

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	15/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC052946
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Care 2 Share Ltd
Registered provider address	46 The Ridgeway, North Harrow, Harrow, Middlesex HA2 7QN

Responsible individual	Mehnaaz Chaudhary
Registered manager	Mehnaaz Chaudhary
Inspector	Sharon Payne

Inspection date	15/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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

SC052946

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Police officers, education, youth justice and social care professionals greatly appreciate the service. They provide positive feedback regarding the home's strengths.
- Care planning evidences a good understanding of individual needs and clear objectives. There is a strong understanding of issues relating to race, religion, gender identity and immigration status. This aides staff to produce meaningful diversity plans.
- Focused key working enables young people to tackle their personal issues. Staff positively work to raise young people's self-esteem, confidence and self-worth.
- Young people feel listened to. They actively participate in decision-making that affects their lives. Young people are able to engage in what is written about them and contribute towards their care planning.
- There is a strong commitment to promoting education. An example is the introduction of an education coordinator. Young people can obtain additional practical qualifications in first-aid awareness, food hygiene, diversity and equality, and health and safety.
- Young people benefit from effective safeguarding arrangements. Staff succeed in providing a nurturing base for young people who have a history of short placements, complex behaviours and absconding.
- Young people respond well to personalised incentives, which promote socially acceptable behaviour. Sanctions focus on reparation, enabling them to take responsibility for their actions. Restorative justice approaches are based on four key features: respect, responsibility, repair and reintegration.
- Young people benefit from long-standing, highly effective leadership and management arrangements. The staff team is very stable, competent and well qualified. There is a strong commitment to staff development and creating opportunities for maximising their potential.
- Shortfalls do not have a detrimental impact on young people. These relate to improving the performance appraisal system and ensuring that the statement of purpose and sanction and restraint records meet regulatory requirements.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person/s meet(s) 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>16: Statement of purpose</p> <p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement of purpose, which covers matters listed in Schedule 1. This particularly relates to restraint training and staff competence in this area. (Regulation 16(1))</p>	01/12/2016
<p>35: Behaviour management policies and records</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that sanction and restraint records contain all required information. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(b)(c))</p>	01/12/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff performance appraisals take into account, when reasonable and practical, the views of other professionals who have worked with the staff member and children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.5)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care and accommodation for five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The registered person also manages the home. The company has another children's home and a range of other services for children and adults.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
28/10/2015	Full	Good
30/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/01/2015	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Young people make good progress in relation to their starting points. The comprehensive induction on admission documents their preferences and clearly outlines the home's rules and expectations. Young people are comfortable and quickly settle into life at the home. A young person stated, 'Nothing could be better.' Another said, 'I like how I am looked after, how the staff treat me.' A further young person affirmed, 'Things have been good for me.' A social worker highlighted that they are 'very impressed with the service'. A former resident stated, 'Compared to all the others, this is the best children's home.'</p> <p>Care planning evidences a good understanding of individual needs and clear objectives. A social work professional commented on the 'well-balanced care plan'. Diversity plans focus on young people's heritage, faith, culture, language, significant calendar days, gender and sexual identity. Young people receive support with following their religious choices. Examples are celebrating Eid, fasting during Ramadan and encouragement to attend places of worship. Young people demonstrate pride in who they are. For example, they wear culturally reflective clothing and listen to traditional music.</p> <p>Young people benefit from regular key-work sessions, which enable them to address a range of personal issues. Topics covered include education, health, activities, positive relationships, enjoyment and achieving, staying safe, health and well-being, and family contact. These discussions enable some young people to produce individual action plans, detailing their short- and long-term goals. Staff effectively assist young people with their personal development. They challenge sexist attitudes and the use of discriminatory language, positively working to raise young people's self-esteem, confidence and self-worth.</p> <p>Staff succeed in forming and maintaining nurturing, mutually respectful, trusting relationships with young people. Staff continually focus on motivating young people. Young people say they feel listened to. They actively participate in decision-making, which affects their lives. Young people are able to consider what is written about them and contribute towards care planning. Young people actively participate in house meetings, influencing menus, activities and house practices.</p> <p>Leaders and managers recognise the importance of positive contact with relatives. Family and friends are welcome to visit the home. Young people prefer meeting up with friends outside of the home. Staff, when necessary, supervise contact sessions. On exceptional occasions, the home has also assisted with funding young people's activities with their relatives. Staff work hard to build and maintain a dialogue with parents, to promote the best interests of young people.</p>	

Leaders and managers strongly promote the importance of education. The introduction of an education coordinator is an example of their commitment. The majority of young people are attending some form of educational establishment, although regular attendance is an issue for some young people. Staff support young people with this, offering to transport them if necessary.

Staff have good links with schools and the virtual school teams. A virtual head teacher described staff as being 'very supportive'. Staff assist young people with their college and apprenticeship applications. They also have opportunities to obtain additional certificates in practical subjects, such as first-aid awareness, food hygiene, diversity and equality, health and safety.

Young people have opportunities to pursue their hobbies and interests and to engage in a range of social activities. This enables young people to engage in their local community and to venture further afield. An example of the latter is a holiday to a theme park.

Young people lead relatively healthy lifestyles, which include attention to their physical, sexual and mental health. Young people eat a balanced, culturally diverse diet. They can snack on an ample range of international fruit. A young person described the food as 'good'. Staff are able to cater for preferences, such as halal and organic foods. Young people participate in various forms of exercise: bike riding, tennis, football or going to the gym.

Young people have access to local health services and are registered with a doctor, dentist and optician. They attend workshops in sexual health and alcohol and substance misuse. A professional confirmed, 'The young people's well-being is very important to staff.'

Staff promote independence, and a structured programme is available. A former resident stated they were 'well prepared' for future independence. Young people undertake household tasks, which helps to prepare them for adult life. They do their own laundry, tidy their rooms and prepare light meals. They also bake and cook main meals with staff.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good

Young people feel safe and they appreciate that the home provides a stable base for them. A social worker confirmed that staff 'work with some very difficult and challenging young people and do eventually get through to them'. Staff effectively work with young people who have a history of short-lived placements, complex behaviours and absconding. There are good links with youth justice teams, safeguarding personnel and the police, which provide a highly effective, coordinated way of working. A youth offending officer gave an example of staff assisting with the monitoring of intensive supervision orders and in doing so helping to encourage young people to lead offending free lifestyles.

The majority of young people enjoy spending time outside of the home. Missing episodes mostly relate to late returns. Staff appropriately report when young people are missing. A social work professional stated that missing episodes are 'no way related to the quality of the care'. A police officer confirmed that staff 'deal with missing robustly'. Missing plans and risk assessments are available for young people. Staff also benefit from bespoke training and guidance from the coordinator for missing incidents.

Staff raise young people's awareness of the dangers of sexual exploitation, gang affiliation and radicalisation. Safeguarding policies include information on how to counter risks of self-harm and suicide. Staff additionally use a child sexual exploitation measurement tool to inform their thinking, when there are concerns. Staff benefit from a range of safeguarding training, which further informs their knowledge.

The home has a good risk-management system, which addresses individual and collective needs. A social work professional commented on the home's 'well-considered risk assessment'. The updated location assessment outlines the risks in the neighbourhood. The closed-circuit television contributes to the good security arrangements. Extensive certificates further confirm the safe environment. Staff undertake regular health and safety checks. Robust recruitment practices help to ensure that unsuitable people do not work with young people.

Staff appropriately challenge socially unacceptable behaviour. The safe-parenting strategy asks staff to consider, 'What would you do if this was your child?' A social worker confirmed that staff give 'clear and firm boundaries'. They clarify, 'Staff do not back down [when young people are] abusive and threatening.' Staff reinforce, praise and encourage acceptable behaviour. Personalised incentives help with this process, for example being able to obtain a new pair of trainers.

Sanctions focus on reparation, enabling young people to take responsibility for their actions. Restorative justice approaches focus on four key features: respect, responsibility, repair and reintegration. The overall aim is to help young people to solve difficulties and continue living at the home. Sanctions are fair, and physical interventions are rare. The only issue relates to record-keeping, which does not fully comply with regulations. In particular some sanction and restraint records did not contain all the required information.

Leaders and managers acknowledge when they are unable to effectively meet young people’s complex needs. They purposefully work with young people and their placing authorities, until an alternative placement is available. An independent reviewing officer commended their ‘sensitivity’ and period of notice, which enabled ‘a fair transition’ to a new setting.

Young people live in a home that blends easily into the residential area. All bedrooms include a television, and young people have keys to their rooms. There are two communal lounges. One lounge has a large television and an abundant supply of books. The other lounge is more recreational, having a computer and games console. The kitchen has a dining area, where they can eat together. The garden has wooden furniture and a trampoline, enabling young people to enjoy their outdoor space. A young person expressed their appreciation of the spaciousness, especially the big garden.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>Effective leaders and managers provide a consistently high-quality service. A wide range of professionals provide exceptionally positive feedback. A social care professional highlighted that staff ‘go above and beyond’ to meet young people’s needs. Several professionals described communication as ‘excellent’. One stated that they would ‘highly recommend’ the home.</p> <p>The registered manager is also the owner of the business. This individual is a qualified social worker and has over 25 years’ experience of working with children and families. The management structure is strengthened by strong deputy and senior arrangements. The quality-assurance system provides an effective evaluation of the quality of care. Monthly management meetings contribute towards service improvement.</p> <p>The workforce development plan meets the quality standards guidance, ensuring that competent, supported staff care for young people. Staff have the necessary vocational training. They benefit from ongoing training and reflective supervision. Team meetings provide a further opportunity for practice-related learning. Staff have their performance formally appraised. However, the appraisal system misses the opportunity to take account of the views of young people and involved professionals.</p> <p>Young people have their own informative guide, which they receive during their</p>	

induction. The home's statement of purpose summarises the service and clearly details the guiding principles, aims and objectives. This document does not include all the required information. The omissions relate to restraint training and staff competence in this area.

Placing authorities appreciate the strong partnership arrangements, which positively support their plans for young people. Social workers receive regular progress reports, which help them to keep updated on their young person's development. An independent reviewing officer highlighted that high-quality reports were provided for each review. Young people receive care from a stable, competent, highly experienced staff team. A young person described staff as 'nice', 'caring' and 'welcoming'. Staff have a range of experience and skills, which includes working in youth work, fostering and residential care. Staff feel appreciated by the organisation and commented on the strong team camaraderie. There is a strong commitment to staff development and creating opportunities for maximising their potential.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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