

1241407

Registered provider: Evergreen Children's Home Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is owned and operated by a private provider.

Inspection dates: 25 to 26 April 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: This is the first inspection since the home was registered on 8 November 2016.

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: Not applicable

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- Young people make good progress from their starting points.
- The care that young people receive is personalised and reflective of their individual needs.
- Young people enjoy warm and trusting relationships with all staff. This enables them to make progress in their emotional and social development.
- Staff proactively support young people to engage in education.
- Highly committed staff keep young people safe, providing clear and consistent boundaries. Staff help young people to understand risks and to keep themselves safe.
- Staff have an in-depth understanding of young people's behaviour and complex care needs.
- Staff work well together and receive excellent support and guidance from managers.
- The child-focused registered manager ensures that staff understand the ethos of the home and that they prioritise young people's needs at all times.
- The registered manager and staff work effectively with a range of professionals and family members in order to ensure that the young people receive the care and support that they need.

The children's home's areas for development

- Staff do not consistently have sufficient training made available to them in behaviour management.
- Staff do not ensure that young people's records hold all the required documentation about their care.
- Staff do not have access to the equipment necessary to count medication accurately.
- The registered manager supervision has not been sufficiently reflective with an emphasis on practice and professional development.
- Young people that have been missing from care have not consistently been offered an independent return home interview by their placing local authority.
- The independent visitor's monthly report and the review of the quality of care have not been submitted to Ofsted by senior management.

Recent inspection history

This is the first inspection since the home was registered on 8 November 2016.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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>6: The quality and purpose of care standard</p> <p>In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard the registered person must ensure that children receive from staff who —</p> <p>(3) (c)(i) have the experience, knowledge and skills to deliver that care.</p>	31/05/2017
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23 (1))</p>	31/05/2017
<p>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, are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(a)(b)(c))</p>	31/05/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to HMCI (Regulation 44 (7)(a))</p>	31/05/2017
<p>The registered person must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (4)(a))</p>	31/05/2017

Recommendations

- Where a child returns to the home, the responsible local authority must provide an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.26)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes

regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make good progress in all areas of their development because of the care that they receive. Young people are well matched with one another, and placements are well planned from the start. Young people enjoy positive beginnings and endings to their time at the home. The registered manager ensures that he has enough information about young people and their needs prior to their admission. She takes care to ensure that there is a balance of young people in the home.

Staff take time to get to know young people. They provide good-quality, individualised care. Plans are focused, with simple and clear guidance regarding young people's needs. They are purposeful, with clear aims and goals.

Young people have excellent relationships with staff. Staff practice is exceedingly warm and considered. Young people blossom due to their positive attachments to staff. One young person told the inspector, 'This is the best home I have been in, the staff are great.' Through young people's meetings, they are involved in decisions about the development of the home. Young people say that they understand how decisions are made and the degree to which they are able to influence these. This enhances their day-to-day experience of living in the home.

Education is well supported in the home. Some young people struggle with their attendance, but staff do not give up. Young people benefit from individual education packages that reflect their learning needs and challenge any barriers that they face. When young people do not have suitable school placements, staff work in partnership with specialist education agencies to reduce disruption to young people's learning. The manager and staff work closely with the education provider and the local authority to identify the barriers to learning and to help to address them.

Young people are actively engaged in reviewing and recording their progress and they contribute effectively to the process. This develops a sense of ownership in young people. It ensures that young people are able to articulate their achievements and plans for the future. Regular key working sessions take place, where progress and future needs are routinely discussed.

Young people's health needs are prioritised. Some young people require a range of specialist healthcare services to meet their needs. These include specialist mental health provision and sexual health support services. Young people's health and development benefit because of this specialised support. Young people engage well in health services and when they have complex health needs, there is good partnership working with the professionals involved. Some young people are prescribed medication. There is clear communication about expectations regarding administering of medication. However, staff do not have access to the equipment necessary to count medication accurately.

This practice develops the opportunity for error and scope for inaccuracy in the recording of medication counts.

When it is appropriate, young people are encouraged to develop their level of responsibility in preparation for their transition to adulthood. This is reflected in the key skills that young people have developed. For example, some young people are supported to complete self-care skills and household chores. This ensures that they are able to advance their own self-resilience and life skills. Young people are also encouraged and supported to manage their money, to save and to make plans for the future. Young people's self-esteem and confidence are promoted through a wide range of varied and focused activities, both inside and outside the home. Activities are planned and enjoyable, but also facilitated with purpose. Staff support young people to develop social skills and relationships and to enjoy healthy living. Good-quality daily experiences help young people to make progress. They take part in activities, enjoy bike rides and go to the park and cinema. Some young people have friends to visit and enjoy planned free time in the community.

Staff work with social workers and the placing authorities to ensure that young people are able to maintain relationships with their families. One social worker said, 'I feel staff act and respond very professionally, by putting the young person's needs first and going beyond.' When contact restrictions are in place, staff clearly explain these to young people. The young people receive practical and emotional support to attend contact visits.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Young people are safe and live in a safe environment where they are protected from harm. Young people have complex needs and some display challenging behaviours, at times. Staff have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of young people. This supports staff to care effectively and provide support to young people in all areas of their lives.

Teaching young people to be accountable for their own behaviour is central to the ethos of the home. Staff promote and encourage a culture of trust and respect for everyone in the home. Staff use their relationship skills, knowledge and experience to encourage and reinforce socially acceptable behaviour. Staff are excellent at listening to young people and, as a result, young people's behaviour problems have been minimised. The use of negative sanctions is low. This is because staff deploy a strength-based approach to supporting young people to take responsibility for their behaviour. Young people are able to make positive decisions about their behaviour. This is demonstrated by the fact that there have been no incidents of physical restraint since the home opened.

There is a high level of attention to ensuring that young people are safe in their use of social media and the internet. Staff recognise that the young people need to learn how to keep themselves safe online. Regular checks on their social media are undertaken and the young people understand this.

Robust multi-agency planning ensures that young people are better protected by agencies that know young people well. Professionals share information and communicate effectively. Risk management plans are current and individualised. Consequently, young people's risks are well managed and they are enabled to make progress.

Young people's risk-taking behaviours, such as being missing from care and self-harm, have decreased since their admission. There have been some episodes of young people going missing from the home. Staff work in partnership with police and local authorities to protect young people from harm in these circumstances. A police officer comments, 'Any safeguarding or missing incidents/unauthorised absences are immediately reported to us via the correct procedures.'

Young people's risk-taking behaviours have decreased since their admission. Key work is delivered sensitively to explore issues such as bullying and radicalisation. Young people who were previously at risk of child sexual exploitation are no longer and incidents of self-harm have reduced. When young people go missing from care, staff implement the missing from care protocol and are aware of how to safeguard young people from going missing. However, when a young person returns to the home, the placing local authority has not consistently provided an opportunity for them to have an independent return home interview. This missed opportunity has meant that staff have been ill prepared in putting arrangements in place to protect each young person.

The home is maintained to a good standard. Health and safety and fire risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated. Young people reside in a safe and secure home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The registered manager has been in post since November 2016. She has considerable experience and is qualified with a level 5 diploma in leadership and management. The home has 12 members of staff. Four staff are qualified to a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. The remaining eight members of staff are currently working towards the qualification.

The registered manager is child-focused in her practice. She understands young people's individual needs. Staff receive good-quality and regular supervision and consequently work safely and consistently together. The registered manager receives regular supervision from the responsible individual. However, this supervision has not been sufficiently reflective with an emphasis on practice and professional development.

Effective team meetings ensure good communication and consistency of practice across the staff group. All staff attend these meetings. Mutually supportive and respectful relationships exist across the staff group. These demonstrate positive role models and consistency for the young people.

The registered manager understands the crucial importance to young people of having

well-supported and trained staff. However, she has unfortunately been unable to secure behaviour management training for all of her staff during their induction period. This leaves young people and staff vulnerable to poor practice. This practice potentially affects the capacity of staff having the skills and competencies necessary to meet the diverse needs of the young people.

There is a clear statement of purpose in place that details the aims and objectives of the home. This document emphasises the importance of effective admission processes, with the use of impact assessments being key in the decision-making process.

Young people's records do not hold all the required documentation. For example, key information is missing, including up-to-date education plans and statutory care plans. They are routinely checked for consistency and content and consequently the registered manager without any success has made numerous requests for this information to local authorities. The absence of these documents hinders the opportunity for staff to track progress and developments from young people's starting points.

Partnership working with other agencies remains vital in helping young people to make good levels of progress educationally, socially and emotionally. The manager actively challenges other agencies, when necessary, to obtain the best outcomes for young people.

Robust recruitment and vetting processes are in place. Applicants undergo appropriate checks, including criminal history and employment history checks. This reduces the possibility of young people being harmed by those in positions of trust.

An independent visitor completes monthly visits and writes a detailed report. The registered manager uses these reports to help her to develop the service, with the key focus being on young people. The registered manager is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the service and routinely completes a review of the quality of care provided for young people. However, these reports have not been submitted to Ofsted by senior management.

Staff feel valued and supported by the registered manager. They feel listened to and that their views are valued. Their needs, both professionally and personally, are being taken into account. This helps the staff to remain highly motivated in their care of young people.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: 1241407

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Evergreen Children's Home Limited

Registered provider address: Fairgate House, 205 Kings Road, Tyseley, Birmingham B11 2AA

Responsible individual: Jane Holmes

Registered manager: Tanya Humphries

Inspector

Lisa Walsh: social care inspector

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