

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	23/08/2016
Unique reference number	SC060758
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	3 Dimensions Care Limited
Responsible individual	Nita Ellul
Registered manager	Shirley Cowell
Inspector	Sharron Escott

Inspection date	23/08/2016
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

SC060758

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Two young people who have moved into the home since the previous inspection benefited from carefully managed and successful transitions. The home now accommodates five young people. All five young people are flourishing as a result of the nurturing support and guidance they receive from staff. They are making good progress educationally and socially, have positive experiences and enjoy living in the home.
- A consistent and well-trained staff group provide care that directly benefits young people. Staff are equipped with the skills needed to understand and meet the young people's individual needs and abilities.
- Overall, staff promote positive behaviour through encouragement and positive reinforcement. They recognise when young people are doing well and make every attempt to reward these steps. Praise, internet vouchers and days out are common rewards.
- Young people are happy in this home. This is confirmed by their families and their social workers.
- Although the staff consider that the views, wishes and feelings of young people are very important to them, more formal consultation systems are not utilised effectively. This is a missed opportunity for young people to contribute to the development of the home and services provided.

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 the records of young people's meetings are clear and presented in a child-friendly manner. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children and the staff caring for them. This is with specific reference to reviewing the use of financial reparations and ensuring that all reparations are recorded in the central record of sanctions. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- Ensure that information from internal and external monitoring is used to ensure continuous improvement. This is with particular reference to the effectiveness of the home's development plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- Ensure that records kept for staff evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). In particular, evidence attention to practice-related issues and details of continuing professional development needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. Some young people may also have specific learning disabilities. The provision is registered with the Department for Education to provide education on this site for young people who live in this and other homes run by this small independent provider.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/04/2015	Full	Good
16/10/2014	Full	Adequate
21/08/2014	Full	Inadequate
19/11/2013	Interim	Satisfactory progress

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Strong, effective relationships exist between staff and young people. Interactions are respectful and warm. Young people benefit from the stability provided by a team of committed, enthusiastic staff. The majority of the team members have worked at the home for many years. They are experienced and hold the relevant childcare qualifications. As a result, young people are safe and have fun.</p> <p>Young people live in a home that provides them with good opportunities to have personal and private space. Young people's bedrooms are decorated in accordance with their personal interests and hobbies. For example, one young person likes 'Star Wars' and, his bedroom is decorated with this as a theme. This approach provides a strong sense of identity and belonging for each young person.</p> <p>The staff have successfully developed the young people's interests and talents. This has a positive impact on their personal development. For example, one young person who expressed an interest in playing the guitar now owns four acoustic guitars and a ukulele and attends weekly lessons. As a result, his talents have developed and he is writing his own music and lyrics. At the time of the inspection, a second young person and two of his allocated care staff were climbing Snowdon.</p> <p>Communication between the staff and young people is respectful, jovial and nurturing. The views, wishes and feelings of young people are considered informally throughout the day. Weekly house meetings take place but these are adult-led meetings and, typically, the discussions held are limited to menu choices and activity options. Records kept by staff do not demonstrate that young people's views have contributed to the quality of care provided and the development of the home.</p> <p>Staff have high aspirations for the young people. They encourage the young people to embrace all the opportunities available to them. The young people are encouraged, supported and guided to reach their ambitions and goals. One young person said, 'I like all my team. They are great. They really help me. Since I have lived here, I have learnt to cook. I've stayed in a hotel and ordered room service, which was fun. I love living here and do not want to live anywhere else.'</p> <p>Positive feedback was received from one young person's social worker and a parent, who confirmed that the young person is very happy and that the quality of care is good. The social worker said, 'Communication is frequent, and weekly reports are of a good quality.' A parent said, 'The staff not only help my child, but they are also very supportive to me. My relationship with my child has improved</p>	

because of the encouragement and support the manager and team provide.

Sanctions are rarely imposed for negative behaviour. However, records maintained on the young people's files show that financial reparations are given when young people cause damage to the home. This approach is not restorative and does not encourage young people to consider the impact that their behaviour has on themselves or others. In addition, the financial reparations imposed are not recorded in the central records of sanctions.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people are safe and protected, because the registered manager and care staff give the highest priority to their safety and well-being. Safeguarding arrangements are effective, and keeping young people safe is integral to staff's daily practice. Staff are trained in child protection and understand their safeguarding roles and responsibilities. They demonstrate a good awareness of risks and vulnerabilities for each young person and take appropriate action to manage these effectively.</p> <p>All staff have been fully assessed for their suitability to work in the home. The recruitment and selection process is robust. All new employees attend a comprehensive induction, followed by an ongoing training programme. These opportunities provide them with the required training to meet the complex and unique needs of the young people effectively. All staff spoken with had a good understanding of how to safeguard and care for the young people.</p> <p>The staff teams are good at identifying and managing the young people's anxieties and behaviours effectively. Since the previous inspection in January 2016, the records show that there have been nine incidents involving four different young people that have required the use of physical intervention. These interventions are for a limited time and used as a last resort. The manager reviews all incident reports and speaks to staff and the young people, following the incidents. However, this informal approach is not followed up formally in one-to-one sessions or team meetings. As a result, the manager has not explored with the staff or young people alternative ways to manage similar incidents and to prevent them from happening again.</p> <p>Young people say that they know how to make a complaint, but do not need to. They say that they feel safe and enjoy living at the home.</p>	

The registered manager maintains strong and effective links with other agencies. The team works successfully with a range of safeguarding, education and health professionals to ensure that young people's needs, risks and behaviours are effectively addressed.

Young people live in a physically safe home. They are protected effectively by the use of health and safety procedures, risk assessments and checks that are regularly reviewed and kept up to date. Young people and staff are regularly involved in fire drills to ensure that they know how to evacuate the building safely in the event of a fire.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home is led and managed by an enthusiastic and committed registered manager. She is suitably qualified and proactive in sharing her knowledge and experiences with the staff team. Collectively, the team shares the manager's child-focused approach and is motivated to provide high levels of individualised, nurturing care to the young people.</p> <p>The atmosphere in the home is vibrant, and the young people are at the centre of staff's practice. Continuity of care provided to the young people is good. A member of staff said, 'We haven't needed to use agency staff because it is very rare staff are off work, and if they are then we are always willing to help out and cover the shift.'</p> <p>The care team is highly committed, enthusiastic and motivated. The training programme is good and ensures that the staff have the skills required to meet the needs of young people well. Team meetings are well attended, and are used effectively to share young people's achievements. In addition, the manager has recently introduced weekly key-worker meetings. These meetings are in the early stages of implementation. The manager confirmed that the aim of these meetings is to allow key people to share current information about their key child, for example behaviour management strategies and/or changes to care plans.</p> <p>Staff receive regular supervision and say that they value one-to-one time with the manager who is supportive and relaxed in her approach. Records reviewed confirmed this. Despite this, the manager has not utilised this formal meeting to consider staff's individual development needs, in particular opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice following incidents. Opportunities in which to identify what</p>	

has gone well and/or to explore alternative behaviour management strategies are missed.

The registered manager regularly reviews the home's development plan. However, this plan does not include development opportunities that maximise young people's experiences and achievements or any planned environmental developments.

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 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 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 whom 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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