

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	02/02/2017
Unique reference number	1240883
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Care 4 Children
Registered provider address	Care 4 Children, 1 Stuart Road, Bredbury Park Industrial Estate, Bredbury, Stockport SK6 2SR

Responsible individual	Ali-Raza Sarwar
Registered manager	Peter Nuttall (acting manager)
Inspector	Caroline Jones

Inspection date	02/02/2017
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	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	Requires improvement

1240883

Summary of findings

This children's home provision requires improvement because:

- A young person's risk-management plan has not been adhered to by the staff to ensure his welfare.
- The staff do not have training specific to young people's health needs, including first aid.
- Behaviour management is inconsistent, conveying mixed messages to young people.
- Young people's views and wishes have not been responded to in a timely manner.
- The staff have not passed on young people's complaints to the manager.
- The staff duty rosters are unclear and they do not identify the first aid lead on shift.

The children's home strengths

- The majority of young people who have previously not attended school are in full-time education and making progress.
- The majority of young people participate in regular activities that they enjoy, including martial arts classes, youth club and snowboarding.
- A new manager is in position, who is enthusiastic and committed to developing and improving the home. He has the relevant experience and skills.
- The staff are proactive, and facilitate young people in seeing their families regularly.
- Recruitment and vetting records are robust to promote the safety of young people.

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>12. In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that staff–</p> <p>2(a)(i) assess the risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and make arrangements to reduce the risk of harm to the child. In particular, following risk management plans.</p>	01/03/2017
<p>10. In order to meet the health and well-being standard, the registered person must ensure that–</p> <p>(1)(a) the health and well-being needs of each child are met; (b) children receive advice, services and support in relation to their health and well-being.</p>	01/03/2017
<p>7. In order to meet the children's views, wishes and feelings standard, the registered person must–</p> <p>(2)(a)(iii) ensure that the staff help each child to understand how their views, wishes and feelings have been taken into account, and give reasons for those decisions promptly. In particular, that complaints are taken seriously.</p>	01/03/2017
<p>11. In order to meet the positive relationship standard, the registered person must–</p> <p>(2)(a)(v) ensure that the staff communicate to each child expectations about behaviour. Specifically that the organisation's policies of handing in tobacco and lighters at night and staff not locking doors routinely are adhered to.</p>	01/03/2017
<p>13. In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that–</p> <p>(2)(c) ensures that staff have the experience, qualification and skills to meet the needs of each child; in particular, that they have</p>	01/03/2017

training to meet the health needs of individual young people. (h) uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.	
31. Staffing of the children's home: (2) The registered person must ensure that– (a) at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification.	01/03/2017
37. Other records: (2) The registered person must– (a) maintain in the home records in Schedule 4. In particular, to staff rosters.	01/03/2017

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that supervision enables the staff to reflect upon how they care for young people. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.15)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The children's home is one of a number of homes operated by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
First inspection following registration		

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Requires improvement
<p>Young people living here have complex emotional and behavioural needs. The staff work very hard to help them settle into the home and achieve their potential. The majority of young people are attending educational provision regularly and making progress. For example, they are sitting mock examinations and gaining vocational awards. Other young people are not doing as well, as incidents of them going missing and substance misuse are increasing. This is having a negative impact on their overall development and investment in the home.</p> <p>Young people take part in a range of activities and hobbies of their choice, such as martial arts, snowboarding, youth club, and seeing their friends locally. These are new experiences, which they look forward to and enjoy. The acting manager is also introducing new independence plans with young people, to equip them with the skills for adulthood.</p> <p>All young people are registered with health professionals and are offered appointments with specialist services, including the child and adolescent mental health service, which they sometimes refuse. There is also a trained therapist in-house who works with the staff and young people. Again, not all young people engage with this service. The acting manager could not provide information in relation to the staff training in first aid, or training in relation to young people's specific health needs. This does not assure the competence of staff in promoting young people's health outcomes. Processes for administering medication are sound.</p> <p>Young people are generally involved in the running of the home, but this involvement could be improved. They participate in house meetings and talk with staff to get their views across. However, their views are not promptly followed up to ensure action is taken and that their ideas count. For example, young people's repeated requests to personalise their bedrooms are still not fulfilled. Furthermore, a young person's complaint was not passed on to the acting manager by the staff and there are no records of this. This does not ensure that young people have a voice and that their complaints are taken seriously.</p> <p>The staff support young people to stay in touch with their families, and they have a good understanding of their background history and relationships. Practical arrangements are fully supported, and the staff transport and accompany young people to see their family members. Staff work proactively with parents and placing authorities to ensure contact is safe and enjoyable.</p>	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>There have been recent increases in incidents of young people going missing from the home and substance misuse. This has led to a risk-management plan being put in place by the placing authority social worker to promote the safety and welfare of the young person. This includes 30-minute observations of the young person. There is no evidence that this is carried out by the staff. However, when young people do go missing, the staff are proactive; they go out and look for them and encourage them to return home. Moreover, the staff have built up good relationships with the police and share information to promote young people's welfare.</p> <p>The staff have clear guidance to follow when managing negative and challenging behaviour. A behaviour management system is in place whereby young people can earn points for positive behaviour such as going to school or cleaning their bedrooms. These points are converted into extra money. This generally works well and encourages positive behaviour. However, staff have not been consistent in ensuring young people hand in their tobacco and lighters at night. Some staff have been routinely locking the kitchen door at night, despite no identified safety concern. This does not provide clear boundaries and guidance to young people, and is in conflict with the company's behaviour management policy.</p> <p>Sanctions and physical intervention are not used excessively, and the staff are fully trained in a recognised technique to safely hold young people if needed. Young people identify the staff members they like and would share any worries or concerns with. The staff work individually with young people through key-working sessions to educate them on internet safety, drug misuse and sexual health.</p> <p>Fire safety and health and safety checks are carried out around the home to ensure a safe living environment. However, young people smoking tobacco in their room is not identified in these risk assessments. Staff are vigilant, and take appropriate steps to verify the identity of visitors to protect young people.</p>	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The home was registered in August 2016. An acting manager is in post and his	

application is being processed by Ofsted. He is experienced in working with young people who have behavioural difficulties and is currently undertaking a management qualification. He is supported by a deputy manager, and together they run the home in line with the aims and ethos of the statement of purpose.

The acting manager is keen to improve the service to young people. A development plan sets out the areas for improvement, such as strengthening the healthcare plans to include an in-depth medical history for each young person. New internal monthly monitoring systems are being embedded but these have not identified the shortfalls found in this inspection in order to improve the quality of the service further.

The home is newly decorated and furnished, and is generally well maintained. However, delays in repairing a damaged front door and a young person's bedroom window do not ensure a hazard-free environment. Moreover, young people's bedrooms are not yet personalised, despite numerous requests from them to do so. This does not convey the message to young people that they are worth it.

The staff members spoken to enjoy their work and are complimentary of the acting manager. They have guidance, policies and procedures to support their care practice. They also have regular supervisions, team meetings and appraisals to further ensure their competence in delivering care to young people. Although supervisions are regular, they do not include discussion and reflection regarding the care practice of staff to improve practice further.

The staff are suitably qualified or working towards this. There are sufficient numbers of staff from differing backgrounds to provide role models for young people. Any gaps in the rosters are filled with staff from other homes in the company and by the acting manager being on shift also. There is an electronic roster system in place, but this does not accurately identify who is on shift or who the first aid lead is. Although staffing of the home can be tracked through the log book system, this is not ideal and is open to error.

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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