

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	09/11/2016
Unique reference number	1228091
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Phoenix Care and Education Limited
Registered provider address	31 Hansby Drive, Speke, Liverpool, Merseyside L24 9LG

Responsible individual	Lee Ellis
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Nick Veysey and Paul Gillespie

Inspection date	09/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	Monitoring visit was carried out on 09/09/2016
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate

1228091

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Leaders and managers have not addressed all the areas for improvement identified at the monitoring visit on 9 September 2016 and by the independent person through her monthly visits.
- The recruitment of staff is still not robust. Not all of the necessary checks and information are in place to minimise potential risks to young people from unsuitable people.
- Staff members have not been adequately trained to promote their professional development and meet the needs of the young people, including appropriate training in safeguarding and protecting children from sexual exploitation. Also, staff are not receiving practice-related supervision by the manager in order to reflect on young people's progress and their own practice, to assess their performance, and to identify their development and training needs.
- The quality of young people's records is not yet consistently good, and they do not set out clearly the arrangements for their care. Written risk assessments, behaviour-management and health plans have not been completed to show how the young person's assessed needs are being met on a daily basis. The records do not provide a detailed picture of young people's experiences and progress. Consequently, the records are not being used as a tool to review, evaluate and understand young people's needs, or to develop support plans to meet their needs.
- Health plans do not clearly show the arrangements for supporting young people's health needs, and they do not promote a better understanding of healthy lifestyle choices. The arrangements for storing young people's medication are not secure.
- Young people do not have a clear education and learning programme to encourage, support and prepare them to attend a new school.
- The statement of purpose is currently being updated to reflect the ethos and objectives of the home and recent staff changes, so that it provides accurate information about the home. It also needs to be supplied to Ofsted once it has been revised.

The children's home strengths

- The appointment of a new manager has brought focus, stability and structure to the running of the home. The new manager has a clear and realistic understanding of the home's effectiveness and key areas for improvement.
- The young person lives in a warm, positive and supportive environment. Staff's friendly and considerate approach is helping the young person to develop positive relationships with her carers. They have an awareness of her needs, and work hard to meet them on a daily basis.
- The young person feels safe and able to talk to staff about her worries and feelings. Consequently, she is developing a sense of security and belonging.
- Staff's calm, clear and engaging approach is helping the young person to manage her feelings and to control her behaviour when she is upset, frustrated or angry.
- The young person has opportunities to enjoy activities that develop her interests and talents.
- The independent visitor provides impartial and robust scrutiny of the effectiveness of the home in meeting young people's needs and protecting them from harm.

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>8: The education standard</p> <p>In order to meet the education standard, the registered provider must ensure:</p> <p>(2)(a) that staff:</p> <p>(i) help each child to achieve the child's education and training targets, as recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>(viii) help a child who is of compulsory school age but not attending school, to access educational and training support throughout the period of non-attendance and to return to school as soon as possible.</p>	28/12/2016
<p>10: The health and well-being standard</p> <p>In order to meet the health and well-being standard, the registered person must ensure:</p> <p>(2)(a) that staff help each child to:</p> <p>(i) achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>(ii) understand the child's health and well-being needs and options that are available in relation to the child's health and well-being, in a way that is appropriate to the child's age and understanding;</p> <p>(iii) take part in activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs; and</p> <p>(iv) understand and develop skills to promote the child's well-being</p> <p>(b) that each child is registered as a patient with a registered dental practitioner</p> <p>(c) that each child has access to such dental, medical, nursing, psychiatric and psychological advice and other services as the child may require.</p>	28/12/2016

<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the provider must ensure:</p> <p>(2)(b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. In particular, ensure that checks are carried out to assess staff's suitability to work with children and young people prior to commencing their employment.</p>	28/12/2016
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must:</p> <p>(2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p>	28/12/2016
<p>16: Statement of purpose</p> <p>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))</p>	28/12/2016
<p>23: Medicines</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that medicines kept in the home are stored in a secure place so as to prevent any child from having unsupervised access to them. (Regulation 23 (2)(a))</p>	28/12/2016
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>(1) The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>(2) The registered person may only:</p> <p>(a) employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>(b) if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>(3) The requirements are that:</p> <p>(a) the individual is of integrity and good character;</p>	28/12/2016

<p>(b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform; and (d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(d))</p>	
<p>33: Employment of staff</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development, and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(a)(b))</p>	<p>28/12/2016</p>
<p>36: Children's case records</p> <p>The registered person must maintain records ('case records') for each child which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) include the information and documents listed in schedule 3 in relation to each child; (b) are kept up to date; and (c) are signed and dated by the author of the entry. <p>(Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p> <p>In particular, children's case records should include: a detailed picture of the child's assessed needs, experiences and progress; a placement plan showing how the registered provider will meet the child's assessed needs, and promote and safeguard his or her welfare on a day-to-day basis; a health and well-being plan; an assessment of risk and a plan for the management of risk and behaviour; and an up-to-date copy of the placing authority's care plan.</p>	<p>28/12/2016</p>

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned by a private provider. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
<p>The manager and staff provide young people with a friendly, positive and supportive environment. At the time of the inspection, only one young person was living at the home. The manager and the placing authority worked together well to ensure that the young person's move into the home was planned carefully. The manager had sufficient information to make an assessment that the staff had the knowledge, skills and expertise to meet the young person's needs and promote her welfare. The young person visited the home before she moved in, and felt included in the plan. She has settled in extremely well, and is developing positive relationships with the manager and staff. She is very positive about the move because it means that she is now living closer to her family and friends. She also said that she enjoyed living there and staff had made her feel at home. Her social worker said, 'She has settled well and the staff are really good with her.'</p> <p>The young person lives in a pleasant family house. It is furnished and decorated to a good standard and meets her needs. She has plenty of personal space and has made her mark on the whole house by decorating the doors and displaying her artwork. She is currently choosing a colour scheme to decorate her bedroom.</p> <p>The young person's records do not include all the necessary information to provide a clear and accurate picture of her assessed needs and how the placing authority's plan is being put into practice on a daily basis. This does not help staff to develop a clear and consistent plan of support for the young person, or help staff to develop a detailed knowledge of her individual needs. This lack of information about the young person's needs and circumstances at the start of her placement makes it difficult for the manager and staff to measure her progress, and identify the home's effectiveness in improving her outcomes.</p> <p>The lack of a detailed and up-to-date health plan is not helping staff to understand the young person's specific health needs, or promote good health outcomes, including the support she requires to manage a long-term condition. Staff had an awareness of the young person's condition and how she uses medication to relieve this. However, they were less clear about what action they should take when the young person refuses to take her medication. The young person is registered with a general practitioner, but it was not clear from records and talking to staff whether she had also been registered with a dentist and optician. The records also failed to show how plans would guide staff to promote the young person's understanding of healthier lifestyles choices, including the importance of following a healthy diet and regular physical exercise. Neither did they help to inform staff about how best to support the young person with other health issues, such as</p>	

supporting her emotional well-being, and reducing health risks associated with smoking, using alcohol and misuse of drugs. The young person's medication was not stored in a secure place to prevent unsupervised access to it.

Written information about the young person does not provide a detailed picture of her needs, progress and experiences. It is not written in an engaging and informative way that would be helpful to the young person or contribute to a better understanding of her life. The manager and staff are not taking the opportunity to record their observations and evaluation of the young person's experiences, presentation and emotional well-being so that they can measure progress.

The manager and staff are working closely with the social worker and local authority to identify a suitable school for the young person to attend that best meets her learning needs and ability. The staff are providing the young person with opportunities for informal learning, including art and design, discussing current affairs, going to the cinema, ice skating, and shopping for clothes and food, while a new school is identified. The young person enjoys these activities, especially tattoo art and the cinema. The activities promote her skills, knowledge and talents, and give a reasonable structure to her day. However, she is not currently taking part in a programme of academic work to help prepare her for returning to school.

The manager and staff encourage and support the young person to see her family and friends in line with her plan for contact. The young person is benefiting from living closer to her family and friends. This means that she is able to spend more time with them in line with the placing authority's plan, and her friends are also able to come round for tea. The social worker said, 'Staff support contact safely, they are aware to identify and manage any risks.' Staff work well with the members of the young person's family to ensure that she has positive experiences when spending time with them. They also support the young person's wishes and feelings about wanting to see important people at key times of the year, such as celebrating Halloween together.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>The young person living in the home feels safe and protected from harm. She feels able to talk to the staff about her worries, and said that they listen to what she has to say, reassure her and take her seriously.</p> <p>The manager and staff give the young person's safety the highest priority, and are alert to any signs that she is upset or may be at risk from abuse, neglect or exploitation. They took prompt appropriate action when the young person raised</p>	

serious concerns about how she had been treated by her previous carers. They reported the concerns to the young person's social worker and the local authority in line with the child protection procedures. However, staff have not had the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge through training in safeguarding and protecting children from sexual exploitation.

The manager and staff have an awareness of the young person's vulnerabilities and risks associated with her individual needs and experiences, and in relation to self-harm and missing from care. The staff are vigilant, and manage risk well on a day-to-day basis. The young person has not been missing from the home, and staff provide her with a suitable level of supervision in the community. The staff are clear about what they need to do if a young person does go missing, and this is consistent with the local arrangements and statutory guidance.

The manager and staff have not devised a written risk assessment about the young person's needs that clearly identifies the level and nature of risk she may be exposed to or place herself at. Therefore, there is no plan that shows the precautions that staff should take to manage and reduce the potential risk of harm. Likewise, the young person does not have a written behaviour-management plan showing how staff are expected to help the young person understand and manage her feelings and control her behaviour. The lack of written assessments and plans does not help staff to develop a consistent and proactive approach to supporting the young person by anticipating problems and taking effective action should they occur. It also means that they do not have the tools to understand the young person's behaviour, identify patterns and emerging trends, evaluate the effectiveness of their work or develop practice to support the young person.

The manager and staff make every effort to promote positive behaviour. They provide the young person with clear and unambiguous boundaries that are helping them to understand the expected standard of behaviour. Staff members encourage and reinforce positive behaviour through praise and rewards. They also challenge poor behaviour, such as swearing, helping the young person to understand why it is unacceptable and to find alternative ways to express herself in a more constructive way. The manager and staff are developing a better understanding of the times and situations when the young person feels upset, frustrated and angry. For example, they have recognised that when she gets upset she gets into rows with members of her family and the social worker on the phone. They are working with her to help her understand the impact of these rows, and that it is better to sort out problems when she is feeling calmer. They have suggested that when she starts to feel angry she ends the call and gives staff her phone until she is calm. She is using this strategy successfully, and showing signs of managing her feelings more positively.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Inadequate
<p>The home has experienced some turbulence recently, with the previous registered manager leaving and a lack of continuity with the staff group. However, a new manager has been appointed recently who has a strong background in education. She has a Level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management for Residential Childcare and a master's degree in education. She has a range of experience working with colleagues from youth justice services, social work and education and is using her transferrable skills in this new role. However, she has limited experience in the management of residential childcare. The manager is in the process of submitting an application for registration with Ofsted.</p> <p>The manager is realistic in her assessment about how the home is currently operating. She said, 'I needed to ensure I had a realistic picture of the position of the home when I started to make a baseline assessment.' There is now a strong emphasis on recording and report-writing, with increased management oversight and an improved daily overview of the practice within the home. A sample from the records shows closer scrutiny is now undertaken by the manager of what and how information is recorded. This demonstrates that the manager has an input into, and a good understanding of, the day-to-day running of the home. A staff member commented, 'Since the new manager has arrived there is more organisation, and she is clear about what she expects.'</p> <p>The manager is reviewing the staffing arrangements. There has been some improvement in the recruitment of staff, resulting in a more consistent team. This needs to be built upon further so that the home can provide the continuity of care that is important for young people to develop trusting relationships. Some staff are not adequately trained to meet the needs of young people living at the home. Not all mandatory training has been undertaken, including first aid, safeguarding and understanding and responding to risks regarding child sexual exploitation. Some training had been planned, but was cancelled. However, the manager has now produced a training matrix for staff that identifies these shortfalls, and training is scheduled. This must now be delivered to ensure that staff are suitably equipped with the knowledge and skills to respond to young people's needs.</p> <p>Arrangements for staff supervision and the induction of staff have not been embedded. Supervision is a key element in ensuring that the quality and standards of practice at the home are maintained. Staff are yet to receive regular supervision to inform their practice and to assess their performance. The manager has now established a programme for supervision going forward. Team meetings have taken place and the manager sees them as important for building a more cohesive team. The manager is also reviewing the induction programme for staff, as well as the staff handbook, which offers guidance about expected standards of conduct</p>	

and performance.

An independent person visits the home each month, and provides an impartial assessment of the arrangements for safeguarding and promoting young people's welfare. They offer a critical but constructive assessment of the home's effectiveness. The manager spoke about how the relationship with the independent visitor is supportive in addressing shortfalls and informing the detail of the home's development plan so that it is achievable. The manager and provider now need to ensure that issues identified by the independent visitor are acted upon to improve the quality of care.

Although the home's statement of purpose complies with regulation, it needs updating to provide a clear overview of the home's revised therapeutic approach and to reflect the recent staffing changes. A copy of this must be provided to Ofsted in line with regulation.

Three of the four requirements from the monitoring visit, in relation to the employment of staff and records, have not been met. The arrangements to ensure staff's suitability to work with children, including having all the necessary checks in place and that they have the necessary experience, qualifications and skills, still need to be addressed. Young people's case records must be maintained to the required standard so that they assist staff in the work they are doing and provide an accurate reflection of the needs and experiences of young people.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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