

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>14/09/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC028174</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Direct Care Ltd</b>
<b>Registered provider address,</b>	<b>Goldwyns, Rutland House 90 92, Southend On Sea SS2 6HZ</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Rebecca Ouellani</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Carly Playle</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Corrinne Barker</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>14/09/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Sustained effectiveness</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>Outstanding</b>

## SC028174

### Summary of findings

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

- The home is providing a good service to young people, with young people making excellent progress from their starting points.
- Young people benefit from stable and secure placements. They are encouraged to develop positive and trusting relationships with staff. They grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Young people are engaged in education and become enthusiastic learners. Staff intervene quickly when education is not going well and work in partnership with others to bring about positive change.
- Health needs are met, with staff accessing specialist support for young people when needed.
- Young people develop the skills and confidence to manage their lives as adults. Preparation for independence is well planned and young people can review their own progress and celebrate their achievements.
- Risk to young people is reduced as a result of living in this home. Staff safeguard young people well, and respond effectively when incidents occur.
- Staff manage behaviour skilfully and support young people to develop strategies to regulate their own behaviour. Young people contribute to their own plans, and begin to take responsibility for their behaviour.
- The manager provides strong leadership, and has developed a culture of nurturing, child-centred practice.
- Staff work in partnership with professionals to achieve the best outcomes for young people, advocating on behalf of young people when necessary.

## **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:

- The registered person should ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. This is with particular reference to recording more detail following a physical intervention. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- The registered person should ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. This is with reference to recording clearly whether an independent return interview has taken place. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.30)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This is a privately run home, which is part of an organisation. The home offers care and accommodation for up to four children and young people aged between 10 and 18 years old, who have an emotional or behavioural disorder. This home particularly specialises in caring for young people who are at risk of sexual exploitation.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/08/2015	Full	Good
24/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/10/2014	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people living in the home are happy and settled. The home environment is welcoming and relaxed and young people make a strong contribution to how it looks.</p> <p>Young people benefit from stable and secure placements. Staff support young people to develop positive, trusting relationships. From this secure base, young people make very good progress, particularly considering their starting points.</p> <p>Young people are engaged in education and become enthusiastic learners. Young people are making active choices to learn and become ambitious for themselves. Staff intervene quickly when education is not going well and work in partnership with others to bring about good outcomes.</p> <p>Young people's health needs are met, with staff accessing specialist support for young people when needed. Young people have benefited from specialist therapeutic support, including direct work.</p> <p>Young people make very good progress in their self-confidence and self-esteem. This means that young people are able to engage more fully with staff and peers, and are better placed to take advantage of opportunities. They learn to live alongside their peers and navigate sometimes difficult relationships. Young people talk about respecting staff and feeling respected themselves. Communication between staff and young people is positive, with young people feeling listened to.</p> <p>There is a good sense of community and young people have opportunities to volunteer, fundraise for charities and good causes and have fun. Young people engage in activities inside and outside the home, which helps to create positive memories and promotes self-esteem. Young people are supported to pursue their interests, with one young person excelling in gymnastics.</p> <p>Young people develop the skills and confidence to manage their lives as adults. Preparation for independence is planned effectively through a well-defined series of goals and rewards. Young people can review their own progress and celebrate their achievements. They are encouraged to contribute to their own plans and review progress.</p> <p>Young people are supported to become increasingly independent and take age-appropriate risks. These risks are very well managed and are kept under close review. An example of this is managing contact safely and in line with their care plan. Staff actively support contact and assist young people and their families to</p>	

progress to unsupervised contact as young people become more independent.

The home environment is safe and following recent redecoration provides a pleasant environment. Young people's bedrooms are highly personalised. One young person said 'I love my room'. There is a shortage of private space where young people could meet their social worker or have contact with family without disrupting other people's access to communal rooms. There are plans to address this by building a summer-house.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people feel safe in the home. This starts with trusting relationships with staff and a strong sense of being cared for and listened to. Young people invariably come to the home deemed to be at high risk of harm or having suffered significant harm. Within a short period of time, the risk posed to young people is reduced.</p> <p>Young people are protected by comprehensive risk management and behaviour management plans. Staff work in partnership with other professionals as a multi-agency team to reduce risk. Specialist services are accessed as needed. Staff communicate well and take a proactive approach to liaising with professionals and families.</p> <p>Staff support young people to develop awareness of risk and make safer choices by encouraging them to contribute to their own plans. Because of this intervention, harm, through sexual exploitation, self-harm, drug and alcohol use and risks due to missing from care, either reduces or ceases altogether.</p> <p>Staff receive appropriate training and feel confident about their safeguarding role. An example of this is with young people missing from care. Incidents become less frequent, but when a young person goes missing staff respond appropriately and follow procedures effectively. All relevant parties are informed and staff record these incidents well. Management oversight of missing from care episodes provides the opportunity to identify patterns of behaviour or certain triggers, so that the risk can be further reduced. While missing from care incidents are responded to appropriately, staff do not always record whether independent return interviews are taking place following an incident.</p> <p>Staff manage challenging behaviour well. Staff understand young people's behaviour and what emotions are being expressed when young people engage in harmful behaviour, or lose control or become aggressive.</p>	

Staff rarely use physical intervention to manage behaviour. In situations where physical intervention becomes necessary, staff use this safely and record this appropriately. Staff provide a written account of the situation and the hold used. They do not use more visual accounts of the hold, such as a diagram or picture, so the written description can be open to misinterpretation, or may mean very little to the young person retrospectively when reflecting on the incident.

Debriefs for young people and staff are in place and young people can reflect on the incident and express any negative feelings they have about being restrained.

Staff manage behaviour skilfully and support young people to develop strategies to regulate their own behaviour. Young people contribute to their own plans, and begin to take responsibility for their behaviour. Young people learn to get along with each other, and when arguments occur, staff encourage a restorative approach to resolve tensions quickly.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She is highly skilled in her management role and has a sound understanding of young people's individual needs. The manager promotes a strong ethos for the home, with young people being central to everything the staff do. Staff clearly share the manager's vision and make the home feel welcoming and relaxed for young people. Leadership and management is outstanding in response to the progress young people make from their starting points. The manager is ambitious for young people and works in partnership with others through positive professional relationships to ensure the best possible outcomes for young people. The progress and welfare of young people is monitored and staff quickly address issues where they arise. Staff are confident in their safeguarding role and any risks are managed effectively.</p> <p>The manager sets high standards for the home and leads by example. Staff are well trained, receiving training online as well as having access to a broad spectrum of training opportunities provided in-house and externally. There is some evidence of research informing practice, and this is particularly helpful for staff in relation to specialist areas such as child sexual exploitation and self-harm. Induction processes are very good, providing a firm foundation for staff development while ensuring safe practice. Staff feel well supported by the manager and by colleagues. Good staff retention in the home evidences this, and this provides young people with stability. Staff have regular supervisions and appraisals, ensuring that they can reflect on practice and have the opportunity to discuss their own professional</p>	



development. The recommendation made at the last full inspection has not been achieved yet. This recommendation referred to the lack of space in the home where young people and either family or their social worker could meet in private. A summer house in the garden is being planned, but major groundworks have taken place this year, delaying any progress.

Quality assurance systems are well used, enabling the manager to have good insight into the strengths and weaknesses of the home. External monitoring of the home is used to good effect in driving up standards.

## 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 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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