

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	17/10/2016
Unique reference number	1159903
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Holistic Approach Ltd
Registered provider address	Unit 8, Meadow Court, Amos Road, Sheffield S9 1BX

Responsible individual	Brian Lewis
Registered manager	Julie Atherton
Inspector	Mark Kersh

Inspection date	17/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
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	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

1159903

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- There is a strong commitment to improve the quality of the lives of young people by the manager, staff and the wider organisation. This is evidently achieved through their consistent working practice and researching evidence-based approaches to their work.
- Young people are making good progress from their starting points on admission to the home in all areas of their lives. This is particularly true of their re-engagement in education. For some, this progress has been outstanding and they have successfully passed a number of their GCSEs and moved on to higher education.
- Young people benefit from being cared for by a consistent, well-trained team of staff that is very child centred. The staff and young people have built strong relationships based on trust and mutual respect. The staff team has a detailed understanding of the needs of the young people and works in a consistent manner in line with young people's plans.
- The environment feels like a family home. The staff are friendly and welcoming, and the atmosphere is relaxed and comfortable. Young people are settled in the home.
- There is a stable group of young people. Some have been in placement for six or seven years. Young people generally move on to semi-independent living when they are 18. The staff are extremely mindful of young people's anxieties and their attachment to the home. Young people of the appropriate age are thoroughly supported during their transition period from the home.
- Protecting young people and keeping them safe from harm are firmly embedded in practice. The management team and staff have a clear understanding of the particular vulnerabilities of each young person. Young people are safe and say that they feel safe in the home.
- Young people have reduced their risk-taking behaviours with the support of staff. Incidents of young people going missing and placing themselves at risk have significantly reduced. Young people learn how to keep themselves safe.
- The home is managed by a strong and effective leader. She is highly regarded by the staff and young people. Staff are motivated and confident because they are well managed. They are provided with good-quality supervision and training that enhance their development and enthusiasm to work with young people.

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 recommendation:

- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each young person and the arrangements in place to protect them. This includes ensuring that all relevant information is contained in their risk assessments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and learning disabilities. The home is privately owned.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/08/2015	Registration	Not judged

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>The management team undertakes robust impact risk assessments to ensure that young people are appropriately matched and that new young people do not have a detrimental impact on those already living in the home. The home completes an initial risk assessment prior to accepting a referral and a compatibility risk assessment when the new young person arrives.</p> <p>As a result, the high standard of care, delivered by a stable and committed staff team, helps young people to settle well and, in most cases, make exceptional progress. The management team and staff demonstrate a clear understanding of young people's backgrounds and the impact of their past negative experiences. This enables staff to continually develop their knowledge and understanding of the young people's changing needs. Staff take a genuine interest in each young person's development and encourage them to do well and celebrate all of their achievements.</p> <p>Young people develop and enjoy warm and trusting relationships with the staff. Staff invest in their care, and this maximises young people's opportunities to grow and develop. Staff understand the importance of gaining the young people's trust and finding innovative and positive ways to work with them. They are highly nurturing and work to a model of positive parenting. This gets to the heart of young people's need for secure and lasting relationships and provides them with a sense of belonging.</p> <p>Young people make progress in relation to their physical health and regularly attend any necessary appointments. They have a choice of food, contributing ideas for the menu and cooking for the rest of the group and staff. Healthy options are encouraged by staff, and young people are benefiting by reducing portion size, cutting out junk food and doing more exercise. As a result, weight gain is stabilised, and previous digestive disorders are improved.</p> <p>There are close working relationships with external health agencies. Staff know how to contact professional health workers should a young person require specific support in relation to their emotional, social or psychological well-being.</p> <p>All young people have education placements at local schools and colleges, and this is a high priority from the point of their admission. Not all young people attend on a full-time basis, but this is developing as they become settled and confident in the home. The registered manager challenges those responsible for ensuring that young people have an education placement. When delays occur in finding the suitable education provision for young people, private tuition is sourced so that</p>	

young people do not fall behind academically.

Some young people's educational achievements have been outstanding and they have successfully completed their GCSE exams and moved on to higher education, or have part-time jobs and high aspirations for their future, such as being a barrister, a prison officer or working in information technology.

Young people feel consistently listened to and participate in formal and less structured discussions. They highlight key-working staff as being those with specific responsibilities for their care, and subsequently state that they are important parts of their lives at the home. Excellent records of key work and young people's meetings are completed, showing that a wide range of areas are discussed that relate to their day-to-day lives, families, friends, relationships and behaviour. Feedback is given to young people following their meetings, showing how the registered manager and staff have responded to their views and ideas.

Young people know their arrangements for contact with their families and friends, and staff facilitate contact visits if required. Young people's contact with their families and friends has increased following staff advocating on young people's behalf. Arranged overnight stays are in place with family and friends, who also visit the home regularly. Young people are afforded the same opportunities as their peers and they are proud of their home.

Supported by the registered manager, there is a very good understanding in the staff team of evidence-based research, specifically pro-social modelling and attachment and loss theory. This approach focuses on individual young people's strengths and needs, provides them with good role models and enables regular assessments to take place to ensure that young people make progress in all areas of their lives.

Identifying suitable activities and supporting young people to engage in them is an integral part of the home's approach. According to young people's personal interests, staff offer them opportunities to participate in new experiences and pursuits so that they can develop confidence, social skills and a sense of identity. These activities also help to promote positive relationships with staff and peers. Holidays and trips to concerts and shows are a regular feature at the home and are suggested by the young people and organised by the staff.

Young people know their plans for their futures. They are involved in review meetings and they contribute to their records in the home. Young people's placement plans are individual and kept regularly updated by their key workers. The registered manager has a system in place, which clearly reflects the young person's journey in the home and the progress that they make.

Some young people have lived in the home for a considerable length of time and staff are supporting them in the challenges that they face as they prepare to move on from the home. Staff are particularly skilled at managing young people's anxieties and responding in a calm and supportive manner when challenged by young people and, equally, when young people challenge each other. This ensures

that any disputes are quickly responded to and resolved. A social worker commented, 'Staff are very good at advocating on behalf of young people and have solid independence plans in place to ensure the young person's smooth transition from the home.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
<p>Young people have a particularly strong sense of safety and well-being in the home, and confirmed that they feel safe and trust the staff to protect them if things are not going well. Young people are not left together without a staff presence, and staff use these opportunities to chat and positively interact with them. This constant, interested presence means that situations do not escalate and issues can be worked through at an early stage. One young person said, 'I am safe and I do not run away anymore.' Another said, 'It is good here, and I feel staff do look out for me. I think staff are strict but kind and helpful.'</p> <p>Safeguarding arrangements are in place to protect young people. Policies and procedures in this area have been updated, are current and are closely adhered to in practice by staff. The organisation has a quality assurance manager who is also the safeguarding lead. She has provided additional quality training to the staff team on child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and internet safety. All staff demonstrate well their knowledge of the local safeguarding designated officer and how to report any suspicions of abuse.</p> <p>Through training, staff have discussed current trends and dangers of social media. They are familiar with the public enquiry reports published and research into residential care. Their reflection on practice and their experiences enable them to effectively protect and safeguard young people.</p> <p>Social workers collectively said that their young people in this home are safeguarded and that they have every confidence in the staff who look after their young people to keep them safe. One social worker commented, 'As a result of direct work and the close relationship with the key worker, my young person's risks in relation to child sexual exploitation, self-harm and missing from home [have] significantly reduced.'</p> <p>Staff set consistent boundaries, which promote young people's positive behaviour and ensure that they feel safe and secure. Staff fully understand the behavioural triggers for individual young people as well as the group. Staff do not overreact to</p>	

the immediate situation, but explore the underlying emotional state of the young person or group. Staff demonstrate a keen understanding of what is currently going on in the lives of the young people and were observed intervening in a non-challenging way when needed. As a result, restraint is very rarely used. Young people respond very well to incentives and rewards, and consequences feature far less than praise and rewards in the records kept in the home.

Staff understand the young people's vulnerabilities and the dangers and risks posed within the community. They know how to help young people to keep safe. Although risks are clearly evaluated and well managed through practice, some recordings are not well presented. This has arisen from the introduction of a new recording format that has left some risk assessment reviews in the old format. As a result, a recommendation is made. This is to ensure that all young people's risk assessments are in the new recording format, and to ensure that all relevant information is contained in young people's risk assessments.

Prompt action is taken when it is suspected that risks are escalating because young people are not managing their safety effectively. For example, missing from home incidents are closely monitored, and strategy meetings are convened in order to agree a consistent approach. As a result, a young person who had multiple missing from home incidents prior to and on admission to the home has now significantly reduced these incidents. This is because staff advocated on the young person's behalf with other professionals and put in agreements and incentives that allow the young person to see their friends. This has significantly reduced the need for the young person to run from the home to their friends.

The staff work closely with the local authority missing from care team. A missing from care worker confirmed that she knows all of the young people in the home, and if young people are missing she, or someone from her team, conducts a return home interview with the young person. However, she said, 'I rarely have to visit this home as the staff are fully competent to assess and minimise young people's risks.'

Young people's risks are significantly reduced as the home follows robust recruitment procedures. A new staff member confirmed that he could not commence work in the home until all necessary checks had been completed and verified. Staff files clearly evidence the measures that the home takes to ensure that young people are not looked after by people who may cause them harm. There is a signing in and out procedure and all visitors have to produce evidence of their identity before entering the home. Young people are not left unsupervised with visitors, which further protects them.

The home has been decorated, had new carpets laid and furniture purchased. All necessary health and safety checks are undertaken and recorded. Records show that young people participate in fire evacuation procedures, and there are no outstanding repairs.

The relationships between young people and staff are extremely positive. Young people all confirmed that they can talk to and trust members of staff. If they have

concerns, they prefer to speak to staff to 'sort it out', rather than make a formal complaint. Two young people independently told the inspector about the process they would follow and they demonstrated well whom they could make a complaint to.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
<p>Following a change in ownership in August 2015, the home was re-registered by Ofsted. The home has been in operation for some years, and the registered manager and staff remain the same. The responsible individual takes an active part in the function of the home and supports the management team and staff extremely well.</p> <p>Since this time, new systems introduced into the home have been firmly embedded and are fully understood by the staff. There are clear lines of accountability, and all staff have delegated tasks, which they take seriously and complete professionally. For example, staff have lead roles in the quality of care, participation, education, activities, health and protection. This provides a sense of ownership throughout the staff team and ensures that the quality standards and regulations are consistently met and young people's excellent progress continues in the home.</p> <p>The registered manager has worked in the home since 2002 and is very experienced and well qualified. Her enthusiasm in sharing her practice-based knowledge and researched models of care with the staff and other professionals is clearly evident. She has created a culture in which young people always come first. The home is efficiently managed and well resourced to deliver high-quality support to young people. All staff have substantial experience and qualifications, and most have worked at this home for some considerable time. New staff who have joined the team are all qualified and have completed their induction.</p> <p>Supervision and appraisal for staff are integral to improving practice and embedding the ethos of the home. Regular, individual supervision sessions are reflective, comprehensive and centred on young people's needs. Targets are used well to enable staff to develop their practice and to maintain a high level of service and support to the young people. Staff development is supported by regular refresher training provided by the quality assurance manager or through staff having access to the local authority's training courses.</p> <p>The statement of purpose document has been updated and has been sent to</p>	

Ofsted in line with regulation. The document accurately reflects the ethos of the home. Staff are fully aware of it, and appreciate the particular focus on positive parenting and role modelling, and they achieve the home's child-centred approach, which underpins the young people's daily care routines.

The registered manager maintains effective partnerships with social workers, educational virtual teams, police, parents and other agencies to promote the safety and progress of the young people. She is robust and professional when challenging other services when shortfalls in practice are identified. This results in much better outcomes for young people, particularly in provision for their education.

Excellent systems are used effectively to monitor the quality of care being delivered and the progress made by young people. In addition to monthly independent visitor reports and regular quality of care reports, the registered manager has a thorough system in place to analyse records of information each month, for example the number of serious incidents, behaviour issues and achievements and progress of the young people. This enables the management team to evaluate the effectiveness of young people's care plans and the strategies in place to support them.

A similar system monitors young people's progress in education. This innovative approach ensures that the management team gains a thorough understanding of the impact that care is having and clearly shows the progress that young people make in the home.

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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