

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>19/10/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>1240449</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Idem Living Ltd</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>Newlands, 1a Huyton Hey Road, Liverpool L36 5SE</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Andrew Palmer</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Anthony Hallam</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Denise Jolly</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>19/10/2016</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>

**1240449**

## **Summary of findings**

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

- Leaders and managers have carefully overseen the development of this new home, to ensure that young people have high-quality support that helps them to make progress. They readily explore difficulties to learn how to improve. Minor shortfalls found in this inspection have not affected young people's welfare.
- Staff consistently provide aspirational, warm and supportive care that underpins positive relationships with young people and with all who support them to make progress in every area of their lives.
- Young people are safe and feel safe because staff have a very good understanding of their individual needs. Staff use this information effectively to provide high-quality care and support.
- Young people are making good progress in education. This is because staff have high aspirations for them and work in partnership with school and health professionals. Consequently, the effects of barriers to learning, such as inconsistent support and the impact of poor health, are minimised.
- Young people continue to learn effective ways to manage their feelings and impulses. They demonstrate confidence and trust in staff. This helps them to explore new experiences that increase their participation in society and shared activity.
- Young people are at the heart of the home. Their wishes and views are reflected in the way that their home looks and the activities that they take part in. This helps them to have enriched experiences that add value to their unique personalities and strengths.
- A lack of understanding of diverse communication is limiting the capacity of staff to encourage all young people to reach their full potential, although they do support them to make good progress in their individual and social development.

## 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) 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
Leaders and managers must ensure that staff have the experience and skills to meet the needs of each child and, in particular, that they know how to support and promote their individual communication needs. (Regulation 13(2)(c))	09/01/2017
The registered person must ensure that within five days of the use of any measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (This record must include behavioural and emotional observations if the child has communication needs.) (Regulation 35(3)(c))	09/01/2017
The registered person must notify HMCI without delay if there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40(4)(c))	02/12/2016
The registered person must give notice in writing to HMCI, as soon as it is reasonably practicable to do so, if the premises of the home are significantly altered. (Regulation 49(g))	02/12/2016

### Recommendations

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

- To ensure an effective introduction to the home, the registered person should ensure that key information about living in the home is made available to young people in accordance with their capacity to understand and retain information. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.8)

## **Full report**

### **Information about this children's home**

This is a privately owned children's home, providing care and accommodation for up to three young people who may have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

### **Recent inspection history**

This is the first inspection following registration.

## 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 enjoy the experiences and opportunities provided by caring and enthusiastic staff. This is reflected in their increased ability to take part in everyday life, attend school and medical appointments and spend time with their families.</p> <p>Despite there being careful assessment of young people's needs, one young person has moved on from the home due to emerging mental health difficulties. Staff did not fully support him to consider information about his move into the home, because they did not provide him with written or visual information, despite knowing that he had poor verbal recall. There is no evidence that this shortfall contributed to the future instability of the placement. Initially, he made good progress in building relationships with staff. Managers communicated effectively with partner agencies, to secure appropriate assessment of his mental health, and made decisions in the best interests of all who lived and worked in the home. However, despite their efforts, the young person moved without an identified future placement, due to a crisis in his mental well-being. The manager and staff have reflected on this disrupted placement to inform future practice.</p> <p>The young person now resident appears relaxed and confident in the home, which meets his communication and environmental needs, and suits his individual tastes. Staff provide support that is tailored to his needs and is consistently delivered, so that he demonstrates trust in those who care for him. He is making good progress in independent personal care, enhancing his safety and appearance. He has created new routines that help him to manage transition in and out of the home. This has helped him to engage in more activities in the community, which provides him with greater enrichment.</p> <p>Key workers maintain and regularly review detailed placement plans that set out the young person's achievements and future goals. These are completed in consultation with all professionals who support him and his family. He contributes to these plans by daily participation and choices. For example, he likes to spend time on the computer. He has negotiated set times for his use of this, by spending more time completing other activities that are led by staff. Monthly progress reports and regular information exchange with his social worker, mental health professional, teacher and family show that this negotiation has successfully increased his overall activity level and tolerance of social activity.</p> <p>During the inspection visit, staff welcomed a visit from the social worker and parent of a young person who hopes to move into the home. This was part of a detailed programme of information collection and familiarisation for all who support them, to assess and plan how staff will meet their needs from the outset. This</p>	

commitment to involving parents continues throughout placement and ensures a holistic approach to individual care.

Staff want young people to have fun and to exercise control over their daily lives and relationships. This involves careful recording of the small details that are meaningful to individuals and their needs, such as the kind of food that young people like and what they can and cannot yet do independently. Staff undertake thoughtful and insightful reflection about young people, and offer practical strategies such as visual schedules, small practical tasks such as completing a jigsaw, or timetable reminders that help young people to remember the things that are important to them.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people live in a home where staff help them to feel safe and happy. Staff maintain comprehensive risk assessments for young people. These are dynamically reviewed in response to changes in circumstances, to the developing understanding of young people and to their behaviours. Staff break these risk assessments down into subsections in order that subtle changes in progress can be measured and care planning developed, to ensure that young people are kept safe. Progress is shared effectively with parents and professionals so that they are fully informed of any concerns about, or improvements made by, young people.</p> <p>Young people are enabled to develop new skills and abilities, such as using a washing machine. Such skills are broken down into steps, in individual plans, which staff members monitor and adapt when progress is made. This ensures that young people are able to acquire and build on new skills safely.</p> <p>Visual systems are used in the home to ensure that young people can demonstrate their understanding of hazards and awareness of procedures to follow, for example during a fire evacuation. Use of strategies, such as social stories, enables young people to achieve transitions, for example starting school, and to reduce their anxieties.</p> <p>Behaviour support plans are developed in order to understand and analyse young people's behaviours and any incidents. These include the use of positive praise at the base level, to enable young people to develop confidence and skills. Applied Behaviour Analysis is used well to provide oversight and to promote positive behaviour strategies. Staff undertake training in behaviour management to</p>	

promote consistency in practice. Staff are able to discuss and reflect in order to develop their understanding of young people's communication, which results in decreasing incidents. Following positive redirection from staff, one young person now pushes their arms more gently in his communication. Staff now record this behaviour as communication, rather than as incidents, and are using this approach to increase his tolerance to boundaries and expectations. This young person was seen to seek reassurance from a member of staff when meeting the inspector, indicating that he is developing positive relationships which support his sense of safety.

During crises, staffing levels are sufficient to ensure that individual young people are kept safe and protected from events occurring with others. Staff are able to access informal supervision, in addition to formal meetings, at these times, which enables them to feel supported. Staff are suitably debriefed following the use of restraint, and managers evaluate incidents in order to inform improvements in practice. However, some incidents might have been avoided if staff had used information provided on young people's cognitive and communication abilities more effectively. Staff do not consistently give young people the opportunity to communicate their feelings following an incident, to ensure that staff have an improved understanding of the young people's experiences.

Consideration is being given to staffing levels to ensure that a vulnerable young person who is going to move into the home is safeguarded effectively. The young person's social worker and other professionals have been impressed by the proactive approach taken by the home. Appropriate adaptations, following assessment by an occupational therapy team, are being undertaken to ensure that the young person's personal needs can be met safely.

Young people are protected from going missing by appropriate levels of staffing and a home environment that is responsibly secure. Risk assessments are completed, to support young people to access safely activities in the community and transportation, which support and develop their participation and experiences outside of the home. In the home, there are suitable strategies, such as parental controls, to protect young people from potential risks from internet use. Staff respect young people's use of technology to maintain contact with family members, but remain in close proximity to ensure that this is managed. They support contact between young people and parents safely, in line with relevant plans and expectations of social workers. The manager is seeking further training and development of the home's policy on e-safety, to ensure that staff maintain an up-to-date knowledge base.

Staff are able to clearly describe procedures to be followed to ensure that children are safeguarded. The home has positive links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board and has good communication with both the designated officer and Team Shield, both part of the multi-agency safeguarding hub. This enables concerns to be escalated promptly to statutory agencies, including the police, to help to keep young people safe.



While appropriate contact was made with the designated officer and the placing authority in response to an allegation against a member of staff, the home did not notify Ofsted of the incident as required. This did not impair the protection of young people, and the organisation's robust internal quality assurance procedures identified this error. Thus, the manager is now aware of the need to report such incidents to Ofsted in the future.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The home is well led by a suitably qualified and experienced manager. He drives continuous improvement in the quality of care provided to young people, by enthusing and supporting his newly formed team. Staff work in effective partnership with all those who are involved in young people's lives. Professionals and parents talk positively about the impact that the home has on the safety, development and emotional well-being of young people.</p> <p>Through regular and in-depth monitoring and review of young people's plans and goals, the manager highlights and celebrates all progress that young people make. All staff are clear about their roles and know how to break down targets and aims into small steps, so that it is clear when and where young people need help to improve. This underpins a holistic approach to the development of socialisation, self-control, independence and happiness experienced by young people. Focused participation in multi-professional reviews enables key workers to know about the young people's needs, and they use this information to create systems and strategies to help young people to overcome barriers to success. For example, they are working with family, mental health professionals, school and a social worker to help one young person to improve his communication skills, with the goal of reducing emotional and physical outbursts. This is enabling him to participate in increased social activity and to develop appropriate independence.</p> <p>All staff confirm that they receive and value regular and supportive supervision that helps them to reflect on how to improve their practice. They are motivated to undertake independent learning about the young people's needs, but need additional support to improve their understanding of how to support young people's diverse communication needs. Those who need it are being enrolled on a suitable childcare qualification course. The manager has reviewed staff development needs and set out a plan to address them. Meanwhile, the drive and energy of the leadership team have ensured that the fundamentals of effective</p>	

childcare are understood and delivered by staff. This expectation has underpinned the progress being made by young people.

The manager oversees competent systems that ensure that he understands the development needs of the home. He maintains an active action plan to address and review targets arising from his vision for the home and its purpose. The independent visitor effectively contributes to improvement because their visits are focused on young people and the plans that support them. Careful scrutiny of records enables them to identify shortfalls and to make recommendations for improvement. This means that young people receive care that is continually improving.

The person-centred planning that surrounds young people is a positive characteristic of the service. The home is routinely altered and adapted to help young people to feel safe and confident within it. This has led to some structural changes being made to create an ensuite wet room that the manager had not informed Ofsted about. However, a variation request was submitted prior to the inspection and prior to any young person using that facility. The manager is now aware that he needs to alert Ofsted to any such changes in good time. This shortfall, together with notifying Ofsted of any allegation made against staff, is addressed through requirements arising from this inspection.

Social workers and teachers confirm that the home communicates effectively with them. They praise the staff for their commitment to ensuring that young people's plans are progressed. Staff challenge, as well as support, other services. For example, when one young person demonstrated declining mental health, they actively pursued an appropriate assessment for him. This has informed the next placement for him because professionals were better able to match his needs to an appropriate service.

## 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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