

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>08/02/2017</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC011185</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Calcot Services For Children</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>1210 Parkview, Arlington Park, Theale, Reading, RG7 4TY</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Rachel Redgwell</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Post vacant</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Emeline Evans</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>08/02/2017</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Sustained effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

## SC011185

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people benefit from the quality of the relationships they are developing with the members of staff working with them. These relationships are developed in a sensitive and professional manner.
- Staff act as good advocates, for example, to ensure that young people have access to appropriate education. This enables young people to improve their engagement and behaviour and to achieve their potential.
- Young people are supported to be as independent as possible and transitions on to independent living have been successful.
- There is a huge range of direct work to support the young people. These sessions are therapeutic in their approach with staff investing quality time and thought with the young people.
- Risks are very well understood by the staff team and staff are able to recognise and respond well to any concerns.
- Staff are very proactive in promoting positive behaviour and relationships. As a result, young people predominantly behave appropriately and interact positively with staff.
- There is sense of joint ownership, with staff being very passionate about achieving consistency and wanting the best for the young people. The whole team communicates a sense of striving for improvement.
- Monitoring systems are strong with challenge provided and they evidence clear awareness of strengths and areas for development.

## **What does the children's home need to do to improve?**

### **Recommendations**

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

- Ensure that staff can support and meet each child's needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 52, paragraph 10.5) In particular, they should undertake training in therapeutic ways of working and attachment disorders early in employment.
- Ensure that external agency staff's qualifications are taken into account before they commence work. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16)
- Ensure that the registered person can demonstrate that they consistently follow good recruitment practice. (Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1) This specifically relates to ensuring that dates of employment supplied in references correspond to dates of employment given in application forms.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This home is registered for up to seven young people and is owned and managed by a private organisation. The home caters for young people who have a range of emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home aims to prepare young people to be ready to leave care.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/07/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/10/2015	Full	Good
29/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people benefit from good levels of support from a child-centred staff team. Staff are actively concerned with the welfare of the young people and have successfully created a nurturing and welcoming environment. Young people benefit from the quality of the relationships they are developing with the members of staff working with them. Staff are sensitive to how they approach this with the young people who are new to the placement, and they are aware that young people are resistant at times in exploring new relationships. However, it is clear that young people are beginning to trust staff and explore their feelings and emotions. A placing social worker commented on how staff are managing to be on the young person's level and the young person is starting to listen. Young people spoke positively about how they trust staff and have confidence in the staff's ability to invest quality time with them. Staff are attentive to young people's needs and are consistently looking at how to promote their well-being and ensure that they are kept safe.</p> <p>Since the last inspection in July 2016, there have been two new admissions and four discharges. The managers and senior staff considered carefully whether they were able to keep the young people safe before ending placements. One of these endings involved a planned positive move on to semi-independence. Two of the moves were to other homes in the organisation; one decision was not in the home's control, and the other two discharges were due to a reflection by managers that the young people required a more specialist provision. Staff are very aware of their limitations, and endings to placements are a last resort with all avenues having been exhausted before this decision is made. Despite these moves, there is evidence to demonstrate that the young people who have moved on made good progress, especially in their confidence, emotional and psychological resilience and independence. Young people currently in placement are progressing well; young people are now able to put into practice newly developed skills, which they have developed through discussions with the staff to manage their behaviours and reflect on their choices.</p> <p>Staff act as good advocates, for example, to ensure that young people have access to appropriate education. This enables young people to improve their engagement and behaviour and to achieve their potential. Staff give practical support to young people to encourage their educational progress. Staff assist and enable young people to complete job applications and apply for appropriate education placements. Staff help young people to make decisions in this area and this is further enhancing their self-esteem. When young people refuse to engage in education, staff incorporate education and learning into young people's routines in</p>	

a creative and age-appropriate way.

Young people are involved in decisions in the home and are aware of why, at times, their wishes cannot be met; this enables them to have a say but also to develop an awareness of the boundaries and how to respect them. There has only been one formal complaint made, and this was taken seriously and action taken. There are various opportunities for young people to raise concerns without the need to formally complain.

Young people are given various opportunities to enjoy leisure activities and to be involved in the local community. This helps young people to build positive peer relationships, increase their social networks and integrate into the community. Sometimes young people choose not to engage in activities with staff; however, staff persevere to ensure that young people are given these opportunities and experiences. The organisation continues to encourage community involvement and is involved in a range of charity work. This enables young people to have a sense of achievement and boost their confidence, and they are able to see the impact of their achievements on others.

Young people are supported to be as independent as possible and transitions on to independent living have been successful. Young people engage in practical skills such as cooking, washing and budgeting to prepare them for later life. Staff make sure that young people are well prepared and confident about their future plans. This helps young people to make important choices and move successfully on from the home. The direction this takes is carefully considered for each young person, with some work aimed at supporting young people to be independent in keeping themselves safe and to manage unsafe behaviours and relationships. There is a huge range of direct work to support the young people in these areas. These sessions are very therapeutic in their approach, with staff investing quality time with the young people to give them the advice to make the right decisions and to develop their own strategies in managing difficult situations.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
Risks are very well understood by the staff team and staff are able to recognise and respond well to any concerns. They take immediate action and work with all the necessary professionals when they feel the young person is at risk and not safe. Staff provide regular opportunities for young people to talk to them or others, including professionals external to the organisation, should they feel worried or upset. Young people say they are and feel safe in this home. Staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures and appropriate actions to take in	

response to any incidents concerning the protection of the young people. Training for staff is regularly refreshed and covers a range of areas around safeguarding. Staff enable the young people to have regular opportunities to discuss ways to keep themselves safe when out in the community. This can be a challenge at times; however, with staff perseverance, young people are beginning to understand the reasons for this. The staff team are working collaboratively with drug and substance misuse workers, as this is currently perceived as a subject on which young people require additional guidance. Young people are encouraged to reflect on the impact of these behaviours; this is an ongoing area of work with the young people.

Young people have placed themselves at risk by going missing. Responses to episodes of going missing are well coordinated and staff consider how instances can be reduced in the future. For example, staff explore triggers for young people who may go missing in direct work and also together as a staff team and put strategies in place, such as extra staffing and diversionary activities. Individual patterns are appropriately identified and considered in young people's risk assessments. For one young person, incidents of missing have dramatically reduced following individual strategies being implemented. Meetings with all involved in the young person's care are promptly arranged should this behaviour occur. They work very closely with the local neighbourhood police team, with an officer reporting that communication has been good and they work together to share intelligence. This helps to reduce recurrences. Young people currently in placement are not deemed at risk of child sexual exploitation. The staff team have made effective links with professionals should the need arise for advice.

Staff are very proactive in promoting positive behaviour and relationships. As a result, young people predominantly behave appropriately and interact positively with staff. There have been times when young people have had disagreements, which have resulted in physical altercations and staff have had to intervene. These occurrences have been managed well and were not perceived as bullying behaviours. There has been some use of restraint since the last inspection and this has been proportionate, and young people and staff have a full de-brief following any interventions. There is a reflection on practice, with very good oversight by the manager to ensure consistency in how staff are working with the young people. Staff do not use police to manage behaviour and police assistance is used only as a last resort. A police officer commented that there has been a massive improvement in managing behaviours in-house and, when staff have required police assistance, this has been appropriate. Boundaries are clear and consistent, enabling young people to reflect on their behaviours and learn what is acceptable.

There is a careful selection and vetting of staff working with young people in the home. However, there was no clear audit trail to confirm that dates of employment provided in references were checked against dates given in application forms. This has indirectly created some possible gaps in employment.



	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Since the last inspection, there have been changes to the management arrangements of the home. The previous registered manager left the organisation in October 2016, a new manager was then appointed but left the home before completing registration. The organisation took the decision for a senior manager to oversee the home until an experienced manager from another home takes over the post. This has been managed well to ensure that any impact on the young people and staff has been minimised. Staff have described the previous few months as chaotic, but say it is now settled and they all work well as a team. There is a sense of joint ownership, with staff being very passionate about achieving consistency and wanting the best for the young people.</p> <p>In recent months there have been a number of staff leaving and new staff joining the organisation; the senior managers are aware of this impact on young people and have consulted with staff to ensure retention and acknowledge their hard work. As a result, the rota system has changed so that staff know their hours in advance; hours are now fixed. In addition, the on-call system has been reviewed to ensure that this is more effective. Incentives have been created through the use of a 'perk box', which motivates the staff and recognises achievements.</p> <p>Staff are enthusiastic and committed to the young people in their care. Staffing numbers, levels of experience and the support provided to them are such that the staff sufficiently meet the needs of the young people. Staff undertake regular training, which provides them with the necessary knowledge and competencies to fulfil their roles. Although staff attend therapeutic group sessions to have the opportunity to reflect on practice, staff do not receive any training in therapeutic approaches and attachment disorders until a length of time after they are employed. This does not provide newly appointed staff with the necessary skills to work to the aims in the home's statement of purpose. Any shortfalls on the rota are covered by regular bank and agency staff known to the young people. The agency staff are competent. However, it is not evident whether or not they have undertaken the necessary qualification.</p> <p>Staff spoken to feel well supported and able to raise any concerns through supervision or by speaking to the acting manager. There is effective communication through handovers and team meetings, which ensures that staff are kept up to date and able to provide consistent care.</p> <p>The manager has good monitoring systems in operation. This contributes to an excellent understanding of the strengths of the service and any areas needing improvement. There is constant review of the processes which involve staff and young people. The senior staff examine trends and patterns and information is then shared with the rest of the staff team. Monthly monitoring reports are</p>	

undertaken by an independent visitor. These offer challenge and identify any areas for improvement.

Young people benefit from collaborative working relationships between staff and professionals from various other agencies. These include social workers and a number of specialist workers and the police. Information is cascaded to staff to ensure that they have the appropriate knowledge to support the young people's needs effectively.

There has been a low level of complaints, with one being received by managers since the last interim inspection. This was responded to promptly and all the necessary people kept informed. All concerns are dealt with quickly without the need to make formal complaints.

## 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 the '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 looked after children 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 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 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  
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