

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	05/12/2016
Unique reference number	1214396
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	River Valley Care Limited
Registered provider address	The Stables, Chestnut Farm, Cuxham, Watlington, Oxfordshire OX49 5ND

Responsible individual	Quentin Carson
Registered manager	Jason Sellars
Inspector	Sue Young

Inspection date	05/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
<p>This home was judged as good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p>	
<p>Young people have good experiences in the home. They are safe and feel happy and well cared for. There have been no complaints about the home or staff since the last inspection.</p> <p>Young people are making steady progress in many areas of their development. They are healthy and attend all health appointments. Although they are not attending school or college, they are engaging in education in accordance with their plans, often for the first time in many years. This is because young people are developing respectful and trusting relationships with staff, and as a result are gaining in confidence. One young person said, 'Staff are brilliant.'</p> <p>Young people currently living in the home do not go missing or engage in behaviour necessitating the use of physical intervention. This is because staff listen to young people. They promote positive behaviour resulting in significant improvements to young people's social and emotional well-being. When previous young people have gone missing, this has only been for short periods and there have been no concerns regarding their safety. Staff are proactive and prompt in their response. They work well with police and social workers to make sure of young people's safe return.</p> <p>The manager and staff work well in partnership with parents and other professionals, such as placing social workers and youth offending teams. This provides structured plans and activities for young people. Staff are proactive in supporting and facilitating contact with young people's families. As a result, young people are able to maintain their identity and relationships with family members.</p> <p>The home environment is warm, comfortable and child-friendly. At the time of the inspection, it looked festive and decorated ready for Christmas. Furnishings are of a good quality and photos of young people are displayed within the home. Young people's bedrooms are of a good size and reflect their personalities.</p> <p>The home continues to be led by an experienced registered manager who is undergoing the Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential</p>	

Childcare. Although the manager has a good awareness of the progress each young person is making, he does not use this to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. Managerial oversight and monitoring of the home does not support continuous improvement in the quality of care given to young people. Although the manager has recently developed new monitoring processes, these are yet to be implemented or embedded in practice.

Staff supervision is taking place on a regular basis. However, the quality of supervision is inconsistent and variable. It is not reflective. It fails to highlight key issues and does not help staff to understand and manage their own feelings or the behaviour of young people.

Information about this children's home

A private company runs the home. It accommodates up to two young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The home's statement of purpose indicates that the age range will be between 10 and 18 years of age.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/07/2016	Full	Good

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with particular reference to staffing, the registered person must:</p> <p>(2)(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	<p>31/01/2017</p>

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision that allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection, we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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