

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	11 July 2016
Unique reference number	SC010090
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Partners in Care
Registered provider address	Rouse House, 2 Wyther Lane, Kirkstall, Leeds, West Yorkshire LS5 3BT

Responsible individual	Sonia Bennett
Registered manager	Hayley Thistlethwaite
Inspector	Elaine Clare

Inspection date	11 July 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	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC010090

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are settled and making positive progress in their development, relative to when they arrived.
- Young people have warm and trusting relationships with dedicated staff who actively support their emotional and physical well-being.
- Highly-skilled staff understand the underlying issues affecting young people's ability to manage their emotions and behaviour and work with them to address their difficulties.
- Staff work well with young people to help them to understand how to keep themselves safe.
- The well-organised registered manager enables the staff group to focus on the needs of the young people.
- The registered manager ensures that staff supervision is challenging and supportive and that staff receive relevant training.
- The highly child-focused registered manager challenges other professionals when they are not meeting the needs of young people, with particular regards to education.
- Staff sometimes lack that they each fully understand and have the skills to implement the child protection policy and this is an area for improvement.

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 the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>Children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, that staff are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(vii))</p>	31 August 2016
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>Children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, that staff take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(vi))</p>	31 August 2016
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>The registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that promotes their welfare. (Regulation 13 (1)(b))</p>	31 August 2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is part of a large organisation operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care for up to four young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
2 March 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12 January 2016	Full	Good
16 March 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
1 December 2014	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 benefit from living in a settled, stable and nurturing environment. They enjoy warm and trusting relationships with the committed, child-focused staff group. Young people are happy with their rooms, which they personalise. They are positive about the decor of the home. Young people talk about how they are able to choose the decor in their room and assist staff with its decoration.</p> <p>Three young people are making significant and sustained progress in their education and will shortly be taking their end of year exams. Staff fully support their aspirations, including one young person who would like to be a professional make up artist. One young person, who is not in full-time education, engages with staff in a varied range of activities that support their learning and progress. Staff spend time with them on maths, budgeting, food shopping and cooking. Staff support the education tutor with her two-hour lesson and have strongly advocated on behalf of the young person with her complaint against the local authority for not providing a full-time education placement sooner. Staff effectively encourage young people to engage in artwork, practical skills like painting walls and sheds and going fishing.</p> <p>Committed and caring staff have an in-depth understanding of the reasons behind young people's difficulty in managing their emotions and behaviour and the need to address this on all levels. Young people are listened to by skilled staff, who take their concerns seriously. Staff also help young people to prepare for and contribute to their looked after reviews and education meetings. Staff address difficult issues with young people, including bereavement and they support young people's identity with, for example, family contact and discussions about religion. Staff enthusiastically encourage young people to benefit from sport and physical exercise for their self-esteem, confidence and emotional and physical well-being. Young people enjoy going to the gym with staff. Staff proactively support one young person, who is a keen fisherman on a holiday in the south of France on a fishing expedition. Another young person enjoys listening to music and spending time with the registered manager exploring different music and eating 'Greggs'. The social worker for one young person commented that he benefits from receiving one-to-one attention from staff, which he has not had before. Another social worker says, 'They have been willing to work with professionals in order to achieve the best outcome for (name).'</p>	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>At the previous inspections in January 2016 and March 2016, a requirement was raised to ensure that safeguarding procedures were followed following allegations against staff made by the young people at the home.</p> <p>During this inspection, it was found that a safeguarding concern was raised by a staff member at the start of June 2016. During a restraint, a few days earlier, he reported that a member of staff had used inappropriate restraining techniques by pulling the arm up the back of a young person and pulling her hair. He did not express the concerns to the team leader on duty, who was also involved in the restraint, but wrote a statement to another manager in another home three days after the incident. He failed to follow the organisation's safeguarding policy immediately, which left a young person vulnerable.</p> <p>Upon receipt of the written statement, the registered manager acted quickly and passed on all the information to the local area designated officer. However, she failed to stipulate the detail of the concerns and that there were inconsistencies with the statements of the staff members involved. The registered manager did not receive a response from the local area designated officer and proceeded to undertake her own internal investigation. No referral was made to the local authority safeguarding board.</p> <p>The staff had failed again to notify the local authority of a safeguarding concern immediately and, as a result, did not follow the authorities or the organisation's safeguarding procedures. Furthermore, a poor internal investigation led to no action being taken against the staff members involved. Failure to follow safeguarding procedures means that there is potential risk to young people.</p> <p>Strategies are in place with clear guidelines for staff to follow to ensure the safety of young people and themselves. The social worker commented, 'This is the safest place for her and she has been safe. When she goes missing, they find her. They have understood how to manage her behaviour. She is rethinking and will now respond to consequences.'</p> <p>Staff work together daily to assess the moods and needs of young people. They ensure, for example, that it is safe to agree to a request for unsupervised time out in the community. This provides further safeguarding in addition to staff referring to the regularly reviewed and updated risk assessments. Staff discuss strategies to keep young people safe, while acknowledging the benefits to young people of allowing them to feel that they are trusted.</p> <p>Key work evidences a wide range of safety issues discussed with young people including internet safety, bullying, confidentiality, drugs and alcohol, safe sex, trust, smoking and fire evacuation.</p> <p>The recruitment records inspected contained all the required information to ensure that young people are protected by good recruitment procedures.</p>	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>The registered manager is currently undertaking her level 5 leadership and management qualification and has eight years' experience of working with children in residential care. She has managed this home for the past 16 months but has recently submitted her application to cancel her registration. Four members of her staff team hold their level 3 qualifications.</p> <p>The registered manager manages a well-organised, settled home, where young people are making progress in all areas of their development. Her strong child-focus and organisational ability have supported staff to effectively meet the complex needs of young people. Since the interim inspection, there has been a significant reduction in challenging behaviour from young people. This is due to the registered manager's skilful impact assessments and matching of the young people in placement. The more settled environment and consequent improved staff morale has enabled the registered manager to achieve the aims and objectives of the service set out in the statement of purpose.</p> <p>The registered manager consistently provides the staff group with clear leadership, supportive supervision and relevant training. Staff say that the registered manager is supportive and they feel well trained to do their job. Supervision is thorough and staff can bring ideas to discuss. The registered manager leads by example and is not afraid to challenge other professionals when they do not provide young people with the services that they need. Education is an example of this, with the registered manager repeatedly contacting local authorities and virtual schools in order to secure education for one young person in placement.</p> <p>The registered manager continues to work hard to establish consistency within the team, in particular with regard to protecting the young people's welfare following allegations. Staff do not always demonstrate that they put the welfare of the young people at the centre of their practice. This is an area for improvement for the registered manager to address via training and individual supervision.</p> <p>Inconsistencies by staff to follow the child protecting policy and a lack of education for one young person are currently preventing the registered manager from driving up standards even further in the service.</p> <p>Feedback from childcare professionals is very positive with regard to the work undertaken by the staff team and the registered manager. The social worker for one young person commented that the service 'works really well' with her, with regular communication from the home so that she can see how the young person is progressing daily. She is satisfied that the staff address complaints and call her immediately with any concerns. She also commented that the registered manager is very good at prompting the local authority to provide services for the young person. Another social worker echoed these encouraging views.</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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