

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>27 April 2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>1222089</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Platinum Services for Children (Residential Care) Ltd</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>The Apex, 2 Sheriffs Orchard, Coventry CV1 3PP</b>
<b>Registered Individual</b>	<b>Leonard Pattinson</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Wayne Barker</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Louise Whittle</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>27 April 2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>N/A</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>Good</b>

**1222089**

## **Summary of findings**

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

- The young person enjoys warm and trusting relationships with all of the staff, enabling him to make progress in his emotional and social development.
- Staff listen to the young person and respond appropriately to his requests. His close involvement in the choice of decoration of the home enables him to make a valued contribution to his environment.
- Staff proactively support the young person to engage in education, and they encourage him to aspire to a future career.
- Highly committed staff keep him safe, providing clear and consistent boundaries. The young person feels safe.
- Staff work with him to understand risks and how to keep himself safe.
- Staff are highly skilled and trained, and have an in-depth understanding of the young person's behaviour and complex care needs.
- The child-focused registered manager ensures that staff understand the ethos of the home and that they prioritise the young person's needs at all times.
- He provides the appropriately qualified and experienced staff with regular, supportive and challenging supervision.
- The registered manager and staff work effectively with a range of professionals and family members in order to ensure that the young person receives the care and support he needs.
- The registered manager did not obtain sufficiently detailed information from the local authority prior to the admission of one young person. This led to the young person making less progress in placement than he might otherwise have done, and is an area for improvement.

## **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(s):

Ensure that the registered person accepts placements for children only where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The registered person must challenge (under regulation 5(c)) any placing authority that asks them to accept a child in the absence of a complete and current relevant plan, as the expectation that a placement of a child without the necessary information would go ahead (in circumstances other than an emergency) is inadequate in relation to their role. It is essential that homes understand what will be required of them before they accept responsibility for a child's placement, to avoid disruption and instability for the child in future and for other children in the home (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 56, paragraphs 11.4 and 11.5).

## **Full report**

### **Information about this children's home**

This privately owned children's home is registered to provide care for up to four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home was first registered in February 2016.

## 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 person in placement was admitted in an emergency. Staff sensitively and effectively managed this move, and he is settled and happy here. He has made significant progress in his family contact, health, education and emotional well-being. He benefits from warm relationships with staff whom he trusts. The young person enjoys spending time with staff when he is not at college and is currently helping to choose furniture and decoration for the newly established home. He likes to share banter with the staff, yet knows that they will listen to him if he has concerns or requests. He was consulted about which staff member he wanted as his key worker and is satisfied with the outcome.</p> <p>The young person has chosen his room in this spacious and well-maintained house, and he is personalising it to make it his own. As new young people are admitted they can add artwork and photographs to the shared living areas to make them more homely. He is looking forward to having more young people in the home.</p> <p>Staff support the young person to maintain new local friendships and to develop his independence skills. He engages in the weekly young people’s meetings where he contributes to menu and activities choices. He has expressed an interest in joining a gym and recently did a bungee jump. He is looking forward to camping with staff in the holidays.</p> <p>The young person engages with staff to address a wide range of complex issues in key-work sessions, including sexual health, behaviour, routines and boundaries, contact and relationships. With the support of staff he now has contact with his family members, which is a positive and valuable experience for him.</p> <p>One of his childcare professionals commented, ‘The staff are very good at communicating and have engaged with him as well as anyone could be expected and they are very proactive... The emergency move went very well as he knew the staff, and it is a good placement for him.’ A parent stated, ‘I’m pretty impressed with them. They look after him well.’</p>	

Another young person was admitted to the home, but has now left due to his highly challenging behaviour. Despite the highly committed staff providing him with stability and consistency, he made little progress in placement. However, his social worker acknowledged the challenges and provided very positive feedback to the staff, stating that she saw ' a real investment from you all – to move him onto a different path. ' His youth offending team worker commented, 'They worked really well with him and could not have done better, given how difficult he was.'

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>

The young person feels safe, and the highly skilled and trained staff protected him when the other young person became violent at the home. The staff are highly vigilant to the possible risks of child sexual exploitation and address this issue with him in key-work sessions. Their understanding and practice with regard to child sexual exploitation is proactive and thorough.

The home is safe and well maintained, with a locality risk assessment in place. All staff read the young person's risk assessment and behaviour management plans, which the registered manager regularly reviews and updates. The registered manager considers both young people and staff safety when drawing up staff rotas. There have been no physical interventions since the other young person left. Staff are clear that restraint is used only as a last resort to ensure the safety of the young people and staff. The highly trained staff know how to assess risk effectively and to follow safeguarding procedures.

The young person is closely involved in his own risk assessments and behaviour management plans. His positive contribution has resulted in him being allowed unsupervised time outside the home, during which he is trusted to behave responsibly. This has led to a reduction in missing incidents and alcohol abuse, thereby keeping him safer. Staff skilfully use key-work sessions and informal discussions to address safety issues with the young person. These include the risks of alcohol abuse, child sexual exploitation and going missing, and help him to identify safe choices. One of his childcare professionals said, ' I take my hat off to them' for getting the balance right between enabling him to do things he needs to, as a 16 year old, and keeping him safe.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The registered manager has been in post since the service was registered in February, and this is his first registered manager post. He holds level 3 and 4 qualifications in health and social care (children and young people), and is currently undertaking his level 5 management and leadership qualification. He has 12 years' experience of working in children's residential care, the past 6 of which were as the deputy manager at another home owned by the same provider.</p> <p>The registered manager has made a very positive start to managing this home and ensuring that staff practice is child focused. He expects staff to base themselves in the large kitchen-dining room, which is the heart of the home, and to spend as little time as possible in the office. This makes staff highly visible and available to the young person, and consequently more aware of issues as they arise. Each month the registered manager identifies a policy which staff must read and cross-reference to the quality standards and regulations. There is evidence of supportive and challenging supervision, which is thorough and well recorded. Staff work closely with other professionals and family members, attending multi-agency meetings, including looked after reviews.</p> <p>The registered manager demonstrates a strong awareness of the strengths and areas for development of his team. He is proactive in identifying and responding to needs for improvements in knowledge, skills and practice. He is keen to develop his staff, and to enhance the individual skills that each brings to the home. Staff feel strongly supported by him and enjoy working here. He is realistic about the newness of the service, the staff team and himself in this demanding role. The registered manager is open to learning, and is honest when he considers that he could have done something better. He has identified the need to ensure that all relevant referral information is received from the local authority and previous carers before the decision is made to admit a young person.</p> <p>The registered manager is highly child focused and takes a 'hands on' approach to his role. He has individual meetings with the young person, offering him an opportunity to raise any issues, and to express views about staff practice and how the home is run. Consequently, the registered manager remains in touch with the young person's issues and feelings, and gains valuable feedback and ideas about how to improve the service. This practice gives the young person a strong sense of being valued and listened to by the registered manager.</p>	



The registered manager is not afraid to challenge or disagree with other professionals, including the police and those in education, if he considers that they are not acting in the best interests of the young people. He prioritises communication with professionals and family members in order to support the young person's well-being and progress in the placement.

One parent said, 'I have no concerns. They keep in touch and update me all the time.' A youth offending team member for the previous young person stated, 'They are the best home I have dealt with in 13 years at a youth offending team... Their communication is exceptional, both the key worker and the registered manager came to meetings.'

## 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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