

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	09/11/2016
Unique reference number	1229534
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Halliwell Homes Limited
Registered provider address	1 Tape Street, Stoke On Trent, ST10 1BB

Responsible individual	Karen Mitchell-Mellor
Registered manager	George Hudson
Inspector	Sarah Oldham

Inspection date	09/11/2016
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	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

1229534

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people say that they feel safe, comfortable and happy in the home. They have developed good attachments with staff and get along with the other young people.
- Consistent levels of engagement and support provide young people with effective strategies to contribute to managing negative behaviours. This, in turn, improves relationships with family, friends and carers, preparing them for their planned move on from the home.
- The manager and staff have high aspirations for the young people. They work in partnership with a range of agencies, including health clinicians, education providers and placing social workers to support the holistic care planning for each young person.
- Young people have clear risk assessments in place to help minimise and address the risk of harm.
- The home undertakes impact assessments for any new admissions to the home to make sure that the young people's care is not compromised by poor matching of needs.
- The impact and effectiveness of the leaders and managers require improvement because although the home's statement of purpose has been updated, a copy has not been forwarded to HMCI and was not available at the time of inspection. This does not enable clear oversight of the service by the regulator or other interested parties.
- The home has not consistently complied with the statement of purpose in relation to the admission age of young people.
- Staffing vacancies have resulted in the registered manager and deputy managers covering additional shifts. This means that evaluative monitoring of the service has not been robust. This includes notifying the host authority in a timely manner of admissions and discharges to the home.

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
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	03/01/2017
The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. In particular, this relates to admission ages as identified in this document. (Regulation 16 (5))	03/01/2017
13. The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must: (2)(d) ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child – this is in relation to recruiting staff to fill the current vacancies within the home (h) use monitoring and review systems to support continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	03/01/2017
The registered person must notify, without delay, the local authority for the area in which the children's home is located of every admission of a child into the home and every discharge of a child from the home. (Regulation 41 (1))	03/01/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a private children's home registered to provide care and accommodation for up to seven children and young people who may be experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A multi-disciplinary team supports children and young people with their mental health needs.

Recent inspection history This is the first inspection since registration

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Young people living at the home are happy and settled. They are developing positive relationships with staff and their peers. This contributes to their feelings of security. One young person said: 'This is a really good place. I like living here and it is helping me to prepare for living with foster parents as part of a family.' Another young person said: 'Since I have moved here, I feel much happier. Everyone accepts me as I am and, although we sometimes disagree with each other, I don't feel bullied or unhappy here.'</p> <p>The home has been registered since the end of April 2016 and started to admit young people from the beginning of June. Consideration is given to matching of young people's needs to support them all to be settled, thereby enabling progress. Placements at the home are time limited to work through a specific programme of support, with placements generally lasting up to 18 months. Social workers said that the progress made by the young people since entering the home has been very good. One commented: 'The young person I support is receiving the support he needs to develop strategies to manage his emotional well-being. He is recognising these changes himself, resulting in greater confidence which further contributes to his overall progress and development.'</p> <p>All young people are engaged in education, achieving high levels of attendance. Three of the young people access the education provision run by the organisation. There is a school attached to the home which is currently making an application to be a registered school. While this is being progressed, alternative provision has been sourced off-site, with teaching staff recruited under the registration of the organisation's school. The other four young people attend different schools, and staff ensure that there are good links with all education providers. This means that there is effective communication between professionals, with residential staff having a good understanding of young people's educational targets and outcomes. Additionally, staff support and encourage young people to complete homework and to access activities to support their overall educational attainment. For example, they encourage them to attend after-school study groups.</p> <p>Young people are supported to lead healthy lifestyles. They access healthcare services as identified within their individual healthcare plans. Their individual placement programme is overseen by a psychologist, with staff having regular meetings to facilitate consistent implementation of agreed strategies and support. This provides continuity for each young person and contributes to their emotional-health outcomes.</p>	

The home provides nutritious homemade meals which are enjoyed by all of the young people, who contribute their ideas to the weekly menus. Mealtimes are relaxed and social occasions, with young people sharing what they have been doing at school or during the day and discussing what their plans are for later, enabling them to negotiate and develop their social interaction skills. They enjoy lots of activities, including football, rugby, and swimming, which is further beneficial to their overall physical and emotional health. One young person said: 'We play football outside and it doesn't matter if we get really dirty, we just wash and help put our clothes into the wash.' Another young person discussed the medals and sporting awards he had achieved.

Regular house meetings make sure that all young people can contribute their views to the day-to-day running of the home. They also discuss boundaries and expectations of behaviours. One young person said: 'I feel more secure knowing what we can and cannot do. It's good because there are rules in everyday life. We can contribute our views to the house rules.' Additionally, individual key-worker sessions support young people to discuss and focus on things that are specific to them.

Young people gain age-appropriate life skills in preparing them for moving on from the home. They also learn to help each other in the daily tasks. For example, after meals they take it in turns to help clear the table, wash up, and sweep the dining-room floor. This helps them to understand the importance of working together as a team and, additionally, helping to keep the home clean and comfortable for them to live in.

Placing authority social workers are kept informed of progress and outcomes through regular telephone communication and weekly updates. They are also involved in the three-monthly programme review which involves the home manager, staff, education and psychologist to reflect on progress. The views of the young person are also gathered and contribute to this. One social worker said: 'I can see the difference in this young person. He has settled into the home well, formed positive attachments to staff and is demonstrating a good understanding of the impact of his behaviours. His overall engagement with other young people has vastly improved and he is focused on what he wants in the future. Whenever I visit, the home is warm, welcoming and lively. It feels a very positive place to be and this view is reflected by [name] in our conversations.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people say that they feel happy at the home and attribute their security to feeling safe and cared for at the home. Four young people spoken with during the inspection said that they felt that it was important to have clear boundaries. They say that they are treated fairly by staff members and have good relationships with them. In general, they say that they get along with their peers and that any disagreements or arguments are quickly addressed by staff to minimise the risk of bullying. One young person said: 'I have experienced bullying in another home and it wasn't very nice. It hasn't happened here, although if it did, I know that I can tell staff and something would be done about it.' During the inspection, staff were observed to engage well with young people and settle differences of opinions when some young people were playing a board game. This enabled them to continue with the game together, supporting their development of appropriate social interaction.</p> <p>Young people are welcomed into the home and helped to settle into the day-to-day experience of living with others. Consideration is given to the matching of the young people to minimise the risk of unnecessary placement moves as a result of incompatibility. However, the home has admitted a young person who is older than the age range as identified in the home's statement of purpose. Although the reasons for doing so are clear, and the age does not exceed the conditions of registration, the home has not amended the statement of purpose to reflect this. That said, the home has completed a full impact assessment in relation to the placement. Placement stability is good. When a placement notice was served, this was due to unknown needs that required specialist mental health support. The placement move was supported effectively to minimise the impact on all the young people.</p> <p>Placing social workers speak positively about the home's nurturing and supportive ethos. One social worker said: 'The young person I support has settled well, and staff have facilitated this by being responsive and child-focused in their approach.'</p> <p>Staff treat young people with dignity and respect. This helps young people to feel valued and acts as positive role modelling. They are encouraged through positive behaviour management plans to understand how their behaviours impact on themselves and others. These plans are developed and reviewed in consultation with the organisation's psychologist and clinical lead. Strategies include enabling the young people to remove themselves from the situation and take time out to calm down. Consequences for negative behaviour are proportionate, and young people feel that they are fair. They are consulted following a consequence and are able to record their views, although some choose not to do so. Staff use a range of de-escalation techniques when young people's behaviour becomes heightened.</p>	

Physical intervention is used when there is a risk of harm. This is recorded within the daily logs as well as the physical intervention book. A number of these interventions are 'guiding hand' rather than restrictive intervention, with input at a minimal length of time which is reflected within the records. However, these do not clearly state the time of the intervention. Additionally, when a manager is involved in an intervention, this is not independently reviewed. This means that effective oversight of patterns and trends is compromised.

There have been no incidents of young people reported as missing from the home. One young person did leave the home but staff followed, maintaining visual sight and providing encouragement to enable their safe return. Staff have a clear understanding of the local procedures and protocols to follow. These are discussed within their safeguarding training and included within individual young people's risk assessments.

The recruitment and selection process in place makes sure that staff only commence work after completing the application process, a formal interview, the receipt and verbal confirmation of references as well as the receipt of disclosure and barring services enhanced certificates. This means that the home takes appropriate measures to ensure that young people are protected from people who are unsuitable to work with children and young people. When there is a concern raised about the practice of staff, the manager addresses this through referral to the local authority designated officer and follows agreed protocols to safeguard the young people.

Regular health and safety checks are undertaken within the home to ensure that the building is maintained well and is safe for young people living there. Maintenance is responsive, and the home addresses any repairs in a timely manner. Staff and young people know the fire procedures. One young person explained the procedure to follow in the event of a fire and the safe meeting place. Fire evacuation drills are undertaken at different times to re-enforce this. The home is decorated to a good standard. Social workers spoke about the welcoming environment for the young people and confirmed that they viewed the young person's bedroom when they completed their statutory visits. Bedrooms are personalised, reflecting individual choice. One young person said: 'I really like the wallpaper in my room. It has characters on it from one of my favourite films.' Another young person has posters of the football team he follows as well as photos of him playing football. The personalisation of bedrooms supports young people to value their environment, helping them to engage and invest in their placement.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>The home has a manager in post who completed registration with Ofsted at the end of April 2016 at the time of the registration of the home. His previous experience includes working within children's residential settings, having previously been a deputy manager at one of the organisation's other homes. He has qualifications to level 3 in working with children and young people and is currently completing his level 5 diploma in management. Supporting him is an experienced lead deputy manager and two further deputy managers. The staffing consists of a mixture of experienced practitioners and staff who are new to residential childcare work. Not all staff have a relevant qualification. However, following a formal induction programme and successful completion of probationary periods, staff are enrolled to undertake level 3 qualifications within agreed timeframes. There are four staff vacancies, with recruitment planned to meet this shortfall. Support to the young people has been met by current staff completing additional shifts, along with the home's managers. Although this promotes continuity of care for the young people there has been a shortfall in rigorous, effective and evaluative monitoring of the home by the manager. Shortfalls include notifications of placements made to the local authority where the home is situated in a timely manner. The statement of purpose failing to be supplied to Ofsted following a review to address shortfalls identified during the registration of the home. This includes information about staffing and their relevant qualifications along as well as referring to the organisation's other home rather than this one. This document was not available within the home at the time of the inspection. This does not enable a clear oversight of the service by the regulator or other interested parties, including commissioners and parents.</p> <p>The home has an independent visitor who undertakes monthly visits on both an announced and unannounced basis. However, due to permission not being in place to enable the review of young people's individual plans and records, this places limitation on robust and effective monitoring. Consultation with parents is also limited. However, there is good consultation with the young people during these visits and their views are incorporated in the report provided to the manager.</p> <p>The home is effective at communicating with other professionals, ensuring that they are invited to attend regular progress meetings of young people. The therapeutic model of care that the home follows, is overseen by the organisation's clinical team, consisting of a lead psychologist and two educational psychologists. Staff receive training and support on the model of care, enabling them to consistently implement it. They receive supervision on a formal and informal basis, although there have been some delayed supervisions due to the school holidays</p>	

and level of staffing. That said, supervision is planned and the shortfall is minimal.

Young people's care files are stored securely to maintain confidentiality. They provide details of individual plans and daily recording. Some plans require additional updating and signing by the manager and social workers. Despite this, social workers confirm that they receive placement plans, risk assessments and weekly summary progress sheets.

This is the first inspection following registration. There were no requirements made at the point of registration.

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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