they are engaging with staff in the home to complete their independence folders. Young people are taught a range of tasks, from making their own bed to budgeting and using tools. Some of the young people have also completed online training in basic food safety awareness and drug awareness. Young people help to decorate their own bedrooms, work in the garden, do their own laundry, help with shopping and choose decor for the home. They are also about to embark on a few projects, including building their own barbecue and entering the soapbox derby. Young people learn useful skills, which will help them to successfully transition into adulthood.</p>	

Young people enjoy a range of activities. These include football, bike rides, the gym, the cinema and days out. They also enjoy meeting up with their friends. This ensures that young people have a supportive network and helps to increase self-esteem and confidence.

Young people actively participate in day-to-day decisions, including complex decisions about their future care. They participate in statutory reviews, as much as they feel able, to discuss their current care. They also discuss decor and furnishings for the house as well as the menu and activities. Young people know how to make complaints. No complaints have been made since the home opened. However, an incident with a neighbour meant that a young person voluntarily went round to the house to apologise. This demonstrates remorse and an understanding that what he had done was wrong.

The environment provides for a warm and welcoming home. Young people have plenty of communal space as well as their own bedroom. Bedrooms are highly personalised and young people can lock them to ensure privacy.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Practice to promote the safety of young people is good. Staff have good knowledge of the home's safeguarding procedures and implement these well. All safeguarding concerns are referred to the appropriate agencies. Effective multi-agency action is taken to ensure the safety of young people.</p> <p>Staff build strong relationships with young people. This helps them to manage young people's behaviour appropriately. A police officer said, 'Overall, I have been impressed with the way that the staff have managed some particularly difficult behaviours, and they appear to have a good relaxed relationship with the young people.' Risk-taking behaviour such as going missing, self-harm, damaging property and misuse of drugs has significantly reduced. This is due to listening to young people as well as strong, secure and trusted relationships.</p> <p>Staff are trained in physical intervention, which includes de-escalating challenging situations with young people. Staff are confident in maintaining boundaries and talking to young people to help them to calm down when they are angry or anxious. Subsequently, physical intervention is rarely used. Positive behaviour management helps young people to manage their own behaviour.</p> <p>Young people say that they get on well with each other. They report that bullying is not an issue in this home. Young people are confident that staff would not tolerate bullying and will resolve any issues quickly.</p> <p>Vetting procedures help to ensure that young people are not looked after by unsuitable adults. Appropriate checks are carried out, including verifying</p>	

references. However, currently conversations with referees, when verifying references, are not recorded. This would be particularly helpful when the referee has only sent in a basic reference as it would demonstrate that the provider has asked the appropriate questions to ensure that young people are safe.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>This is a newly registered home. The registered manager provides good leadership and support to staff. He holds a level 5 diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare.</p> <p>Staff are qualified, professional, friendly and caring. A parent said of the staff, 'They are really friendly and helpful. We work together as a team.' Another parent said, 'They go above and beyond and couldn't have done anything more.'</p> <p>Staff work closely with external professionals. A police officer said, 'Safeguarding of the young people is at the forefront of what they do, and I have exchanged several items of intelligence/information with the registered manager relating to persons and addresses where the young people have either been found or have said that they have visited.' A social worker noted that this information has helped to reduce the number of going missing events for young people. A social worker also said, 'I have a lot of trust in the staff and feel secure that if there are issues I will know about them.' Staff communicate well with external professionals.</p> <p>The registered manager has good monitoring and review systems. He has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home with plans in place to address shortfalls. He is supported well by the responsible individual who is currently based in the home.</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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