

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	25/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC484402
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Footsteps To Futures Ltd
Registered provider address	20 Wheatley Drive Carlton Nottingham NG4 1FE

Responsible individual	Glynis Storer
Registered manager	Joseph Rafter
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford

Inspection date	25/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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

SC484402

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people receive a therapeutic approach to their care, which helps them to come to terms with what has happened to them in their past.
- Staff respect young people. Their respectful, positive approach helps young people to feel highly valued, and they develop a sense of belonging.
- Young people trust staff and feel very able to talk about their worries, problems and anxieties.
- Staff understand the link between behaviour and communication and always look for the root cause of the problems.
- Young people are accessing education. For some, this is the first time they have engaged, and their progress has been exceptional given their starting point.
- Talents and interests are nurtured. Young people find out what they are good at and this has a positive impact on their confidence.
- Young people's confidence and self-esteem improves dramatically. They learn a lot about themselves in preparation for moving on to independence.
- Young people go missing significantly less than they did previously. Some young people who are particularly vulnerable to being sexually exploited have not gone missing at all.
- There are some areas for improvement relating to the recruitment of staff, risk assessments and care-planning. Some aspects of the organisation of the service need to be improved, for example formal supervision and induction for bank staff. Also, the manager should ensure that Ofsted receives independent monitoring visit reports each month so that it can monitor events in the home properly. None of these issues detract from young people's very positive experiences.

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) meets 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
Ensure that individuals are only employed to work at the children's home if there is full and satisfactory information available in relation to each of the matters listed in Schedule 2. This is in particular relation to a full employment history and two satisfactory references. (Regulation 32 (3)(d), Schedule 2)	28/11/2016
Provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI (Ofsted). (Regulation 44 (7)(a))	28/11/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that there are systems in place so that all staff, including the registered manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. This is in particular relation to bank staff. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- Ensure that the registered person has a workforce plan which can fulfil the requirements of Regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should detail the processes and agreed timescales for induction, probation and any core training. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Ensure that a child's care plan forms the basis of their care. This is in relation to the care planning process, which is not always clear on how young people's needs should be met. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.1)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and is registered to care for three young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/2/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/09/2015	Full	Good

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’s experiences of living at this home are very positive. Although there are some areas for further development, elements of the care provided to young people are extremely strong. This results in some young people making excellent progress.</p> <p>The home’s statement of purpose clearly sets out how the organisation intends to care for young people. The therapeutic approach is set out clearly for placing authorities, parents and young people. This means that all parties know what to expect when a young person is admitted into the home. Young people engage very quickly with staff and with the home’s psychologist. This has meant a positive start to living at the home for young people, some of whom have suffered significant trauma in the past, as they start to accept individualised help at a pace that is right for them. The pace is never rushed, and reflection techniques allow them to get to know themselves and their feelings better. Young people start to understand their past and why they are living in the home. One staff member said about their progress in this area: ‘Young people have come on in leaps and bounds.’ The great sensitivity in which support is delivered allows for delicate subjects to be explored, such as the young person’s position in their family. The approach builds self-esteem and confidence. Young people say that staff care about them and that they are helped to get to know themselves. One young person reflected on the challenges she faced before she came and said: ‘I have overcome such a lot.’</p> <p>Young people’s reduced anxiety and improved behaviour allows for very positive progress in other areas of their lives, such as education. Some young people are accessing education for the first time in many months, or years. Staff reported proudly that one young person who used to struggle with attendance has not had a single day off this year.</p> <p>Young people’s interests and talents are nurtured. They realise what they are good at and what they enjoy. Positive decisions have been made by young people about their future learning. This clear direction gives them something to strive for, accelerating their progress further. For example, one young person wants to be a psychologist, and another an artist. Staff have high aspirations for young people and there is a culture of ‘aiming high’.</p> <p>A wide range of activities are on offer so that young people can have fun and spend their spare time developing their social skills in various settings. Young people leave the home more independent, resilient and ready for the next stage in their life.</p>	

Young people receive an individual approach to their care from staff. However, not all the documents that contain information about how this should be implemented are clear. For example, care plans do not capture the safety needs of young people. Also, behaviour management plans and risk assessments have gaps and do not show enough detail about how particular needs should be met. If this issue isn't addressed, there is the potential for staff to be unclear about how care should be delivered.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people's episodes of going missing dramatically reduce soon after their admission to the home. This is due to the good work by staff in helping young people learn about themselves and how they have put themselves at risk in the past. This learning and increased self-awareness impacts positively on their developing sense of safety. Other aspects of safety, such as being involved in criminal activity and drug use, soon stop when young people are admitted. One young person said: 'I used to smoke weed and get arrested but I have done nothing like that here.' Young people are highly respected by staff, and the therapeutic approach dramatically increases their self-worth. They learn about the importance of respect for others and themselves, which impacts positively on their overall behaviour.</p> <p>Staff have a very positive attitude towards young people's behaviour. They ensure that young people know when they have made good progress. At the same time, young people know where they should improve their behaviour because staff explain this to them well. Young people learn about how to behave in a good way towards others in the home and in the community, so that they are safer and more socially accepted. An incentive scheme for good behaviour further encourages them to have something to work towards. Young people enjoy collecting tokens for extra treats and activities. Even when young people have a behavioural episode, they are only ever encouraged to reflect and learn rather than being reprimanded. Staff are keen that there is no interference with progress or disruption to young people's increasing safety.</p> <p>Staff are well trained in behaviour-support techniques. On the rare occasions that restraints are used, these are only to protect young people. The therapeutic approach used by this service assists young people to reflect on their own and others' behaviours in a one-to-one way and/or in groups. The home psychologist works alongside staff to ensure that the home's therapeutic approach is always at</p>	

the forefront of practice.

Staff are committed to ensuring that other professionals, such as placing social workers, receive high-quality information so that they can make well-informed decisions about young people's safety issues. When safeguarding issues arise, staff act immediately, ensuring that the matter is passed on in line with the home's and local area's procedures.

There have been some minor shortfalls identified in the recruitment process for staff. One staff member's employment history could not be fully established from their personnel file. Another file contained only one reference, despite the manager's assurance that there were two positive references obtained prior to recruitment. The current recruitment process may not fully protect young people from unsuitable adults in the future if it is not put right.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager is experienced and appropriately qualified to run the home. There is also a new manager, who is going through the Ofsted application process. This will allow the current manager, who is also the company director, time to further develop systems and to concentrate on developments for the service. Both have a very clear understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses. There are plans in place to address the shortfalls identified in this report. This reflects an organisation that is forward-thinking and which is developing all the time. There is a clear agenda of improvement and an excitement about the future, which helps to motivate all who work in the home.</p> <p>Leaders ensure that the home is well led, and staff and young people are very confident in the leaders' capabilities. One young person said: 'The manager is amazing.' Staff are highly motivated by young people's progress, and all progress, however small, is celebrated. The therapeutic approach extends to the leadership of the home, and there is a culture of wanting to improve. Staff members' self-reflection leads them to analyse their practice and think about how they could do things better next time. They do this individually and in groups. All are very clear about this approach, and even new staff come to an understanding about the ethos from an early stage. While all staff have their practice monitored effectively through this approach, one bank staff member was found not to have had a formal induction or a supervision meeting with the manager since they had started working at the home three months previously. This has not impacted on young people's progress, but the manager has not demonstrated that he has effectively</p>	

monitored this new staff member's practice and progress.

Staff are well trained and report that this assists them in their practice. Staff can easily identify the benefits of their training, with one reporting that recent bereavement training has helped them to think about their understanding and approach to young people. There are no concerns about staff members' practice. However, the identification of staff training needs requires improvement because at present it is difficult to monitor the full picture of staff members' competence and skills.

Managers monitor other professionals' practice involving young people living at the home. They robustly follow up when they feel that young people have not received the good service that they deserve. This makes young people realise that they are important and helps them to develop an understanding of their own rights.

The manager ensures that young people are always at the centre of all work taking place. The organisation employs an independent person to visit the home every month. A report is produced after each visit which clearly evidences that the visitor spends a lot of time with young people, hearing about their experiences. It is the focus on young people's experiences that brings about change. However, the reports have not all been sent to Ofsted, as the regulations require. This means that Ofsted has not been able to regulate fully on events 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 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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