

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	08/02/2017
Unique reference number	1240397
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Direct Care Limited
Registered provider address	Goldwyns, Rutland House 90 - 92, Southend-on-Sea SS2 6HZ

Responsible individual	Rebecca Ouellani
Registered manager	Jacqueline Patel
Inspector	Corrinne Barker

Inspection date	08/02/2017
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	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

1240397

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are making good progress from their starting points.
- Relationships between staff and young people are very positive and young people feel safe.
- Staff provide young people with opportunities to make progress in their personal, social and emotional development.
- Staff support young people to access education, advocating for them and working closely with partners to ensure that young people have the opportunity to achieve their academic potential.
- A stable staff team ensures that young people experience consistent care. Staff are able to implement clear expectations and boundaries.
- Risk to young people is managed well. Staff implement comprehensive risk and behaviour management plans in response to risks associated with going missing from care. Young people become safer as a result of living in the home.
- Effective partnership working is evident between the staff and other agencies. This ensures that young people's individual needs are met.
- The home is led by an experienced and capable manager. She has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the home.
- Managers and staff are providing a good standard of care. They learn from any incidents in the home and look at ways to continually improve the service that they offer.
- Management monitoring systems are robust and provide good oversight of the 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 '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>5: Engaging with the wider system to ensure children's needs are met</p> <p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered manager must, and must ensure that staff:</p> <p>(a) seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with the child's relevant plans; and</p> <p>(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)(c))</p>	24/03/2017

Recommendations

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

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a privately run home, which is part of an organisation. The home offers care and accommodation for up to five children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
This is the first inspection since registration	N/A	N/A

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Young people make good progress from their starting points, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Staff provide consistent and dependable care. This supports young people to develop secure and trusting relationships with them.</p> <p>All young people are engaged in education or training that is tailored to their individual needs or situations. Staff have been tenacious in advocating on behalf of young people to ensure that they have the opportunity to achieve their academic potential. Young people have varying commitment to education, with some young people being dismissive and others excited about their prospects. One young person told the inspector that she loved her education and was really happy with the progress that she was making.</p> <p>Overall, there is an increased sense of self-confidence in young people and a positive attitude towards trying new things.</p> <p>Staff consider young people's sense of identity, and promote each young person's welfare effectively. The home brings together young people with a range of different cultures, experiences and expectations. Staff celebrate difference and support young people to develop a better understanding of each other.</p> <p>Dynamics between young people can occasionally be challenging. One young person described weekly young people's meetings as an opportunity to air complaints and grumbles. A recommendation has been made to consider how staff can make young people's meetings positive, constructive and more enjoyable for young people.</p> <p>Young people living in the home have complex needs. Staff plan their care well, drawing upon sources of information and the young person's wishes and feelings to develop individualised care plans. Key work sessions take place regularly and are recorded well so that there is a good record of direct work and significant discussions with young people. A recommendation has been made to develop this further and to try to involve young people more closely in their care plans, using a range of interventions and resources to increase young people's participation and ownership.</p> <p>Young people have access to universal health services. Staff are supported to meet young people's needs through access to in-house clinical support. An assessment is made of all young people's emotional health and well-being at the point of their admission to identify whether any specific support is needed. There is mainly a systemic approach to supporting young people, but direct clinical assessment and support are available.</p>	

Admissions to the home are managed well. Staff use impact risk assessments to ensure that young people being considered for admission are well matched to young people already living in the home. The manager and staff are able to identify where young people are not making progress or when the home is not meeting a young person's needs. In these instances, swift liaison with placing authorities ensures that the young person's needs are considered and the next steps can be agreed.

Staff are appropriately experienced and skilled and have an exceptionally good understanding of young people's individual needs. Observations of staff demonstrate excellent relationships with young people. Young people receive nurturing care, with high levels of praise and encouragement. Young people make good progress in becoming more self-aware and developing the emotional maturity to help them manage difficult or overwhelming feelings.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>The home provides a safe environment for young people. The home is in a good state of repair and very well presented. Young people say that they feel safe in the home. There is a core of experienced and skilled staff who provide consistent and dependable care in the home. Staff are able to implement clear expectations and boundaries.</p> <p>Young people are relaxed in their home. Observations of young people interacting with staff are very positive. Staff promote a calm and nurturing environment.</p> <p>Staff manage challenging behaviour well. They understand the complexity of the young people who they care for and their individual needs and vulnerabilities. Staff praise young people when they make positive decisions and choices. Young people develop increased awareness of socially acceptable and safe behaviour. There are incidents of young people engaging in risk-taking behaviour, but they become better equipped to make safer decisions over time.</p> <p>Staff use physical intervention to manage behaviour on occasion. In situations when physical intervention becomes necessary, staff use this safely and record it appropriately. Young people are encouraged to de-brief following these incidents so that staff and young people can reflect on the situation.</p> <p>Incidents of young people going missing from the home are managed effectively. Staff follow multi-agency procedures and record these incidents very well. The home has seen a reduction in risk-taking behaviour, particularly as young people have settled into the routine of the home. Effective partnership working is evident between the staff and other agencies. This ensures that young people's individual needs are met.</p> <p>Young people invariably come to the home deemed to be at high risk of harm or</p>	

having suffered significant harm. Within a short period of time, the risk posed to young people is reduced. An independent reviewing officer commented on one young person's improved capacity to keep herself safe. She said, 'There had been serious issues around sexual exploitation, but at the last review the young person was more reflective and she knows more about how to keep safe.'

The manager has devised a location risk assessment and management plan for the home. This provides an opportunity for the manager and partners to consider any specific risks in the local area. The manager had been proactive in seeking the views of partner agencies and inviting professionals to work more closely with the home.

Since the home opened, there have been two instances when staff practice did not effectively safeguard young people. One related to how the administering of medication was being recorded and the second incident related to young people accessing the keys to the home's car. In both instances, the situation was managed swiftly and effectively, with managers fully investigating where processes have fallen down and putting new safeguards in place as a result.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The registered manager is suitably qualified and experienced. She is a capable manager with a good sense of the home's strengths and weaknesses.</p> <p>Staff say that they feel supported by the manager and although this is a new home, they are working cohesively together. They have access to a good range of training opportunities, the majority of which are provided in-house. Short training courses are also available on-line. There is a clear framework for training, particularly for new staff. There is a comprehensive induction programme in place, which challenges and supports new staff, enhancing the quality of care provided.</p> <p>Effective monitoring systems are in place, providing managers with good oversight of the day-to-day care being provided and enabling accurate evaluation of young people's progress. As a new team coming together in a new home, there have been occasional shortfalls in procedures. Managers have ensured that any shortfalls in practice or areas for improvement are addressed promptly. Staff receive regular supervision and contribute to staff meetings. These meetings reflect a learning organisation where practice can be reviewed.</p> <p>Case records are clear and well maintained. They reflect the young person's day-to-day life and progress made against agreed plans. The home has experienced some delay in key documents being forwarded from placing authorities. This has not had a negative impact on the quality of care provided, but a requirement has been made to ensure that staff follow an escalation process when key documents are outstanding.</p>	

Recruitment processes are managed well and reduce the risk of unsuitable adults working in the home. Agency staff are sometimes used, particularly if higher staff ratios are needed or during periods of staff illness. The manager ensures that these staff have appropriate employment checks in place and keeps a full record of any agency staff working at the home.

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 looked after children 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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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