

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	4 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC031220
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Compass Fostering North West Limited
Registered person address	Mountfields House, Epinal Way, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3GE

Responsible individual	Benjamin Jordan
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Pauline Yates

Inspection date	4 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
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

SC031220

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make good progress in their lives through living at the home. They grow in self-awareness and, over time, learn to manage their emotions, and to develop positive and trusting relationships with others.
- Young people experience care that focuses on their individual needs and builds on their strengths, talents and interests. Staff are attuned to the impact of previous life experiences upon young people, and provide nurturing and holistic care.
- Young people receive good-quality ongoing assessment of their needs. This is accompanied by regular therapeutic input that complements, and is integrated into, their daily care.
- Staff are committed to the progress and welfare of young people, whatever the challenges that young people's behaviours may bring. They are given positive and affirming messages about their self-worth and value to others.
- Over time, young people develop aspirations for their futures and value the role that education brings to their lives. The frequency and prevalence of harmful behaviours that the young people exhibit diminish.
- The management team is highly motivated and committed to the young people. Both staff and managers are fully focused upon providing care that is reflective of young people's needs and flexible in its approach.

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
The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person") has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record that they have spoken to the child about the measure (Regulation 35(3)(b)(i)(ii)(c)).	15 June 2016
The protection of children standard 12. In order to meet the protection of children standard, with particular reference to young people being always being provided with an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview, and the home recording and taking account of the information when assessing risk, the registered provider must ensure— (2)(a) that staff (v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person (vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies.	15 June 2016

Recommendations

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

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic

environments ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9). With particular reference to the repair of the young people's bathroom, addressing the damp in the living room, the repair of damaged plasterwork, repainting of stairway and painting of the renewed architrave.

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4). With particular reference to the timely updating of placement plans and evaluative recording of progress made by young people.
- The home's procedures must take into account the views of appropriate local services and have regard to police and local authority protocols for responding to missing person's incidents in the area where the home is located ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.29). With particular reference to the home reaching agreement with the police and making provision for the safe return of young people, taking into account risk assessments.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to five young males. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10 February 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10 November 2015	Full	Good
4 February 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18 November 2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>The majority of young people make good progress in all aspects of their lives. Their experiences through living at the home are rewarding, and nurture their emotional growth. They are given sensitive responses that are well informed and thoughtful with regards to their backgrounds, temperaments and strengths. They feel listened to and that staff care about them. As a result of the good-quality care and role modelling that are given, young people learn to appreciate others' views and share their thoughts and feelings in an acceptable way. Young people learn to trust the adults who care for them and, through this, they begin to talk about what is difficult in their lives.</p> <p>Weekly therapeutic input responds to young people's emotional and psychological needs. The integration of the therapist into the staff team ensures that young people have access to a timely and responsive service. Team working among all staff gives young people a consistent and reliable home environment. One social worker commented, 'He has made a lot of progress and has done exceptionally well and is now fosterable, which we never thought would be possible. They have stuck with him despite the violence and aggression.' Another social worker said, 'He is getting therapy which he himself realises is so important. He never engaged previously.'</p> <p>Open and trusting relationships are a particular strength and feature of the care that young people receive. Community house meetings and individual key-working sessions give young people the opportunity to discuss boundaries, house rules and incidents. These meetings also offer young people space to practise skills of negotiating and presenting their views in a safe forum. Over time, they learn how to acknowledge positively others' feelings and opinions, and learn to adjust their own actions in light of these. Staff work hard to provide a positive and encouraging environment. A social worker commented, 'For the first time he has been able to talk about things. This is a total shift. His responses before were always superficial. The staff give him the time and are openly positive.'</p> <p>All young people have an identified educational provision. From their starting points, young people make good progress in terms of their academic abilities,</p>	

willingness to attend and understanding of the role that education plays in their future lives. Their education is fully supported by the staff, and there is regular information sharing between the staff and education professionals. This liaison ensures that young people receive consistent messages and approaches. When young people struggle to attend, the staff are proactive in talking to young people and developing support plans to ensure that they continue to achieve. For example, there are detailed reintegration plans made with the young person and school, or identification of alternative provisions based on their interests and strengths. A social worker said, 'They recognise his needs in education and are tailoring everything for him. He is able to think about his future in a positive way. I couldn't have done his pathway plan before. They have recognised and encouraged his skills.'

Young people are given the opportunity to experience fun activities that support the positive use of leisure time, and that provide positive shared experiences with staff and other young people. Activities include roller-blading, snooker, regular walks, cinema, driving ranges, plane-spotting, cooking and football training.

There is a considered approach taken to preparing young people for transition into alternative provisions. They are individually prepared and emotionally supported through therapeutic input. Plans are developed around the needs of individual young people and there is careful consideration of the provision being able to meet identified needs. Staff liaise closely with social workers and other professionals to ensure that the most suitable placement is identified.

Throughout their time at the home, young people learn self-care skills in cooking, personal hygiene and keeping their personal space tidy. They are fully supported to maintain contact with family in line with their care plans. This supports and nurtures their identity, and maintains important links to their home areas.

The home, in the main, is well decorated and arranged to meet the needs of the young people. Young people are encouraged to make their bedrooms their own and there are good-sized communal spaces for young people to enjoy. However, there are some areas that require maintenance and repair.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people's risks are thoroughly understood by the staff, and continuous support is given to young people in order to reduce the risk that behaviours pose to others and themselves. Suitable levels of supervision, challenge and focused activities support young people's safety. Staff maintain clear and consistent boundaries that provide young people with a sense of well-being.</p> <p>Young people say that they feel safe in the home, and that they can talk to staff about any worries or concerns they may have. Managers respond promptly to any complaints or allegations, and plans are quickly put into place to ensure their continued safety.</p> <p>Some young people, for whom going missing from home was a feature of their lives, experience a significant drop in the frequency of these episodes. One social worker commented, 'He had high levels of missing. Risks were high in every area. We've seen a total drop in missings and there has been a massive decrease in the risks. There has been an improvement around his attitude, whereby he is saying he doesn't want to go missing. This has really changed due to the impact of care.'</p> <p>When young people do go missing, on the whole this is for a short duration and they are quickly located. Staff are prompt to follow protocols and to liaise with other agencies. However, when young people have been located out of area, staff have not been available to collect and return them. Due to risk assessments around transport issues, there has not been sufficient staff or contingency planning to cover this event. In these circumstances, staff have relied on police to return the young people. In addition, independent 'return interviews' have not been consistently offered or recorded.</p> <p>Staff patiently reinforce positive behaviour in young people. Community discussions, therapy or key-working sessions are continuously promoted as the means of resolving conflict or disagreements. One social worker commented, 'The therapist has been a consistent person in his life; this has been brilliant. Originally the staff put up with a lot of violence, but staff stuck at it. He got through it and realised that they weren't going to give up on him.'</p>	

Physical intervention is only used when other means of de-escalation have not been successful. However, when this has been necessary, the regulation governing the recording and management oversight has not been satisfied. The authorised person has not spoken to either the young person or the staff about the measure.

Recruitment of staff is robust and ensures that young people are protected from unsuitable adults. There is additional regular screening of staff via a psychologist in order to ensure that staff continue to meet the rigours of caring for vulnerable and challenging young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The manager is currently in the process of applying for registered status. She has suitable experience, and prior knowledge of the home and its ethos of working. She is committed and driven in her role to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people. She leads an experienced team and is respected by staff and other professionals. She has a good understanding of both the development needs of the home and its strengths.</p> <p>The manager understands the needs of young people and is accessible to them. Her presence is felt within the home. One social worker commented, 'The manager is fantastic, she has such a great grasp of X and knows exactly how to deal with him. The staff deal with him calmly and they have good strategies in place.' Another social worker said, 'I'm really impressed with the manager. She has such a good understanding of the children and passes this on to everyone else.'</p> <p>The manager has good insight into young people's progress, and other professionals confirm this progress. However, placement plans do not reflect this in an evaluative way, nor are they updated in a timely manner. Therefore oversight and a full understanding of young people's starting points, is restricted to longer-serving members of staff.</p> <p>Staff are given regular, good-quality supervision that supports and challenges practice in order to improve the care given to young people. This is further supported by reflective team meetings and young people being at the centre of those discussions.</p>	

Induction of new staff is thorough, and is supported by appropriate training to ensure that they are able to provide care that meets the needs of young people. In recognition of the impact and challenges that working with young people bring, staff have access to the on-site therapist. This provides staff with advice, reflection and emotional support with regards to their role.

When young people falter in the progress that they are making, the manager ensures that care practice is adjusted in order to address their needs better. Continuing concerns result in multi-agency meetings and reviews in order to address those concerns.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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