

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	30/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC048552
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school
Registered provider	Wings Education Limited
Registered provider address	C/O Kedleston Group Limited, Office Suite No. 1, Ansell Gardens, Holloway Lane, Harmondsworth, Middlesex UB7 0AE

Responsible individual	Paul Brosnan
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Charlie Bamber Sarah Oldham

Inspection date	30/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
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

SC048552

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people report that they feel happy and settled in the home. They speak positively about living at the home.
- Young people make good progress from their starting points. There are strong systems in place for tracking progress, which helps to monitor the continuity of progression.
- Young people's achievements are celebrated by the whole school community, which helps improve their confidence and sense of self-worth.
- On-site education provides young people with joined up care, ensuring that boundaries and behaviour management are consistent across the setting.
- There are a wide range of activities on offer, both on and off site, which are tailored to the interests and preferences of young people.
- Any safeguarding issues arising are dealt with competently and with good communication and cooperation with external agencies.
- The home maintains effective partnerships with the families of young people, their social workers, independent reviewing officers and other professional agencies to secure positive outcomes for young people.
- Changes to the leadership of the home have had minimal impact on young people's lives and progression due to a strong staffing structure being in place.
- Young people who go missing from home benefit from a well-coordinated response, although do not always have the chance to share their views at independent return interviews.
- The home has a clear complaints procedure in place. All complaints made about the home, regardless of their origin, need to be logged in the complaints log to ensure transparency and accurate data collection.
- Young people's needs are very well understood by the staff team. The home needs to ensure that their placement and health plans clearly and fully reflect these needs and the actions taken to meet them.

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, the 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 maintain records ('case records') for each child which are kept up to date and which are signed and dated by the author of each entry. Specifically this relates to ensuring high-quality health and placement plans for young people which are signed and dated. (Regulation 36(1)(b)(c))	12/02/2017
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))	12/02/2017

Recommendations

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

- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 50 young people of both genders. It is a privately owned residential special school which is also registered as a children's home. The home provides for young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
28/09/2015	Full	Good
23/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/06/2014	Full	Adequate

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>The home provides young people with good care that is well individualised. Staff have detailed and in-depth understanding of young people, and plan their care around young people’s individual needs. Young people are encouraged and supported to develop a positive self-view which promotes emotional resilience and helps them to develop trusting relationships. Young people’s achievements are highly celebrated by the whole community which positively reinforces their strengths and abilities and impacts on their self-esteem.</p> <p>Young people are helped to develop trusting relationships with staff. Staff spend time with them, talking about their day-to-day lives, their day at school and things that are important to them. Young people feel that staff genuinely care about them, and that staff do their best to look after them even when their behaviour is difficult.</p> <p>Young people are educated both on site and at local colleges. Education is a strength of the home, and young people make good progress from their starting points. There are good systems in place to monitor educational progress, which enables young people to see the progress that they make. Positive communication and joined-up working between care and education mean that young people receive a consistent response to their needs across both settings.</p> <p>Young people are positively involved in activities and have the opportunity to participate in a range of recreational pursuits outside of the home. Several young people attend off-site clubs and many are involved in charitable fund-raising events. Young people report that opportunities for activities are plentiful, and they also have the option to take part in internal activities and competitions such as a bake-off.</p> <p>Young people are in good health and receive appropriate healthcare. They are supported to maintain good health and attend appointments by care staff and a school nurse. Where young people have specific health needs, they have access to specialist support, and staff have specific training in relation to individual health needs to ensure that they understand and respond appropriately to any issues.</p> <p>Independence is promoted in a planned way, with young people having opportunities to gain independence skills and free time that are appropriate to their age, development and specific needs.</p> <p>Appropriate contact is maintained with young people’s families. Where contact</p>	

proves to cause issues for a young person, the home recognises this and works with placing authorities to address this and to ensure that contact is a positive and safe experience for young people.

Young people feel listened to and report that their views are taken into account. Many have recently had input into the redecoration and furnishing of their bungalows following some flooding issues. They know how to make complaints, and the complaints procedure ensures that young people are clearly informed of the outcome of any complaint that they make. The process for investigating complaints is robust, but the home has not included complaints made directly to the regulator in their complaints log, which is identified as an area for improvement.

There has been a significant change in the cohort of young people placed since the last full inspection. This is due to a range of factors including a new 16 plus provision being opened and a number of young people moving there, young people moving on after completing Year 11 at school, and flooding issues meaning that some young people had to move out of their homes for a period. New admissions have been well planned for, and very good matching and introduction processes in place have ensured that the home has been generally calm and settled despite having 15 new young people admitted.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Risk assessments are in place for young people which clearly identify key risks and strategies for managing risk. Staff understand and apply age-appropriate care in respect of risk-taking and so allow some exposure to risk at a level which is commensurate with young people’s age and understanding.</p> <p>Young people frequently have very high risk levels at the point of placement and, although they continue to display risk-taking and at times challenging behaviours in and outside the home, their risks reduce over time and are well managed by staff who understand risk management and safeguarding procedures well. Staff talk to young people about their risk-taking behaviours and encourage them to make more positive choices. For example, one young person identified that he was negatively influenced by his peer group at the home and requested a move to a smaller, older-age-group home, and this was facilitated for him.</p> <p>Young people feel safe and protected. They understand that their behaviour sometimes places them at risk of harm, and that they at times display challenging</p>	

behaviour, but feel that staff work well with them to manage and reduce risks. One young person stated, 'I feel safe here and I have friends and staff who help me.'

Missing from home is a significant risk for some young people. Where this is related to family contact, the home works with the placing authority to review contact arrangements for young people. A coordinated response is provided to young people who go missing. Staff actively search and try to contact young people when they are missing. They work proactively with police and other agencies, including requesting and attending strategy meetings when the threshold is met. Young people do not always have the opportunity to speak to an independent person upon their return, as their placing authority does not always provide this. The home has responded to this issue proactively by commissioning its own independent return interview service which it will now provide as part of its package of care for those authorities who do not meet their obligation in this area.

Young people report that bullying is not an issue in this home. Although at times they do not get along, they feel that the staff listen to them when they raise issues about their peers and that situations are appropriately managed to protect them. One house has participated in a week's bullying campaign to raise awareness of the issue. Young people are also educated about internet safety and how to protect themselves online.

Some young people engage in criminal activity. The home works proactively with the youth offending service to ensure that young people comply with any order they are subject to and engage positively with the service on offer. The home does not unnecessarily criminalise young people, involving the police only when necessary to ensure the safety of young people and staff.

Restrictive physical intervention is used at times when young people's behaviour cannot be managed in other ways. Records of interventions are clear, and young people are given the opportunity to reflect and debrief on incidents. Young people spoken to reported that physical intervention is used only when no other method of behaviour management could prevent them from causing injury or serious damage.

Self-harm is an area of risk for some young people. Extensive key-work takes place around this issue, as well as additional specialist support. Young people are educated about the risks and are supported to try alternative coping strategies. They are supported to engage with CAMHS where appropriate.

The home has positively developed links with other agencies involved in safeguarding young people. Agencies spoken to reported that the home works cooperatively with them and that it feels like a 'safe' place for young people to live.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home has been without a permanent registered manager since June 2016. An interim manager has been in post, and a new manager has been appointed and is in the process of making an application to Ofsted for registration. The responsible individual has kept the regulator informed as required about changes to the manager's post. The impact on young people of the changes to the management of the home has been limited due to having a stable senior management team and clear lines of delegation through team leaders and house managers.</p> <p>The newly appointed manager has made a positive start in her post. She has gained a very rapid understanding of the home's strengths and weaknesses and has already identified some areas for development and improvement where she plans sensitively and gradually to implement some changes.</p> <p>Throughout the management structure there is a clear focus on prioritising the needs of young people and improving the service and care offered to them. Young people are kept central to all decision-making within the home and their needs are clearly prioritised. Managers have good understanding of plans for young people and monitor progress to ensure that this is progressive and continual. When a young person falters in making progress or their risks remain high, their placement is reviewed.</p> <p>The home is sufficiently staffed with minimal use of agency staff. There is an ongoing recruitment process, and managers are clear that additional young people will not be admitted to the home until the correct staffing levels are in place. Staff report high levels of positivity and morale. They have good access to appropriate and specific training, and report that they can request very specific individual training if there is a benefit to young people. There are systems in place to ensure that all staff are supervised at the agreed level, and staff report that senior staff are always available should they need to ask advice or require any additional support.</p> <p>There are a number of systems in place to monitor the progress of young people, and these have been continuous despite the changes to the registered manager. External and internal monitoring processes are ongoing, and these assist in identifying any areas for development. Some issues raised during the inspection process had already been identified as weaknesses and plans were in place to make improvements.</p> <p>The home's statement of purpose clearly sets out its aims and objectives and provides a clear description of the services the home provides.</p>	

The quality of records kept by the home is generally good, although some areas for improvement were noted in respect of placement plans not being sufficiently individualised and detailed, or containing information about young people's cultural needs, and health plans not being dated and signed by the author.

The home has developed positive relationships with a range of agencies and works in a coordinated way to ensure that young people's needs are met across all areas. Agencies spoken to as part of this inspection reported very highly about all aspects of the home, the care provided to young people and the progress that young people make. The home appropriately challenges other agencies, in particular placing authorities when their response to young people's needs is not effective.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors 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, 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 ensure that their welfare is 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 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 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 whom 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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