

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	27/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC368032
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Constant Child Care Ltd
Registered provider address	Beecham Business Centre, Beecham Business Park, Northgate, Aldridge, West Midlands WS9 8TZ

Responsible individual	Barry Edwards
Registered manager	Lisa Sherwood
Inspector	Julia Wright Beverley Harrison-James

Inspection date	27/02/2017
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 good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness.</p> <p>Since the last inspection, there has been a decline in young people's quality care, with safeguarding procedures not being effectively applied by managers and staff. For example, one young person has gone missing without agreement on a number of occasions and managers have not effectively escalated these concerns to the young person's placing authority. Managers have requested meetings. However, when the response from the placing authority has not been satisfactory, the staff have not escalated their concerns. This has meant that the young person has continued to be at potential risk of child sexual exploitation. Despite the staff's increased concerns about one young person's risk of child sexual exploitation, the young person's risk assessment has not been adequately updated to reflect the concerns. A professionals meeting did not take place until February 2017, despite managers requesting one in December 2016. This significant delay means that professionals have not shared information effectively to understand the extent of the risk that the young person continues to face.</p> <p>Managers have not notified the regulator about these safeguarding concerns, and, consequently, the regulator is unable to review the actions taken by managers and staff to protect the young person concerned.</p> <p>Not all requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have been met. One young person's file lacks her pathway plan and essential documentation that helps the young person and staff to identify the help and support she needs in working towards her move to semi-independent living. Gaps remain in the completion of the physical intervention records. While most records are completed, a small number lack the oversight and review of the registered manager.</p> <p>More positively, other requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection have been met. Managers now complete supervisions with staff at the required intervals. Young people now have the opportunity to have a discussion with an independent person if they have been missing from care. This is usually a local police officer. One young person's bedroom has been repaired to address previous damage. This has improved the young person's comfort and safety.</p>	

Since the last inspection, one new young person has moved to the home. He was warmly welcomed and continues to be supported by staff while he settles. Staff continue to complete regular one-to-one key-work sessions with each young person. This gives young people the opportunity to have individual support by staff and the chance to discuss issues pertinent to their welfare, health and education. Most of the sessions were recorded in detail in a way that gave a good overview of the discussions.

Education remains a priority for staff. All young people attend school or college. One young person has secured a college placement, enabling her to work towards her chosen career. Another young person has recently started school after a period of being away from school for a long period. All young people receive help and support with homework, and this means that they all have every opportunity to learn and develop.

Young people continue to enjoy positive relationships with staff. An education professional told the inspector, 'Staff consistently uphold high standards for him, and there is an enormous amount of forgiveness for him – enabling him to move forward from mistakes and try again.'

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is privately owned.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/11/2016	Full	Good
04/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/07/2015	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) 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
The registered person must, and must ensure that staff– (a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; (b) seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs; (c) if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (a)(b)(c))	31/03/2017
12. The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard requires the registered person to ensure– (a) that staff (i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.	31/03/2017
The registered person must ensure that– Within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')– (ii) Has signed off the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(ii))	31/03/2017
The registered person must maintain records (case records) for each child which include the information and documents listed in schedule 3 in relation to each child, in particular a copy of the	31/03/2017

local authority pathway plan. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and every other person without delay if–</p> <p>(a) a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation. (Regulation 40 (4)(a))</p>	31/03/2017

Recommendation

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

- Ensure that the registered person oversees the welfare of the children in their care through observation and engagement with each child and staff. In particular, have reviewing systems in place to review each young person's progress at the home. (The 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.23)

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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