

# SC436826

Registered provider: CASC (Barrow) Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 16 to 17 May 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:** 26 January 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because

- The home works hard with education providers to ensure that young people can access full-time education and are given opportunities to progress and achieve. The home has appointed an education co-ordinator to oversee all aspects of young people's education, which ensures a continuous focus in this area.
- Young people at the home are much more settled than they have previously been and are, therefore, making better all-round progress. The home helps young people who are not making good progress to make transitions into provision that better suits their needs.
- Young people are helped to prepare for independence from an early stage and respond very positively to this. They are involved in developing their plans for increasing independence and are trusted to be mature and responsible, which gives them a sense of ownership and accountability; this has a positive impact on their behaviour.
- Permanent staff have been recruited. The continuity of care this provides has been beneficial to young people, who have built up close and trusting relationships with staff.
- Young people are helped to build resilience through the use of an emotional resilience outcomes tool and by completing a 'feelings star'.
- The number of safeguarding incidents has significantly reduced, with young people reporting that they feel safe, and their behaviour substantiates this. The home carries out extensive work with young people about the risks associated with social media use and child sexual exploitation.
- The home has a robust system for recording safeguarding incidents, with clear links between the records of the incident and follow-up work with young people to help them understand the impact of their behaviour on their safety.
- The new manager has implemented a system to identify any areas for staff development or gaps in their knowledge, and is developing individual training plans around the areas identified.

The children's home's areas for development

- Some areas of the home are looking tired, scuffed and slightly damaged, which does not provide a welcoming and homely environment for young people.
- The independent visitor has not completed a visit each month as required by regulation. Although two visits took place in March 2017, no visit was undertaken in February 2017.
- There are no permanent male members of staff. This limits young people's contact with positive male role models and, for one young person, reduces his opportunities to engage in activities he would prefer to take part in with a male.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
22/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement
02/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/11/2015	Full	Good

## 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 the premises used for the purposes of the children's home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6(2)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, this relates to the standard of decor in some communal areas of the children's home and the young people's bedrooms.</p>	14/07/2017
<p>44. Independent person: visits and reports</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the home at least once each month. (Regulation 44)</p>	14/07/2017

### Recommendations

- Whenever possible, staff in day-to-day contact with children should include staff from the different gender groups. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.22)

### Inspection judgements

#### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people living at this home are settled and are making good progress across most areas. One young person has progressed exceptionally well since the last interim inspection. A social worker commented positively about the young person's progress, stating 'she is a totally different person to how she was six months ago'.

One young person, who was not making positive progress, and who had a high number of missing from home incidents and drug misuse issues, has now moved on in a positive and planned way to semi-independent living, which is better suited to their needs. The staff and young people can both reflect that the home has been calmer recently with far fewer behavioural incidents.

The young people now benefit from a stable and consistent staff team. They have

developed strong and trusting relationships with staff who know them well and understand how best to work with them. Young people report that they know staff care about them and want to help them. One young person, who has previously wanted to move from the home into foster care, now reports she is happy and settled and wants to remain at the home until she is ready to live independently.

Some young people have found it difficult to engage in full-time education. The home has worked extremely hard to ensure that the young people are attending and engaging with education and are heavily involved in planning their bespoke educational packages with their education providers. This has resulted in increased attendance at education, and one young person has developed a clear ambition to gain qualifications at GCSE level. Staff at the home are highly supportive of this goal. A member of staff has been allocated a specific role as education co-ordinator, which ensures a good level of attention to issues relating to young people's education.

Young people are healthy. They receive appropriate healthcare including, for some, CAMHS support. They are registered with all appropriate services and are helped to make and attend appointments. Where health needs are identified, such as alcohol misuse or smoking, support is always offered for young people to access services which will help them to reduce or stop their use. On the occasions when young people present as under the influence of substances, staff are proactive in assessing them, having had training in recognising the signs of drug and alcohol misuse. Young people undertake direct work on healthy lifestyle choices and some have targets in place to encourage them not to smoke.

Contact with family and friends is supported and promoted by staff. Family members spoken to reported positively of the communication and support they receive from the home. Some young people have links to a specific culture and are supported to attend extended family gatherings and cultural events a long distance from the home, which ensures that they know about, and participate in, their cultural heritage.

Young people feel that they are listened to. They have, on occasion, made complaints, for example about their opportunities to do activities at weekends, which is dependent on staffing levels. They are happy with how the complaints have been addressed and feel confident that their views are taken on board. Detailed key working takes place with evidence that topics covered are related to issues affecting individual young people. Young people are supported to develop their emotional resilience through assessment tools and direct work. Some young people are helped with life story work, which is delivered at their own pace to develop their understanding of why they are in care.

Independence is promoted at a level that is commensurate with young people's needs. One young person has started an independence package at an early stage as she felt she was ready. This has been a great success and she is successfully budgeting for food, clothing and toiletries and feels a great deal of pride in her maturity and achievements. Staff are good at recognising and rewarding progress, which helps keep young people motivated to continue to achieve.

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

Young people report feeling safe in the home and understand what actions staff take to ensure their safety. From the point of placement, risks for young people reduce, sometimes significantly. One young person is subject to a safety plan. A social worker reported that staff work hard to implement her plan and, as a result, she is safer. Her child sexual exploitation risk is significantly reduced and there have been no recent missing from home episodes where she has been at risk.

Staff have a good understanding of young people's risks and work with young people and their placing authority to reduce their risk. One young person was repeatedly going missing to his relative's house. Staff worked with the young person's social worker to enable him to have overnight contact there, so that he did not have to be reported missing each time. Staff undertook welfare checks and calls and stayed in close contact with the young person's relatives to ensure that he was safe.

Each young person has a missing from home risk assessment and an individual procedure should they go missing. For one young person, missing from home has reduced significantly from her starting point. Detailed missing from home records are kept, which indicate that all relevant parties are informed in a timely manner of any missing incidents and that all young people are offered independent return interviews.

Staff at the home work hard with young people to increase their understanding of the risks posed by social media use. They have made very good progress in this area and have safety systems in place. Young people can recognise the inappropriate use of social media and bring it to the attention of adults.

The home maintains chronologies of all safeguarding incidents individually for each child, which enables good monitoring of progress and oversight of any patterns or trends.

Staff have undertaken training in radicalisation, as has one of the young people. News and media are used as triggers for individual discussions about radicalisation, extremism and the threat of terrorism.

As the home is settled, behaviour management is not a significant issue at present. Young people and staff have good relationships and there is mutual respect evident. Staff are skilled in de-escalating situations and there have been no incidents where restrictive physical intervention has been used. The home focuses on reparation and works with young people following incidents of poor behaviour to help them to reflect and repair damage or relationships.

Young people live in a physically safe environment and there are a number of weekly checks and procedures to ensure the ongoing safety of the home. Slippery decking has been replaced by flagging at the rear of the home. Staff are trained in numerous areas of safeguarding and the home has a full set of safeguarding procedures which are easily accessible, easy to understand, and followed in practice.

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

The home has had several changes of manager over the past 20 months and, although there has always been a manager in post, for a number of reasons managers have not been registered by the regulator. The change in managers has impacted to some degree both on the young people and the staff team because different managers inevitably have different priorities, and different styles and practices in their working methods. There is now a manager in post who is in the process of submitting her application to become registered.

Staffing at the home has improved considerably since the last full inspection. The home has sufficient permanent staff to offer the young people consistency in their care and the opportunity to develop close and trusting relationships. This of particular benefit to one young person, whose relationships have to build gradually before she can begin to feel secure and confident with staff. Staff report morale to be high, with a very good team ethos and consistency with young people. Unfortunately, all the staff are currently female, which does not allow for the young people to experience consistent positive male role models in their lives. This is particularly significant for one young person, who raised this as an issue because he especially likes doing certain activities with a male member of staff.

Staff report high levels of satisfaction with the support, supervision and training they receive. A supervision tracker is in place to ensure that supervision takes place, but staff report being able to access support from managers at any time. Managers are directly involved in the day-to-day care of young people and have a very good knowledge of all the issues affecting them.

The interior decor of the home is beginning to look tired and in need of renovation in a number of areas. Scuffed walls, chipped paintwork and damaged fire doors do not encourage young people to respect or feel pride in their home environment. Although the young people have been involved in choosing colours, wallpapers and furnishings for their bedrooms and communal areas, there is still much work to be done before the home looks welcoming and homely for the young people.

The home has good monitoring systems in place, with the new manager being keen to audit all files and to ensure that monitoring activity is robust. Records can be of mixed quality, so more robust oversight should help identify areas for improvement. An independent visit did not take place in one month this year and a requirement is made in respect of this.

Managers are responsive to the needs of young people transitioning into or out of the home. They are fully aware of the need to carefully match any new admission to the young people who are already settled and making progress in order to minimise any disruption an admission may cause them.

The home evidences strong partnership working in all areas of young people's lives, having positive and proactive working relationships with a range of agencies and young people's families. Managers are ambitious for young people and work hard to ensure that they receive a good standard of care from all those involved in their lives.

## **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:** SC436826

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** CASC (Barrow) Limited

**Registered provider address:** 125 Ramsden Square, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria  
LA14 1XA

**Responsible individual:** Hilary Southward

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Charlie Bamber, social care regulatory inspector

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