

Children's home inspection – Full

Inspection date	31/01/2017
Unique reference number	1027164
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Care 4 Children Residential Services Limited
Registered provider address	Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual	Joyce Masson
Registered manager	Rochelle Hey
Inspector	Elaine Allison

Inspection date	31/01/2017
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 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

1027164

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The home has a strong, positive impact on young people's lives. The young people have made good progress across different aspects of their welfare and development.
- Young people have a strong voice. They make meaningful contributions to their care plans. They participate in shaping their own futures and in the decision-making in the home.
- Young people receive high-quality, individualised care and support that meets their needs. They receive comprehensive and effective support in relation to their health, education, emotional, social and psychological well-being.
- The young people have developed close and trusting relationships with staff members. The strong emotional bonds are underpinned by sound safeguarding practice. Consequently, young people have developed feelings of safety and belonging.
- The young people have high aspirations. They have grown in confidence. They seek to learn and engage in education and achieve good educational outcomes.
- Risk management practice is proactive, collaborative and dynamic. It protects young people effectively, while still enabling them to take managed risks when appropriate.
- The home is effectively and efficiently managed. The registered manager is experienced, qualified and competent. She inspires staff and enables them to effectively fulfil the organisation's vision and the statement of purpose.

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

Statutory requirement

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meet(s) 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that:</p> <p>(1) children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure:</p> <p>(a) that staff:</p> <p>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>(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; and</p> <p>(d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.</p>	<p>06/03/2017</p>

Recommendation

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

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) This is with particular regard to ensuring that all documents are dated and signed.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection outcome
10/02/2016	Full	Outstanding
22/06/2016	Interim	Sustained

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>Young people make very good progress in all aspects of their lives. Their experiences through living at the home are rewarding and nurture their emotional growth. Young people are given sensitive responses that are well informed and thoughtful, and which take account of their backgrounds, temperaments and strengths. The very good outcomes are acknowledged by fellow professionals. An independent reviewing officer commented, '[Young person] has made remarkable progress since he was placed here. He has grown in confidence and has started to articulate his wishes and feelings.'</p> <p>All young people have an identified education provision to attend. From their starting points, young people make very good progress in terms of their academic abilities, willingness to attend and their understanding of the role that education plays in their future lives. Educational attainment has seen significant improvements. For example, one young person has a bespoke curriculum and support for dyslexia, which has resulted in a marked improvement in his reading ability. A parent commented, 'He has done incredibly well in his education. I don't think this would have happened anywhere else.'</p> <p>Young people are well supported with their individual health needs, and staff follow detailed healthcare plans. Care, encouragement and attention to detail are given to all aspects of young people's health, including the quality of meals, attendance at appointments and access to professional services. Young people's health has improved as a result of the support available to them. For example, prior to living at the home, one young person had been reported to be smoking up to twenty cigarettes a day. This has now reduced to two a day. Staff continue to offer support, advice and guidance on smoking cessation, and this has also assisted another young person who has already successfully stopped smoking.</p> <p>Young people take an active role in decision-making in the home. They are aware of the home's complaints procedure and are able to use it effectively. Young people confirmed that they feel listened to and that their views and feelings are valued and given due consideration. A young person commented, 'We are all involved in decisions. It's great to know that they listen.' Young people feel appreciated and respected for who they are. They have developed respectful attitudes towards others and have a more positive outlook on life. This has resulted in improvements in their confidence, social skills and self-esteem. A young person summed this up by saying, 'We are all like a jigsaw that has come together to make one big picture.'</p> <p>Staff achieve a good balance for young people between promoting group living and</p>	

shared experiences and one-to-one interactions. Young people have enjoyed group activities, such as golf and fishing, as well as individual activities, such as running clubs, that reflect their interests and hobbies. Staff are skilled at focusing on the interests of young people and using these to develop relationships.

Staff warmly welcome new young people to the home. They provide young people with clear verbal and written information about the expectations and the community ethos of the home. Admissions are risk assessment based and managed well. When making any decisions, the manager takes into account the existing dynamics in the home and the needs of young people who already live there. Endings of the placements are well managed. For example, staff have initiated a plan for a young person who is due to leave the home in six months' time. This plan involves liaising with fellow professionals to ensure that the appropriate accommodation is found and that the young person has the level of support that he will require to live independently.

In general, the home environment is very clean, tidy and decorated to a very high standard. However, in two of the bedrooms, wardrobe doors are missing. Records in the home indicate that these were damaged six months prior to the inspection. To continue to create a warm, homely environment, the manager should ensure that all repairs are carried out in a timely fashion.

With constant staff encouragement, young people develop important independent living skills that are essential in preparing them to move on from the home. This is evident through the use of the workbooks designed by the home. Staff take pride in the achievements of the young people, which is recognised by those close to the young people. One parent commented, 'He is growing into a responsible young man, learning useful life skills as he goes.'

The outcome of this high standard of care is that young people present as delightful, well mannered, sociable and articulate. Given their diverse starting points, this is an impressive achievement by all concerned.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people report feeling very safe at the home. They live in a physically safe and emotionally supportive environment and know that staff are always there to help them with anything that they need. Young people are aware of their right to be safe and respected at all times. They identify staff members as trusting adults	

whom they can talk safely with about any concerns that they might have. They feel listened to, heard and helped. A young person summed this up by saying, 'We are safe here. We all get on, and the staff are fantastic, so why wouldn't we be safe?'

Since the previous full inspection, there have been no missing-from-home incidents. There have been no safeguarding issues and no major incidents of concern. Staff have not had to use any physical interventions and have used very few sanctions. This is because expectations and rules are very clearly put in place, and the young people are content to accept these. This happens because the young people are genuinely engaged and interested in making better lives for themselves.

As part of the ongoing Assessment, Intervention and Moving on (AIM) programme, young people experience a high level of safety, security and supervision. Staff provide clear boundaries and structure. This promotes stability and consistency of care. Through developing a strong relationship with young people, staff become highly intuitive. They recognise when young people's behaviour changes or if they are struggling emotionally. Staff are proactive and take protective action to support young people. For example, a young person was identified by staff as struggling with the AIM programme, because the way in which the programme was set out was not conducive to his level of understanding. Staff effectively adapted the programme to ensure that it was delivered in a way which met his individual needs. This responsive approach helps to keep young people safe from harm and abuse and forms part of their rehabilitation programmes. There are no current child sexual exploitation concerns.

Staff regularly update and review the comprehensive risk assessments, care plans and behaviour management plans. This ensures that information is up to date to reflect young people's changing needs. Further guidance is available through the organisation's psychologist, who provides therapeutic insight and responses to individual behaviour. Ongoing training and individualised discussions in supervision and team meetings further enable staff to reflect on their practice. These strategies provide staff with a comprehensive picture of young people, their presenting difficulties and the best way to respond to these.

Medication, when used, is safely stored and carefully administered. Detailed records of medication are routinely checked for accuracy. This ensures that any errors are quickly identified and promptly resolved.

Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding. However, following a recent incident in which the whereabouts of a kitchen knife were unknown, effective action was not taken immediately to minimise the potential risks. During discussions with the registered manager, she acknowledged how this could have been managed differently and had already taken action to look at the procedures in place and staff's understanding of them. Furthermore, not all visitors were expected to sign into the home's visitors' book, such as the teaching staff who work in the off-site school. This does not ensure that there is a clear record of all people in the home, which can potentially be a safeguarding issue for young

people and an additional concern if there were a fire, as their whereabouts would be unknown.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home is effectively and efficiently led and managed at every level of its functioning. The registered manager has been leading and managing the home for over a year. She has relevant qualifications and many years of experience in the management of children’s social care. She leads a dedicated, stable, well-trained, qualified and resilient staff team.</p> <p>The staff team is stable, diverse and cohesive. Staff report a very supportive culture and structure. This is achieved through regular supervision, team meetings and daily handovers. Staff particularly value the consultation meetings with the therapists. They talk enthusiastically about how reflection in these meetings has informed and developed their practice, for the benefit of young people. Guest speakers are invited to the meetings to share their knowledge on a range of subjects, such as radicalisation and gang culture.</p> <p>Staff receive good-quality supervision. Each of them has a clear personal development plan. In addition to the ongoing review of staff practice, formal appraisals take place for all staff. Staff induction and training are thorough and equip them for their work with young people. There is a core training programme, and staff also access training in the light of the identified and emerging needs of young people placed. A staff member commented, ‘This is the best place I have worked. When they say they are child centred, they mean it. The training offered is outstanding.’</p> <p>Care planning documents held in the home are of a generally good quality. However, some records are not dated, for example, in the life skills booklet. This does not mirror the good practice carried out by staff on a day-to-day basis. This does not currently affect the day-to-day care received by the young people. However, it may have an impact on young people, should they at any time wish to view their records.</p> <p>Leaders and the manager have created a positive ethos in the home. They actively monitor the impact of the service on the young people’s progress, outcomes and life chances. Visiting professionals and parents are clear that in this home young</p>	

people always come first. They describe the manager as 'fantastic', 'professional' and 'child centred'. The quality of working in partnership is good. The manager works closely with the placing authorities and professionals from other agencies to contribute to the young people's care plans and reviews. For example, the manager shares her locality risk assessment with a nearby local authority children's home, to ensure that they have jointly assessed all the risks in the local area.

The manager has an in-depth understanding of the strengths and areas for improvement in the home. This is supported by comprehensive development plans, including one for the workforce. The plans arise from consultation with colleagues in the wider organisation, alongside internal monitoring, feedback and good use of the independent visitor reports. The progress in implementing actions arising is kept under review by the manager.

The statement of purpose and the young people's guide clearly set out the aims and objectives of the home. Young people and professionals say that what is described is what happens. The therapeutic ethos underpins the work of staff and ensures a shared understanding that translates into practice.

Although one requirement and one recommendation have been set at this inspection, these issues do not significantly undermine the good-quality individualised care that the young people receive.

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 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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