

SC379123

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home offer placements for up to five young people who may have a combination of mental health, psychological, emotional or complex care needs. The service is designed to offer medium- to long-term care placements. The home is operated by a private organisation.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 May 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 11 January 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

- The acting manager does not ensure that staff have access to detailed risk management plans that help staff to minimise young people's risks.
- Staff do not keep accurate records of incidents involving physical intervention and the acting manager does not analyse incidents.
- The acting manager does not monitor sanctions and rewards to ensure that these remain fair and balanced.
- Clinical advice is not readily available to staff. This limits their ability to meet the individual needs of young people.
- The acting manager does not challenge other professionals on behalf of young people.
- Staff do not encourage young people to develop social networks within the wider community.
- Staff do not help young people to develop the knowledge and skills they need to stay safe using social media.
- Staff do not ensure the home environment gives young people a sense of belonging.
- The registered manager has not worked with the acting manager to address previous shortfalls effectively.

The children's home's strengths

- Young people make progress because of the committed and patient staff team.
- Staff engage young people to support progress.
- The acting manager is passionate about all young people in his care.
- Young people develop a sense of attachment to adults who care for them.
- Staff receive training opportunities that help them have the necessary knowledge, skills and qualifications to help keep young people safe.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement
26/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/08/2015	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>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular the standard in paragraph (2) requires the registered person to help each child to develop resilience and skills that prepare the child to return home, to live in a new placement or to live independently as an adult. (Regulation 6(2)(vi))</p> <p>In particular, young people should attend mainstream education placements and local community activities.</p>	30/06/2017
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (2) requires the registered person to ensure that staff assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12(2)(i))</p> <p>In particular, risk management plans require detail of the actions needed to reduce risk.</p>	30/06/2017
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (2) requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to understand how to keep safe. (Regulation 12(2)(ii))</p> <p>In particular, e-safety controls must allow a suitable degree of responsibility for young people.</p>	30/06/2017
<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the</p>	30/06/2017

children's home that promotes children's welfare.	
In particular, the standard in paragraph (2) requires the registered person to use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(h))	
In particular, an independent visitor should be used.	
The registered person must within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the date, time and location of the use of the measure and a description of the measure and its duration. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iv))	30/06/2017
The review of quality of care regulation requires the registered person to complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months. (Regulation 45(1))	30/09/2017

Recommendations

- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs (see regulations 5(c)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)
- The registered person must be confident that the person delivering the care will do so in a way that is safe and appropriate for the individual child (as set out in the quality and purpose of care standard 6(3)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 18, paragraph 3.32)
- The children's home must be a nurturing and supportive environment that meets the needs of their children, in most cases, this should be homely and domestic environments. The home should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than institutional impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

The acting manager implements personalised support plans based on his

knowledge of each young person. For example, the acting manager has agreed a school timetable that reduces any clash with contact arrangements for a young person. As a result, the young person feels valued.

Young people feel understood, and are confident staff will support and protect them in any event. One young person told the inspector, 'They understand me and give 100%, whatever is happening.' As a result, young people feel safe, anxiety lowers and acts of aggression or control, such as self-harm, reduce.

Staff listen and respond quickly to young people's views and requests. Key-work sessions are arranged following an incident. These frequent sessions enable young people to develop a sense of their own importance. As a result, young people cease risk-taking behaviour such as misusing illegal substances and self-harming behaviour. Young people believe they are the focus of adult attention and say they enjoy the staff's company.

Staff demonstrate assertive negotiation skills through discussions with young people. This helps young people to learn to assert their own wishes without aggression. For example, one young person courteously negotiated a time for the inspector to leave so they could play pool with the acting manager.

Staff do not implement e-safety controls that allow a degree of responsibility for young people. This means young people are not well equipped with the knowledge and skills they need to keep themselves safe on the internet.

The acting manager offers personalised rewards agreed with young people. When young people have significant fears or challenges to face, rewards are offered intermittently to maintain motivation. For example, one young person attending exams received part of the reward prior to completing all the exams. This gives a visual reminder of what can be achieved. This flexible use of reward and sanction systems encourages achievement and young people have completed exams as a result. However, staff do not ensure that records of rewards and sanctions are kept. This means the acting manager is not able to ensure that sanctions and rewards are always fair and balanced across the whole group of young people.

Young people develop a sense of belonging and attachments to adults who care for them. One parent told the inspector, 'My daughter has a father figure here, she relies on him.' Such trusting relationships encourage resilience and new experiences are faced with support, rather than with fear.

The acting manager has formed positive links with the local education and training providers. Teaching and support staff assist with young people's homework and revision. Staff provide private areas, internet access and a generally controlled environment to encourage study. For example, one young person was supported to revise for her exams and has been accepted into a local college. Another young person who is on a partial timetable has full attendance. Young people who are unable to attend school have tutor support in the home. The acting manager has

not challenged placing authorities effectively when education placements are not provided. This means that the in-house support becomes prolonged. This limited access to learning means young people are not afforded access to all aspects of the curriculum that is appropriate to their age. Staff also do not help young people to form networks in the local community, including attending school. This limits young people's participation in activities that develop skills and enhance citizenship.

Staff regularly review young people's health needs. Young people attend all general health appointments. Staff encourage young people to take an interest in food. One young person regularly bakes and staff make sure that there are recipes from around the world that young people can try.

The acting manager has links with a clinical psychologist to secure advice about each child. This helps the manager and staff to prioritise young people's emotional and mental health needs. Consequently, young people have improved their sleeping and eating routines. When young people previously self-harmed this is no longer evident at home or in school. This is because of the staff's close monitoring of their emotional well-being. However, clinical staff have recently changed and the acting manager has not ensured that advice from qualified clinical professional has continued to be available to staff during this period. Consequently, in this interim period, the staff's responses to emotional and mental health needs have not benefited from clinical guidance. One member of staff told the inspector, 'We don't have anyone to bounce ideas off.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Young people feel safe, cared for and supported. Young people form trusting relationships with staff that help to increase their feeling of security.

The acting manager does not ensure detailed risk assessment plans are available for staff to follow. For example, when a young person has a history of going missing from home, there is no associated risk management plan in place. As a result, staff have limited insight into how to reduce risks if the young person was to go missing from care.

Staff are aware of issues related to young people who may be at risk of child sexual exploitation or radicalisation. However, the acting manager does not ensure that specific concerns which are particular to each young person are captured in individual risk assessments. This limits vigilance and preventative work.

Internet access is limited to young people's study time. This does not help young people to develop the skills and knowledge of using social media safely.

Staff effectively use de-escalation techniques to reduce the need for physical restraint. However, when physical intervention is used, the acting manager does

not ensure that records contain the detail required to monitor the impact of the intervention on young people. This limited oversight means that staff practice is not reviewed.

The acting manager and senior management follow recruitment procedures diligently, ensuring full employment histories, references and selection methods are used. This means that the risk of inappropriate adults caring for young people is reduced.

The acting manager ensures all staff have regular refresher training on safeguarding, physical restraint, bullying, child sexual exploitation and e-safety. However, the acting manager does not analyse the effectiveness of any training. As a result, any impact that the training has on the care offered is limited.

Staff administer medication in line with procedure and errors are minimised. The acting manager maintains control of the office space and this enables staff to administer medication safely for all young people.

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

The registered manager has spent time away from the home overseeing other services. The day-to-day management of the home has been placed with the acting manager, who is supported by an experienced deputy manager. The acting manager recently started his level 5 diploma in leadership and management in residential care of children and young people.

The acting manager focuses on the needs of young people in his care. However, he does not consider the way the home is managed as an element of this support. For example, the home itself does not reflect the young people living there; photographs on a memory wall are of past residents, with no photographs of current young people visible. Leaflets containing formal and often emotive comments are visible in several shared areas, which increases the feeling of an institution rather than a home.

Young people are cared for in line with the objectives set out in the home's statement of purpose and they make progress in line with their ages and abilities. However, the acting manager does not ensure that information is shared in a timely manner with staff. Consequently, specialist advice is not available to staff and they are not able to offer consistent support that meets the needs of each young person, in line with the home's statement of purpose.

The acting manager has a limited understanding of the strengths and areas for development of the home. He recognises that a turbulent period at the end of the last year affected the time he had available to examine underlying issues.

The monthly independent visitor provides external scrutiny of the service. However, the acting manager does not use this advice as an opportunity to improve the service.

The acting manager has recently begun monitoring the quality of care provided by the staff. However, this has not been completed in the required period. As a result, there has been limited development of evaluation systems that can monitor and amend support offered, to ensure that young people benefit from their stays here.

The acting manager shows insight into admission difficulties that impacted on the care offered previously, and has asserted strong managerial control over the admission process. Consequently, no young people are admitted without clear matching analysis and impact assessments have reduced unnecessary distress to the young people already living here.

The staff are experienced and most are qualified. Those who are unqualified are newly recruited.

Since the last inspection, a number of staff have left. During this period, the acting manager has ensured that young people receive support from a consistent group of staff who are familiar to them and a minimal number of agency staff have been employed.

Staff receive monthly supervision and annual appraisals. Staff have regular opportunities, in team meetings and handover sessions, to reflect on young people's welfare and progress. Consequently, staff support young people consistently and young people know what to expect. Staff training includes safeguarding procedures and features awareness of the risks of radicalisation and exploitation.

The acting manager and the staff have developed positive working relationships with a number of key stakeholders, including health and education professionals and placing social workers. Other workers commented that staff, 'Work closely with young people to help stabilise their lives.' However, the acting manager does not challenge placing authorities regarding educational delays.

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: SC379123

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Cove Care Residential Ltd

Registered provider address: Cove Care Residential Ltd, 16 Waterloo Road,
Wolverhampton WV1 4BL

Responsible individual: Lee Smith

Registered manager: Moira Kennedy

Inspector

Bev Harrison-James: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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