

Children's homes inspection – Full

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| Inspection date | 27 June 2016 |
| Unique reference number | SC483220 |
| Type of inspection | Full |
| Provision subtype | Children's home |
| Registered provider | Compass Children's Homes |
| Registered provider address | Mountfields House, Squirrel Way, off Epinal Way, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3GE |

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| Responsible individual | Benjamin Jordan |
| Registered manager | Sandra Berry |
| Inspector | Pauline Yates |

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| Inspection date | 27 June 2016 |
| Previous inspection judgement | Declined 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 |

SC483220

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people engage with the challenges of therapy and talking about what is difficult in their lives. The good support that they receive enables them to do this, and they become increasingly safe. They develop insight into their behaviour and learn positive responses to their emotions.
- All young people engage in education and develop aspirations for their futures. Their learning is fully supported by the staff, who also provide fun activities that develop young people's interests in positive leisure time.
- Young people are actively listened to, both individually and as a group, and this influences the care that they receive. They live together successfully through the support that they receive from staff.
- Staff are fully attuned to the emotional struggles that young people experience in their lives. This ensures that young people experience responsive and individualised care that maintains their progress.
- Staff are fully committed to caring for young people, and improving their life opportunities and outcomes. Young people receive high levels of attention to every aspect of their lives.

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 must comply within the given timescales.

| Requirement | Due date |
|---|--------------|
| <p>In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care they receive in it.</p> <p>The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(2)(b)(c)(5))</p> | 31 July 2016 |
| The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it. (Regulation 16(3)(a)) | 21 July 2016 |
| The registered person must ensure that all employees have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(c)) | 31 July 2016 |

Recommendations

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

- 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)
- This is with particular reference to placement plans and evaluative recording of progress made by young people.
- 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)

This is with particular reference to the redecoration of young people's bedrooms, maintenance, clearance of the garden and prevention of damp.

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

This is with particular reference to supervisions being completed within the company's minimum timescales of every 28 days.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation to five young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| 15 March 2016 | Interim | Declined effectiveness |
| 25 August 2016 | Full | Good |

Inspection judgements

| | Judgement grade |
|---|-----------------|
| The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are | Good |
| <p>Young people have a high level of educational attendance. This is both influenced and supported by staff taking an active interest in young people's schooling and achievements. There are good mechanisms in place to ensure that there is daily liaison between the staff and teachers. This means that information regarding academic progress is carefully monitored by staff. In addition, any particular struggles that young people experience in their lives are responded to with understanding and care. As a result, young people derive much from their education.</p> <p>Staff work hard to provide a high level of interesting activities for young people. Staff are responsive to individual suggestions and requests and, importantly, encourage young people's talents. For example, one young person is a member of a local football team and regularly achieves recognition for his talents in this sport. These activities are not only fun, but serve also to increase self-esteem and confidence. One young person said, 'It has been good' and 'I have really enjoyed making new friends and going to college. When I first came I didn't talk, but now I can talk to people. I feel more confident.'</p> <p>Young people are encouraged to increase their levels of independence, learning new skills that they will require in adulthood. All the young people have meals together, helping to clear the kitchen afterwards, and keep their personal space clean and tidy. Young people who show interests and skills in certain areas are encouraged to continue and develop these further. For example, one young person, who had finished his course for the summer, asked to prepare the lunchtime meals for the school that is on site. With support from staff, this was achieved and the young person created the week's menu, carefully balancing nutritional needs.</p> <p>Over time, staff gain the trust of young people. This enables them to confront their previous behaviours and experiences. Young people engage with therapy on a weekly basis. This encourages their self-awareness, and their ability to empathise and make positive choices. Young people receive high levels of positive regard, and are fully supported to reflect on their lives and the difficulties that they have had with relationships. As a result, their life chances and opportunities increase.</p> <p>Staff spend much time with young people, including in therapy, key-working sessions, community meetings and house meetings. This creates a norm of talking at the home, increasing young people's strategies to resolve problems and</p> | |

conflicts, and positively to change how they think and respond. One social worker commented, 'When I first met him in April at the home, he wasn't engaging with his therapy, but that has improved to the point whereby he is now disclosing behaviour and incidents from the past and is asking for life-story work. It has been really, really positive.' Another social worker said, 'He is saying that he is very happy and, for me, it was important that he got that socialisation and he is enjoying being with other young people. He looks happier and is more talkative about what he has been doing, and he appears really positive.'

On the whole, young people experience positive relationships with each other. They recognise one another's differences, strengths and weaknesses. Staff offer positive role models that are reflective of ethnicity, culture and backgrounds.

The home provides a good amount of space and facilities for young people. The manager has identified areas that need redecoration. However, in addition, maintenance and repair are required in some rooms due to dampness. Young people's bedrooms would benefit from redecoration, and the garden requires full maintenance. For example, large sections of block paving have come loose, shrubs are overgrown and the decking is beginning to rot.

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| | Judgement grade |
| How well children and young people are helped and protected | Good |
| <p>There have been no absences or missing from home incidents since the last full inspection. Young people's risks assessments are well informed, updated and understood by the staff. Young people feel safe at the home, and professionals such as social workers and independent reviewing officers (IRO) also consider them to be safe. There are no current concerns regarding child sexual exploitation, drug or alcohol abuse, self-harm or bullying.</p> <p>Staff deal sensitively with any conflict, disagreements or incidents of distress among young people. Physical intervention is rarely required, and is only used when other means of de-escalating situations have not been successful. One young person commented, 'People can have outbursts, but they (staff) keep us safe and whoever is having the outburst safe.'</p> <p>Young people feel that staff care about them. These underlying positive relationships help young people to manage conflict and to listen to the advice that staff offer. The unfailing positive regard that young people are given by staff, alongside a genuine wish to see them succeed, has resulted in a significant drop in incidences, for one young person.</p> <p>Since the last inspection, there have been no emergency admissions. Young people joining the home have had planned introductions that included visits and meetings.</p> | |

This ensures that staff can meet their complex needs, and unnecessary moves following unsuccessful placements are minimised. Young people new to the home say that they were welcomed and now feel settled.

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| | Judgement grade |
| The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers | Good |
| <p>The manager at the home was registered with Ofsted in May 2016. She is suitably qualified, has held registered manager status prior to this post, and has successfully managed homes and services for young people. She leads a committed staff team, and is aware of both the strengths and areas for improvement at the home.</p> <p>Young people make progress through living at the home, and the manager has good insight into their plans, progress, strengths and vulnerabilities. There is appropriate insight into their achievements and plans. This is monitored by the manager through processes such as supervision, meetings, liaison with other agencies and listening to the day-to-day experiences of young people.</p> <p>Previous recommendations and requirements made at the previous inspection have been met. However, more formal and regular consultations with professionals, parents and young people are not in place. This limits managerial insight into planning improvements for the care provided.</p> <p>The staff say that they receive good levels of support and that the manager is present at the home. She leads by example, and involves herself in supporting staff on shifts and with their day-to-day activities. Young people feel that they can approach the manager directly about issues that they wish to raise.</p> <p>Recent improvements for the care of young people include processes that focus staff's attention on young people's progress at staff meetings. This ensures that information held by the key worker is disseminated and understood by all staff, bringing an even greater consistency of approach to the staff team.</p> <p>Strong relationships are established between staff and other agencies, and other professionals consider that there is helpful and timely sharing of information. Any concerns regarding young people are shared in appropriate timescales, and this prevents plans from drifting. As a result, care remains focused on and relevant to young people's needs.</p> <p>On the whole, case records are detailed, focused and relevant to young people's plans. Key-working records are particularly child-focused, and reflect young people's responses and views. However, placement plans would be improved by a greater emphasis on evaluating progress and not just evidencing the work.</p> | |

The statement of purpose has been reviewed since the last inspection. However, it contains inaccuracies with regard to the name of the registered manager and does not list the full staffing complement, experience or qualifications. As such, it does not meet regulations, and could be misleading for other agencies. This is an administrative error and does not impact upon the care of young people.

Staff receive regular supervision that is reflective in nature and suitably challenges them. However, the regularity of supervision does not currently meet the company's policy of a minimum of 28 days. In addition, not all staff have received the annual appraisals required by regulation.

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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