

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	20/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC047894
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Care Focus Limited
Registered provider address	Care Focus Ltd, 3rd Floor, 24 Chiswell Street, London EC1Y 4YX

Responsible individual	Jean Lloyd
Registered manager	Post Vacant
Inspector	Fiona Littlefield

Inspection date	20/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
<p>This home was judged as good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>The new management team has met two out of the three recommendations from the last inspection. The premises are being redecorated and provide a welcoming and nurturing environment for the children. Risk assessments for those children who are self-medicating are now included as part of independence work with children. However, while pathway plans are now more structured, the work that the children have completed is still not systematically dated and signed. Consequently, it is not clear what work they have achieved, when they have achieved it and what remains outstanding. This recommendation is repeated.</p> <p>The children benefit from a considered approach by the staff and the managers who place the children's interests at the centre of their planning. Some of the children have left as the result of a planned move, while others have joined following a careful admission process. The new manager works alongside senior colleagues in the organisation to ensure that the impact of any moves is assessed and managed. Consequently, all of the children feel secure and adapt quickly to changes.</p> <p>The children make progress because they develop relationships with the staff who are purposeful in supporting them. All the children have individual assessments in which risks are matched with up-to-date management strategies. The staff focus on encouraging them to reflect on their behaviour and express themselves confidently. The children clearly enjoy mealtimes, which can be lively. They have strong opinions and often show remarkable insight about the world around them. They also like to test out their ideas with staff, who enjoy the interplay but maintain a focus on responsible behaviour.</p> <p>This exchange of views is particularly important for the children nearing adult life, who learn to look after themselves and maintain a healthy lifestyle. The worker for one child wrote, 'Yet another positive start. Points have been great and all down to how you conduct yourself.' Consequently, the children are safe in the home and learn to promote their physical and emotional well-being.</p> <p>The children are expected to follow a purposeful day based around their education. Some of the children attend the on-site educational provision while others go to the local mainstream school or college. This is exceptional progress for some of the children, who were school refusers before coming to this home. However, simply</p>	

attending is not enough. The staff and managers are ambitious for them and expect them to work to the best of their abilities. The children's engagement and predicted grades in GCSE core subjects are monitored closely. If the children's education achievement is slipping, the staff work alongside social workers, and the children respond positively. This means that they remain focused on their educational goals.

The new manager reviews the service using both hard data and direct feedback from the children, their parents and other professionals. The level of negative incidents, complaints and notifications is low and reinforces the impression that the atmosphere in the home is well ordered. At the same time, the staff are not risk averse. The manager said, 'We are nurturing but responsible. We focus on their safety without crushing their need to learn to manage their own risks and broaden their horizons.'

The staff team is made up of both experienced and new workers who are currently completing their induction period before starting the national vocational qualification (NVQ) level 3 training. The current records do not reflect the staff qualifications or inform the manager when staff need to refresh any professional development. The manager does not have access to a record of staff supervision since the last inspection or the dates when staff appraisals have been held. This information is crucial in developing professional skills in the staff group.

The parents and social workers of the children are positive about their partnership with the staff and the managers. They comment that the staff appreciate the importance of family relationships and support contact arrangements so that children keep in touch with them. The children benefit from this teamwork approach, which has their interests at heart.

Information about this children's home

This home is one of a small group of homes run by an independent provider. It offers care for up to four children. Education is available within the setting. Children have direct access to therapy as part of the services offered to them by the company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/07/2016	Full	Good
26/01/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/11/2015	Full	Good
24/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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) 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 person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development, receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b)(c))	21/04/2017

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff prepare children for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, or to live independently (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 17, paragraph 3.27). This is with particular reference to providing an organised plan, which outlines areas of work alongside timescales so that it is clear what has been achieved.

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection, we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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