

1226397

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a private organisation and is registered to accommodate three children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: This is the home's first inspection.

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Leadership is outstanding. The registered manager strategically and successfully manages her staff team to change and develop practice. A social worker commented, 'She came and was determined to turn this home around and she has done. It is now a very good home. She had transformed it in a matter of weeks.' This sums up the tenacity and drive of the registered manager and the commitment of staff.
- Recruitment processes are robust and safeguard children and young people. The registered manager is extremely skilled in identifying the skills and qualities that applicants must have. Safeguarding strategies are consistently implemented. Excellent relationships with partner agencies promote young people's welfare.
- There are no concerns about young people going missing or being subject to child sexual exploitation. Staff are fully prepared to deal with any concerns about radicalisation. Safeguarding strategies in the home contribute to a significant decrease in young people's self-injurious behaviours.
- The staff team are highly motivated. They have high aspirations for the young people and themselves. Their enthusiasm and child-centred approach is key to the significant progress young people make emotionally, socially and educationally. Young people credit their progress and newfound confidence to the trusting and positive relationships they experience with staff.
- The manager and staff work tirelessly to ensure that young people have appropriate education placements.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Improve recording procedures for transcribing medication.
- Record young people's views about the outcome of complaints.

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
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. This is with particular regard to recording the young person's satisfaction with the outcome of the complaint. (Regulation 39 (3))	30/06/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that medicines are administered in line with a medically approved protocol. This is with particular regard to the transcribing of prescribed medication onto young people's medication records. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people build self-confidence and make good progress. This is because they feel valued. Young people experience a strong sense of belonging and self-determination as staff ensure that young people feel included in the running of the home.

Relationships are very open and transparent. Clear expectations are balanced with a warm rapport between staff and young people. Social workers' comments include, 'The staff have been both authoritative and supportive, they get the balance right', and, 'The young person has good attachments and understands the balance between authority and nurture.'

Young people report a significant improvement in their experiences, the running of the home, their relationships with staff, and their outcomes since the arrival of the new registered manager. Comments include, 'It was horrible and now it is brilliant' and, 'Everything is better. I get on well with the staff and go to education. I never went before at all and now I go every day because I've got something different here.'

Positive role modelling and the experience of meaningful relationships with staff, young people, family members and social groups enable young people to grow in confidence and have empathy for others. There are no concerns about bullying as young people

look out for each other. They confront and seek support for poor behaviour.

Young people's self-esteem grows as they re-engage with and enjoy education. They appreciate that the manager and staff work tirelessly to ensure that young people have appropriate education placements. Young people feel supported by their bespoke education packages. As a result, young people with extensive histories of poor school attendance are now engaging with learning.

Young people are extremely proud of their progress. Involvement in their own risk plans enables young people to become more independent. For example, gradual and well-measured progression supports young people to earn trust. Young people take increasing responsibility for keeping themselves safe when taking part in community activities. They fully appreciate the support and encouragement that they receive from staff to develop their confidence and independence skills. Young people show high levels of maturity. They take responsibility for their domestic arrangements and prepare themselves emotionally before they move out of the home.

As young people grow in confidence, they access new social circles and enjoy a range of new activities. New experiences include a holiday in Southend-on-Sea, visits to Twycross Zoo, go-karting, pottery classes, the gym and the local youth group.

Young people's confidence grows as they understand their own emotional and mental health needs. Not only are they more able to extend their social experiences, but they are now able to engage with specialist support groups and agencies. Young people who have previously been untrusting of professionals now experience effective external support with issues such as identity, social isolation and mental health challenges. They say that this is because of the support that they receive from staff. This includes staff members acting as the 'middle person' between young people and professionals. For example, young people write down their feelings, staff deliver these to therapists, and then young people receive meaningful replies. This facilitative process has given young people confidence and they are now more able to attend and benefit from face-to-face appointments.

Good emotional and mental health outcomes are matched with improving physical health. Young people thrive because they, with staff support, attend health appointments. Healthy eating and a range of activities keep young people fit and they experience a great sense of achievement.

Young people live in a homely and well-maintained environment. They have a sense of belonging, with personalised bedrooms where they can enjoy their own personal space. Communal areas are spacious and provide space should young people wish to privately meet with family members, friends and social workers.

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

Young people feel safe and cared for. Their needs are set out and met via a comprehensive and regularly reviewed care planning framework. The registered manager and staff are good at sharing information appropriately. File audits and case discussions ensure that young people receive care and support in line with the

expectations of their placing authorities, health services and safeguarding agencies.

When young people move to the home, plans are detailed and tailored to the needs of each young person. Young people benefit from early stability in their placements due to effective compatibility assessments. This tool ensures that young people are well matched and that staff have the correct skills to meet young people's needs.

Recording is of a high quality and child-focused. Young people invest in their placements and develop a greater understanding of their needs because key working is relevant and meaningful. Staff are very skilled in discussing a range of issues relating to sexuality, safe relationships, self-injurious behaviours, family relationships and transgender identity.

There are no current child protection concerns at the home. The manager and staff are vigilant. They have an in-depth understanding of risk and the triggers for young people's behaviour. This combines with effective partnership working to keep young people safe.

Staff understand that the smallest concern can contribute to the larger landscape of keeping young people safe. Safeguarding practices are effective because the manager is proactive in convening professional meetings. For example, early discussion, the pooling of resources and meaningful interventions support and safeguard young people's mental health and manage risk-taking behaviours, including significant self-injurious behaviours. This partnership approach has also been crucial in enabling one young person to seek out and receive appropriate support in managing their trans-gender identity.

Young people do not go missing from the home. Staff work closely with police and placing authorities to draw up meaningful profiles of young people. This individualised approach means missing from care protocols are effective. These meaningful interventions enable young people to refrain from placing themselves at risk in the community.

There are no concerns regarding child sexual exploitation or radicalisation in the home. Staff have completed 'Prevent' training, which develops their knowledge and understanding of radicalisation. In addition, the registered manager and staff have worked with a local community police officer to run a session on grooming, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation in a young people's meeting. As a result, young people are more aware and more able to keep themselves safe.

Meticulous risk assessment and excellent insight into the needs of young people promote effective risk management. For example, staff consistently follow plans for managing significant self-injurious behaviours. Their procedural knowledge and first-aid training ensure good medical support to young people. Positive relationships with the police also ensure that preventative measures to locate items that may be used by young people to injure themselves can be utilised, without staff violating the privacy and dignity of young people in their care.

In-depth knowledge about young people's family backgrounds, childhood experiences and emotional resilience enables staff to promote safe and appropriate contact between young people and their families.

High regard for health and safety ensures that all staff take responsibility for keeping children, young people and themselves safe.

Procedures for the safe administration of medication have recently been updated, but do not currently outline the correct guidelines for transcribing young people's medication onto their medication records.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager and staff have outstanding motivation and enthusiasm. They strive to provide positive outcomes for young people and improve the operation of the home. Leadership, management and staff cohesion are clear strengths and ensure the safety and welfare of young people.

Strategic reviews of all incidents in the home provide constant evaluation of staff practice and highlight young people's changing needs. Staff supervision and focused team meetings are effective management tools and address areas for development and effective staff practice. These processes ensure that staff provide good-quality care to young people as set out in the home's statement of purpose.

The registered manager assertively challenges poor practice. Her thorough review of incidents ensures that shortfalls are identified and rectified quickly.

Experienced staff speak very positively about the changes that the registered manager has made. One staff member said that, 'Everything is better since she came.' The staff have high regard for the registered manager and share her high expectations. Staff comments include, 'The manager expects the best and I will give my best' and, 'This is such a positive place to be. It's a joy because you see progress and you know you are doing something right.' New staff also have the same level of positivity about the registered manager and their colleagues. One new member of staff likens the staff team to 'one big family'.

Staffing arrangements meet the complex needs of the young people. Staff are flexible and adaptable. The core staff team, in conjunction with the use of consistent agency staff, are willing to change shifts in order to provide an increase in staffing. This is sometimes required to meet the high-risk behaviours of some young people when they are in crisis.

Management of the home remains consistent due to the support that the registered manager and staff receive from a skilled team of senior staff. They competently deputise in the absence of the registered manager and have a range of complementary skills which have built a strong and competent management team.

Young people make significant progress because staff training is focused on young people's needs. For example, in addition to core mandatory training, all staff have completed extended training in child and adolescent mental health, trans-gender identity and self-injurious behaviours. They are currently receiving bespoke training from an external mental health psychologist.

Leaders and managers fully acknowledge the challenge for staff working with young people with complex needs. The recent inclusion of a consultant psychologist to the

service will now offer staff specialist support and enable them to implement bespoke strategies for the young people living at the home. Staff supervision is regular and effective.

Partnership working is a key strength of the home and supports the positive outcomes experienced by young people. Staff work in conjunction with young people, social workers and a range of education and health agencies to plan and support young people's current and future placements. The registered manager's persistence and excellent insight into the emotional and mental health needs of young people has been crucial in influencing mental health assessments and exploring the need for more specialist services for young people. Social workers made comments such as, 'They [staff] have been persistent in getting the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) involved. This took time, but they have always been persistent' and, 'They have hung on in there to get her to where she is today.' These comments sum up the commitment and persistence of staff and their focus on meeting the needs of young people in their care.

Development plans are working documents and include full consultation and feedback with the young people and staff. Staff remain motivated and young people feel involved. They can see how the home is improving and how their own contributions positively influence this. All areas of development on the plans are colour coded. Red highlights shortfalls, amber for on-going work and green for completed work. Blue information represents input from the young people. Their ideas include how to give up smoking, have more physical exercise, how to access support groups, new activity equipment, how to induct new young people and how to improve the young people's guide. All of these areas have been addressed. Young people take great pride in their role in improving the home, their own outcomes, and promoting those of other young people who come to the home.

On-going monthly audits by the registered manager are consistently carried out according to the regulatory framework. The visual colour coding system means that staff and young people can quickly identify improvements as they see the ever-growing predominance of green across each monthly plan.

The manager and staff value young people's views and complaints are effectively addressed. Young people experience a clear sense of safety and confidence because they believe that they are listened to. While investigation records for complaints are detailed, the process does not currently include documentation of the young person's response to the outcome of the complaint.

The registered manager has a clear understanding of her monitoring responsibilities. Independent monitoring reports are comprehensive and positive.

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: 1226397

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: Mountfields House, Epinal Way, Loughborough LE11 3GE

Responsible individual: Benjamin Jordan

Registered manager: Paula Niven

Inspectors

Elaine Cray, social care inspector

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