

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>6 July 2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>1226977</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Moonreach Ltd</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>28 Castle Street, Dover, Kent, CT16 1PT</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Linda Cowie</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Lisa Beer</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Mark Blesky</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>6 July 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>

**1226977**

## **Summary of findings**

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

- Young people make good progress and achieve positive outcomes, which they sustain. They build excellent relationships with staff and each other based on trust and co-operation.
- Worrying and unsafe behaviours are effectively managed by cooperative relationships between young people and staff. Guidance rather than sanctions are used sensitively to help support and correct negative behaviours before they escalate. Young people are learning strategies to better control themselves.
- Young people who previously went missing no longer do this. They have established good attachments with staff, and understand going missing is detrimental to their relationships and progress.
- Education is strongly promoted by staff, who have instilled in the young people an understanding of the importance of learning on their futures. Young people understand how it will increase their life chances, choices and opportunities.
- Effective health promotion enables young people to take increasing responsibilities for their own wellbeing. They do this successfully because staff spend time with them explaining how lifestyle choices and behaviours can be harmful to their health.
- Enthusiastic staff are inspired by good, consistent leadership from a manager who they trust and respect. This has enabled them to honestly appraise their own practice, and seek supervision and training to further their skills and professional development.
- Young people's views are valued and gathered in all aspects of their care. Young people know that their views influence decisions within the home. More formal occasions, such as young people's meetings, do not always capture this process clearly.
- Effective recruitment ensures that only suitable people work with young people. The recording of gaps in employment is, however, less clear in some examples.

## **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 recommendations:

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. This is with particular reference to the recording of young people's group meetings. ('Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Ensure that recruitment of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. This is with particular reference to written explanations of gaps in employment histories. ('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 children's home is one of a number of similar homes owned and operated by an independent provider. It is registered to accommodate and provide care for up to two young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
First inspection	N/A	N/A

## 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>Both young people in this home have made progress across all aspects of their care planning goals. They have invested in their home and this is evidenced by their commitment to working closely with the staff and gaining an understanding of their own progress. This commitment and shared vision is by no means incidental, but a journey undertaken with staff who continually create opportunities to work closely with the young people, building their self-confidence and increasing their self-esteem.</p> <p>Young people feel valued and well looked after because they know that their opinions are important to staff. This helps young people's confidence to grow and increases their opportunities to express themselves. Young people's views are valued and gathered in all aspects of their care. They know that their opinions influence the management and decisions within the home. However, more formal occasions, such as young people's meetings, do not always capture this process clearly in records.</p> <p>Staff spend quality time and make significant progress in building close relationships with young people. The unique needs of young people are understood and effectively met because staff take the time to get to know their unique traits and personalities. The honesty and openness expressed by staff has enabled their relationships with young people to flourish. Staff explain to young people when they are acting positively and make it clear when they are not. Consistently safe, firm and caring boundaries help the young people view staff as safe and trusted adults. The rules make sense and are fair. Young people look to staff as role models to help them to regulate and improve their own behaviour.</p> <p>Young people know their right to complain and make representations and they understand how to do this. They say that they can talk about anything they wish and no complaints have been made to date.</p> <p>Caring staff understand the importance of showing dignity and respect, which is reflected in how they speak and listen to the young people. Staff value the young people's individuality and work closely with them to reinforce their special and innate qualities and help them build upon their self-esteem. Staff provide excellent advocacy for young people, providing them with a stronger voice and helping them to express their opinions. This has been successful in maintaining contact, helping young people take part in their care planning and gaining a sense of identity. As a result, young people are more engaged and influential, and are able to see the</p>	

impact of their progress.

Education is valued and strongly promoted by enthusiastic and tenacious staff. Young people learn through meaningful discussions with staff how education can increase their confidence, their knowledge of the world and how this can affect their futures. This enthusiasm and drive provides young people with positive messages and opens dialogues and discussions about their aspirations. This has resulted in regular attendance at school for one young person. The other young person is going back to college following a long absence. This has only been possible because staff have nurtured and their confidence to return to study.

A local authority social worker commented, 'I am really pleased that the staff have engaged this young person in their education and managed to arrange this college placement'. Staff have used the interests of the young person and created further opportunities to support her learning while she awaits college. They have used her interest in films to write about plots and synopsis. In discussion, she said 'I'm really interested in the Second World War and the War of the Roses and I wrote loads about them, I have never done that before.' This insightful practice has created a rich and fertile platform for her to enjoy learning, develop her imagination and take pride in her work.

Young people are engaged and motivated by their individual independency plans. High aspirations and targeted support enables them to understand the importance of learning how to look after themselves and make good lifestyle choices. Young people who previously paid less regard to their health now make good choices, they understand the importance of a balanced diet and how lifestyle choices can negatively affect their lives. Gaining this confidence enables them to take greater personal control over their health; they understand the importance of the community health services and the need to attend core health appointments. One young person said, 'I didn't used to take care of myself, I didn't care what I ate and didn't really think about health. I now make my own meals and take much better care of myself. I can't see myself going back to my old ways'.

Young people are beginning to understand that their local community is not somewhere that they visit, but something that they are very much part of and enrich. One young person who found it difficult to socialise outside of the home has gained the confidence to meet with his peers and take part in community events. Effective links have also been made with the local police community support officers and health services, further bringing the community into young people's lives. One young person has taken up horse riding, a new experience for them which they love and which they are making a real commitment to.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young</b>	<b>Good</b>

<b>people are helped and protected</b>	
<p>Young people have been taught by staff to become more aware of how their behaviour affects others. As a result, they have learned to moderate and manage their behaviour and emotions. One young person said 'I used to just explode, but now I take myself off, have a little time out and everything goes back to normal.'</p> <p>Through meaningful engagement with staff, young people become more aware of their vulnerabilities and the times when they are unsafe. Careful and sensitive approaches by staff have enabled them to understand that behaviours adopted prior to coming into the home were unsafe and placed them at risk.</p> <p>Staff have targeted their approaches and work with young people in the most effective way to keep them safe. Young people have changed negative behaviours, including frequently going missing, and running away. One young person said, 'I used to run away and go missing regularly, I haven't run away since I've been here and I'm not going to run away.' Staff members spoken to knew the impact of the work that they had undertaken and spoke about 'engaging, and honest relationships with young people' as being fundamental and significant in successfully helping them to make safer choices.</p> <p>Careful and thoughtful approaches to behaviour management enable young people to look at their own behaviour, take responsibility and manage it more effectively. Co-operative relationships between young people and staff encourages young people to look to staff for guidance, and in turn they positively reinforce more desirable behaviours. Staff are able to skilfully adjust the approach most likely to support the young person. One staff member commented, 'it's not just about controlling behaviour it's about helping young people manage their behaviour for now and in their futures. This is the key to behaviour management.'</p> <p>Young people's protection and safety is paramount and this is most visible through well-managed employment and recruitment practices. Following good vetting processes, new applicants undertake formal interviews and challenging practical exercises and scenarios which rigorously test their suitability. The recording of gaps in employment is, however, weaker in some examples. Action to address this began during the inspection.</p>	

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>This is the first inspection of this home following registration. The manager has a wealth of experience in residential care. She has completed the National Vocational</p>	



Certificate (NVQ) to level 4 and is currently undertaking NVQ 7. There are six staff employed and four of these have an NVQ level 3 qualification, with the new employees enrolling on this training.

Staff in this home are committed, enthusiastic and focused. They are provided with excellent leadership from a very experienced, committed and competent registered manager. She is trusted, highly regarded and respected by her staff. Staff speak of, 'feeling confident, motivated and well supported' by the manager.

Staff are guided in their practice by a clear statement of purpose. They understand the aims and objectives of the home, the philosophy and the manner in which care and the services are to be provided. Staff use this document to guide practice and young people's views are considered in all reviews.

The manager promotes a culture of openness and honesty which gives staff confidence to question, learn and develop. Each staff member spoken to was able to demonstrate their learning and development and how this positively impacts on their ability to care and improve outcomes for young people. One staff member said, 'I have learned to think, to reflect and to try to understand before acting.' Another said 'the manager is so engaged in the home and the young people; we can go to her with anything'.

The development of staff is enhanced further through engaging and challenging supervision. Staff hold enormous value for this process. They make good connections between their practice and the purpose of supervision. This important link has made supervision more reflective on practice, rather than a prescriptive checklist. This distinction is important because staff feel able to use supervision more creatively; they trust the process and therefore have confidence in this shaping their professional and personal development. Supervision systems also provide staff with good opportunities to discuss more personal matters that may affect their performance. This open culture enables staff to speak about times of difficulty and also strengthens the registered manager's ability to provide the right support, to target resources and maintain the smooth running of the home.

The registered manager has created a learning environment which further enriches the professional development of staff. This has been as a result of the staff and the manager evaluating their practice together and then identifying and creating their training. Training is therefore very much integrated into staff performance, driving and shaping practice. The registered manager said, 'staff are enthusiastic towards training because they understand that they are investing in themselves and their development and how they are better able to support young people.'

Quality assurance oversight is used as an essential component in developing and providing the most beneficial services for young people. For this reason, quality assurance is not a single or isolated activity, but is used as an underpinning and developing process, to inspire evaluation, discussion and learning. This is

successful because all staff understand that they have an investment in this process and share responsibility for improving quality and services.

When independent inspections of the home are undertaken, staff and the registered manager consider any shortfalls as learning opportunities, as a means of developing and enhancing care. The action taken does not just seek to address the matters raised; it exceeds it and becomes the platform for further development of practice. Examples include the development of more creative strategies, helping young people manage their behaviour and to find ways of having greater levels of control over their lives.

Notifications of concerns to external agencies or Ofsted have not been necessary due to the stability of the home. However, there are formal systems in place to ensure that if notifications are made they would contain sufficient information and clarity. The registered manager confirmed an understanding of the process and the importance of providing sufficient information to describe events and the actions taken by the home in response.

## 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 children looked after 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 that 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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