

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	25/10/2016
Unique reference number	1231458
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Sherlock Healthcare Services Ltd
Registered provider address	20-22 Wenlock Road London N1 7GU

Responsible individual	Susan Rai
Registered manager	Susan Rai
Inspector	Julia Wright

Inspection date	25/10/2016
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	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

1231458

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Since opening this newly registered children's home, managers and staff have successfully created a warm and nurturing environment.
- The young person is making noticeable progress, and has developed positive relationships with staff.
- The young person is learning to be independent within safe boundaries.
- The young person is learning to express her views and opinions and understands that these are valued by others.
- The young person is getting to know the locality and enjoying a range of activities which enhance the quality of her life.
- The young person attends full-time education, and staff support her completing additional work at home.
- The young person is safe in the home because risk assessments promote her welfare. Detailed action is taken by staff to protect the young person and limit any risk-taking behaviour.
- Staff work well together and are good role models for the young person.
- The registered manager is an effective leader and she sets high standards of care within the home, which staff are keen to uphold.
- Some areas for improvement have been identified. The back garden area is not developed and there is a patch of uneven ground where water accumulates, potentially presenting a hazard to children and young people. Not all staff are familiar with the action to take following an allegation being made. The location risk assessment does not reflect the need to review when a new young person joins the home, or if additional risks are identified.

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
<p>6 The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, and with particular reference to the uneven block paved area in the garden, and the lack of visual stimulation in the garden area, ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (2)(c)(i))</p>	06/01/2017

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 can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home, in particular ensure that staff have received anti-radicalisation training. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- Ensure that the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home is reviewed at least every year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these, in particular when new young people arrive, and upon receipt of information from police or other agencies. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- Supervision of staff practice should ensure that individual adults in the home are engaged in the safeguarding culture of the home so that they understand what they would need to do if they found other staff misusing or abusing their position to the detriment of the safety of a child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This service is a private children's home offering care and accommodation for up to three children and young people aged from 10 to 18 years, who have emotional and/or behavioural problems.

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	Good
<p>This home was registered in May 2016, and this is the first inspection since registration. The home has cared for two young people since being registered. One young person has moved because the home was unable to meet his needs, and there is currently one young person living at the home.</p> <p>The young person has positive relationships with staff and she readily approaches and interacts with them. Staff said that as they have got to know her and her needs, they use different strategies to help her communicate with others. The young person refers to pictorial timetables and activity charts. She has progressed with her self-help skills as she refers to picture aids to remind herself of morning routines.</p> <p>The young person has a positive and enjoyable day-to-day life. Staff are innovative and involve her in activities in the home and in the community. The young person is writing a short play about domestic abuse. She has allocated parts to staff, and they are working together to produce the play. In addition, the young person is involved in a talent show at the home, in which she and the staff are all participating. The young person enjoys the interaction with staff, and she learns valuable information about important issues in her life, as well as enjoying the activities. She participates in a wide range of community activities. She has joined a local football club and is involved in the matches. Her social worker commented: 'She has good, warm relationships with staff. She is learning to be more open about her feelings and relationships. I am very pleased with her progress.'</p> <p>The young person attends school full time, and since living at the home her attendance has improved. Staff are in regular contact with her teachers, and each informs the other of the young person's progress and any emerging needs. A teacher commented: 'Staff are very thorough and let me know every concern they have about her emotional and physical well-being, no matter how slight. They are also very responsive to information from us.' Staff observed that the young person lacks confidence in maths, and they spend time each day completing some additional work with her. Staff talk to her teachers at school to ensure that this work reinforces the work that she does at school. The young person has grown in confidence and is reassured that staff will help her wherever they can.</p> <p>The young person enjoys good health, and keeps fit and well. She is registered with primary healthcare services that ensure her health needs are met. When more specialised services are required, staff ensure that these are in place, including</p>	

counselling services.

The young person is developing age-appropriate independence skills. In line with her particular needs, staff have found fun ways of involving her in this work. She plays a game with staff – the dip-in box – where laminated cards suggest self-help skills to learn that week. These include baking, laundry and so on. The young person looks forward to the game and undertaking the challenge, and, as a result, learns essential self-care skills.

Staff undertake individual key-work sessions with the young person. These take place regularly, and staff respond to what the young person raises. As they are getting to know her, staff are observant about when she appears to be anxious, and will spend time exploring her feelings. In addition, the registered manager has ensured that resources are available for staff to complete life-story work with her, so that she can record important events and activities that she undertakes while living at the home. The young person retains a visual record of her progress and activities and is able to reflect on her development.

The young person lives in a clean, comfortable and well-furnished home. Young people can decorate their room with personal items according to their taste. There is a large garden area to the rear of the home. This is quite bare, with few items of interest for young people. In addition, there is a patch of uneven block paving where stagnant water has collected. This potentially presents a hazard to children and young people.

The young person feels involved in decision-making in the home and in meetings about her care. Staff helped her to record her wishes and feelings for her recent childcare review, and they involve her with day-to-day decisions – meal preparation, activities and so on. The young person is developing a sense of involvement in all aspects of her life and in that of the home.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Managers and staff promote the safety of young people at all times. The registered manager recognised that staff were unable to meet the complex needs of a young person who previously lived at the home. She escalated concerns appropriately to professionals and ensured that the young person received specialist support from medical professionals to support his mental-health needs.</p> <p>The new staff team reflects on its practice with young people, and staff members continue to develop their relationship with the young person now living at the home. Staff understand the young person's additional communication needs and</p>	

how she requires extra time to process information. This understanding enables the young person to approach staff and talk to them with confidence that they will listen to what she is saying, and offer her appropriate time and support.

To date, there have been no incidents of either young person going missing from care. Incidents of absence without permission are rare, and staff respond quickly to follow their guidance and procedures to promote the young person's safety.

The staff team consistently promotes positive behaviour, and young people receive praise and rewards. The home's incentive scheme is effective and helps young people to work towards buying an item of choice, for example music vouchers, after they have met weekly targets. When young people's behaviour has fallen below expected standards, staff engage with them patiently. Young people have comprehensive plans which include agreed strategies about behaviour management. This helps to guide staff in their practice and supports staff and managers in assessing young people's progress.

There have been a few incidents of physical intervention, and records highlight that this is used as a last resort after other de-escalation techniques have not been effective. Records clearly illustrate why an intervention was necessary and include managerial overview and comment. Young people are always offered a debrief afterwards, enabling them to reflect on the incident, and time to consider how they could manage their emotions and behaviour in the future.

Staff are familiar with most aspects of the home's child-protection policy, but not all staff were clear about the role of the designated officer in relation to allegations against staff. Further clarification of the designated officer role will reinforce staff knowledge and underpin young people's safety in the home.

The home's location risk assessment outlines the potential risks in the locality in relation to young people living at the home, but does not stress that managers and staff will review this assessment each time a new young person joins the home, or if staff receive updated information from the police, for example about new risks in the community.

Young people benefit from living in a safe and secure home. Regular health and safety checks are undertaken by staff and young people, ensuring that the equipment works well and does not pose any risk to young people. Fire drills and evacuations are undertaken from time to time, and young people learn about the need to be vigilant about all aspects of safety.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager has been in post since the home opened in May 2016. She is an experienced manager and has a national vocational qualification level 4 in leadership and management in care services, which was obtained in 2012. The registered manager is very committed to promoting positive outcomes for each young person in her care. She is a strong leader who promotes the ethos reflected in the home's statement of purpose of providing individualised and nurturing care to each young person.</p> <p>The registered manager is constantly proactive in ensuring that each young person receives the help that they need from other services, for example counselling and additional input from other therapeutic services. Managers and staff work well with a range of other professionals for young people's benefit. A social worker commented, 'Communication with managers and staff is always of a very high standard.' A psychologist said, 'The manager keeps me in the loop at all times.'</p> <p>Young people's records are exceptionally well organised and maintained. The registered manager's methodical approach means that systems are in place to address any gaps in records and these are sought from relevant parties. This means that staff have all the relevant information that they require to understand and care for young people's comprehensive needs.</p> <p>The statement of purpose and young people's guide are reviewed and updated. The young person's guide contains a lot of complex information, but staff are vigilant and ensure that they talk to the young person about aspects of its content, to make sure that the young person becomes familiar with the information. This is reinforced through one-to-one sessions with the young person, where topics such as complaints, or how to contact external professionals, are carefully explained. Young people are empowered as they receive important information in an accessible manner.</p> <p>Staff say that they are well supported. They receive regular and effective supervision which allows them to reflect on their skills and abilities and identifies training needs. The registered manager ensures that all staff receive core training including safeguarding and health and safety training. Additional training is in place which reflects the needs of current young people living at the home, including understanding autism spectrum disorder. Staff either have the required level 3 diploma in working in residential childcare, or will be enrolled on the course after their probationary period. Consequently, young people are supported by knowledgeable staff who understand their needs. One area of training that the registered manager acknowledged is outstanding is supporting staff to understand and identify radicalisation. This would enable staff to be alert to this possibility and</p>	

understand the process they must follow to protect young people.

The registered manager knows the areas of strength and development for the home. As the service is new, the manager is realistic and is concentrating on consolidating and developing good practice. She is helping the staff team to undertake additional responsibilities with a view to aiding staff members' development.

The registered manager has good systems in place to review and monitor all aspects of the service, and to ensure that it continues to meet young people's needs. The registered manager welcomes scrutiny and constructive feedback. Managers and staff work with the independent visitor and respond positively to any suggestions or actions suggested. Young people are helped as the service continues to develop for their benefit.

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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