

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	07/02/2017
Unique reference number	1235576
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	South West Childcare Services
Registered provider address	First Floor Flat, 46 Durnford Street, Plymouth PL1 3QN

Responsible individual	Angela Glynn
Registered manager	Lucy Scott
Inspector	Janice Hawtin

Inspection date	07/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	Not applicable
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

1235576

Summary of findings

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

- Young people are happy living here, they trust the staff to keep them safe and do what is best for them. Both young people continue to make progress, sometimes from a difficult starting point and/or following several moves.
- Leaders and managers are suitably qualified and experienced. They lead a team of dedicated staff. Together they provide a service informed by research into practice. This supports the quality of care and contributes to continuous practice development.
- Transitions into the home are carefully considered and well planned. This has avoided any conflict of interest between young people living together which could have an impact on their progress. In addition, it ensures that the service provided can meet the needs of young people living in this home and avoids any further disruption to their home life.
- Young people are safe, they benefit from positive relationships with the staff. The progress they make in developing independence skills, improves young people's prospects for the future.
- Young people are valued and listened to, their feelings and wishes are taken into account and this informs the bespoke care provided.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>44: Independent person: visits and reports</p> <p>(1) The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>(7) The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to:</p> <p>(a) HMCI.</p>	31/03/2017
<p>45: Review of quality of care</p> <p>(1) The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality of care review') at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>(2) In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating:</p> <p>(a) the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>(b) the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>(c) any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>(3) After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ('the quality of care review report').</p> <p>(4) The registered person must:</p> <p>(a) supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed; and</p> <p>(b) make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.</p> <p>(5) The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their</p>	31/03/2017

parents, placing authorities and staff.	
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Recommendations

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

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. In particular, ensure that supervision is provided regularly. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a small private company. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

This is the first inspection since the home was registered in July 2016.

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 service has been carefully planned and resourced to meet the needs of young people. In the six months since it was registered it has provide a home for two young people. Both are making sustained and measurable progress in many aspects of their lives.</p> <p>The care provided is bespoke for each young person and carefully planned in consultation with them and with other professional stakeholders. Young people’s moves into the home were carefully considered and planned to avoid disruption. Young people are well matched, and they live together rather like siblings. There is some minimal disruption to one another but on the whole they enjoy a positive relationship, with both gaining considerable benefit from sharing and learning to live alongside one another.</p> <p>Young people have quickly settled back into an area they consider to be home. Plenty of opportunities are on offer for them to try out new things and they are regularly involved in activities which develop their social skills and relationships with peers, and keep them fit. Favourite activities include visits to the gym and karate lessons.</p> <p>Young people have full time school placements. The staff work in close partnership with education providers to support attendance and avoid disruption to learning. To support learning, young people have been on trips to places of interest including a short break to London and visit to many local attractions. Access to the internet is provided within the bounds of internet safety.</p> <p>Visits to see family and others who are important to young people are encouraged and supported. When appropriate, young people have unlimited access to social networking sites. They have been able to contact those important to them daily if they wish.</p> <p>Healthcare is a priority, all the routine appointments and check-ups are completed and young people have access to specialist resource when needed. Managers and leaders are assertive in sourcing services and providing for the needs of young people in their care.</p> <p>Staff are ambitious for young people, and the service provide is child-focused. The environment is welcoming and homely. Young people have access to all areas, their rooms are personalised and it’s possible to get a sense of who lives here within minutes of entering the home.</p>	

Each young person has a large book full of photos and other memorabilia of their time in the home. These were the first documents staff gave the inspector to look at during the inspection, and there is a definite pride in what young people have achieved. When asked why the care provided was successful, a member of staff said, 'Staff were well matched and skilled to meet the needs of the young people.' This was evident during the inspection.

Feedback from professional stakeholders is positive. They feel informed about what is going on and a 'genuine sense of work in partnership' to benefit young people.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people feel safe in this home. Risk is carefully considered and young people are able to take age-appropriate risks to develop their independence. Unnecessary risk-taking is guarded against and is also explained to young people, using bespoke resources when needed.</p> <p>Staff's attention to the needs of young people communicates their worth and value. Young people trust the staff to act in their best interests. They feel able to communicate their feelings, concerns and worries to the staff who care for them. Innovative ways to reduce anxiety are in place. For example, one young person has a 'worry eater'. Any concerns are written down and zipped into the mouth of this purposeful soft toy, from where they disappear. This process is completed each night, helping a young person to draw a line underneath any worries of the day and aiding their sleep.</p> <p>Young people have not gone missing from this home. Protocols are in place so that staff can respond quickly to any incidents and involve the use of police to secure the safe return of young people if necessary.</p> <p>Young people are placed in their area of origin and benefit from the familiar surroundings and additional visits to see family members or those important to them. Independent visitors are available to young people should they have the need to confide in an adult who is independent of the home.</p> <p>Behaviour management is based on encouragement and modelling, with the addition of rewards and incentives. The use of sanctions is reasonable and linked to the behaviour that needs to change. Staff training in de-escalation of unacceptable behaviour is robust. Although trained in the use of physical intervention, staff have</p>	

not needed to use these techniques to keep young people safe.

Young people are consulted about the care provided. They know how to complain but have not felt this to be necessary. They speak to the staff frequently about their feelings and how their day has gone. At least one individual support session per month focuses on discussing with young people how they are doing, what more could be done and their hopes for the future. These wishes and feelings are translated into care planning.

Health and safety checks are all in place, alongside suitable fire safety precautions. The staff are suitably selected and vetted as part of recruitment checks. This avoids unsuitable people working with these vulnerable young people.

Links with the Local Safeguarding Children Board are in place. All staff receive the training they need to ensure that they respond effectively to any concerns, which may indicate that a young person has been or is at risk of abuse. The manager tests out safeguarding knowledge in team meetings and in the individual support sessions provided to the staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The service provided reflects that described in the statement of purpose.</p> <p>The home is managed by a qualified social worker who is undertaking additional leadership and management qualifications. She leads a stable team of dedicated care staff. Many staff are studying for or are qualified to degree level in social science subjects. These complement the induction and training to all staff provided and assists with completing care-specific qualifications. Succession plans for key members of staff are in place to avoid disruption to young people and ensure that they always have suitable staff caring for them.</p> <p>The responsible individual has a wealth of experience in managing children's homes and providing for young people. She visits the home frequently and is readily available to provide support and guidance to the manager and staff team. Her approach is child-centred and this ethos attracts likeminded staff who relish the achievements of young people and are determined they will do well.</p> <p>All staff are involved in considering research into practice, which informs their understanding of behaviour and young people's development needs. A National Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children programme was used as a</p>	

response to a young person's need to understand about personal space and appropriate touching. More recently the staff are implementing a 'Safer use of public transport' course to assist a young person who wants to use the bus unaccompanied.

Work with other agencies is instrumental in safeguarding the progress made by young people. Education providers and social workers are consulted regularly. Working together avoids problems becoming critical. Links into the community allow young people to access a number of resources safely including group, team and individual activities.

Managers and staff produce reports and attend all meetings with young people. Progress is considered daily and reflective practice is embedded as part of the process for informing care planning. Young people have and continue to make progress.

Independent visitor reports are thorough and provided additional safeguards to young people. On occasion there is a delay in providing these reports to Ofsted for additional quality assurance. This detracts from what is otherwise a robust system.

The manager is continually reviewing the quality of care provided, which includes feedback and consultation with young people. However, the first six-monthly formal summary monitoring report is overdue.

The staff have weekly opportunities to consult with a clinical psychologist. This service is used to strengthen the support and guidance available to young people. In addition, staff can also access individual personal support sessions and confidential counselling. The staff value this resource and feel it contributes to their own emotional well-being and assists them to provide a good service to young people. The provision of formal supervision does not always match the frequency as described in the home's policy documents.

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 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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