

## Children's homes – Interim inspection

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>16/03/2017</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC361167</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Interim</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Residential special school</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Options Autism (5) Limited</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>Turnpike Gate House, Alcester Heath, Alcester, Warwickshire B49 5JG</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Graham Norris</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Rachael Sharpe</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Jo Stephenson</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>16/03/2017</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<p><b>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</b></p> <p>This home was judged <b>good</b> at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has <b>improved effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>At the last inspection in August 2016, Ofsted made one requirement. This relates to incomplete records of physical restraints. During a subsequent monitoring visit in October 2016, Ofsted raised a further recommendation. This relates to the use of generalised terminology by staff when they complete records detailing incidents of challenging behaviours, including the use of physical restraint. Since the last inspection, the registered manager has successfully addressed both of these noted shortfalls.</p> <p>The registered manager has reviewed all physical restraint records to make sure that these documents include all necessary information. This evaluation includes an assessment of any physical restrictions placed on young people's free movement around the environment. At the last inspection, some young people were unable to spend prolonged periods in the company of their peers. For example, a low level of tolerance relating to the noises, sounds, actions and behavioural traits of their peers meant that some young people would physically assault others without any warning signs of imminent aggression. This placed all young people at risk of harm. Subsequently, staff prevented some young people from mixing with their peers for short periods following incidents of extreme aggression. This allowed the on-site multi-disciplinary care, health and education team to review individual risk factors and to amend personalised behaviour management plans. Previously, records of these restrictions, such as staff creating a physical barrier to prevent a young person's access to a communal area of the home, did not include sufficient detail. The registered manager has amended internal incident reports. This means that staff are able to record periods when they stopped young people mixing with their peers, the reasons for the use of this measure of control (including potential risks to the young person and other people) and the steps taken by staff to de-escalate situations. Furthermore, staff participate in bespoke workshops and team meetings delivered by the registered manager relating to this area of practice. This means that staff have an appropriate knowledge of physical restraint and understand when it is acceptable and lawful to use this measure of control. This better promotes young people's safety and welfare.</p> <p>The registered manager has revised incident report forms and physical restraint</p>	

records. These amended documents prompt staff to consider the terminology that they use to describe incidents of challenging behaviours. For example, staff no longer use generic terms such as 'anxious' or 'heightened state' and better describe the specific behaviours that they observe. This improvement means that the registered manager, the multi-disciplinary leadership team, and other professionals are better able to monitor and evaluate young people's behaviours. Subsequently, young people's care programmes and behaviour management plans are personalised to meet their needs.

There has been a change to the group of young people residing in the home since the last inspection. When young people are ready to move to their next placement, staff work in partnership with the young people, their families, placing authorities and other professionals. This means that young people are fully prepared to leave the home and start the next stage of their journey towards adulthood. On the rare occasions when young people leave the home in an emergency, staff and managers work with alternative provisions to provide up-to-date and relevant information relating to young people's care and support needs.

Young people continue to make good progress in all aspects of their development. Professional working relationships between care staff, education staff and health agencies are exceptionally strong and positive. This means that young people experience an integrated approach to meeting their multifaceted, and often extremely complex, individual needs. The registered manager, care staff and other professionals continually strive to improve internal care planning processes. For example, managers work with speech and language specialists, allocated teaching staff and specialist health staff to revise internal placement plans. This means that in addition to mirroring the aims and objectives of the placing authorities, these documents constantly evolve to reflect young people's achievements and changing needs. This improvement helps young people to achieve their goals and to develop their skills and abilities.

The registered manager continues to use a varied and diverse collection of monitoring tools to review the quality of care provided by the service. The review considers the impact that the day-to-day operation of the service has on young people's development, identifies any patterns or trends, and highlights any areas for improvement. For example, following a review of staff recruitment and retention, the registered manager assisted in the development of a more relevant induction programme for new staff. This new programme balances the need to gain theoretical knowledge with more practical care skills. This means that staff new to the home gain a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

## Information about this children's home

This setting is an independent residential special school registered as a children's home and operated by a private company. The service offers specialised education and care for up to 22 children who have learning disabilities, including three children under short-break arrangements. The school has a specialism with children diagnosed with an autistic spectrum disorder and associated complex needs. Some young people stay until they have completed their education at 19.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/06/2015	CH – Full (aligned)	Good
10/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## **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 who 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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