

SC039213

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A privately run children's home, registered to care for up to six young people, irrespective of gender, who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 June 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be 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 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: 15 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because

- The home has failed to address previous requirements and recommendations. For example, the carpet in the home is still to be replaced.
- Managers use poor admission planning and risk assessment, which has resulted in one young person being admitted without a plan for education and with insufficient staff support.
- Managers fail to evaluate the outcomes for young people effectively. This limits the development of practice in the home.
- A lack of structure and planning in independent living skills means that the progress achieved by young people is difficult to assess.

The children's home's strengths

- The home has a committed and dedicated staff team that is passionate about improving outcomes for young people.
- Young people engage well with staff and reduce risk-taking behaviours, such as running away from the home and self-harming behaviours.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/07/2016	Full	Requires improvement
30/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/05/2015	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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>Protection of children standard</p> <p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) 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 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>In particular, this is in relation to the possession of inappropriate DVD material and the lack of effective risk assessments on admission.</p>	31/07/2017
<p>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 home are designed and furnished so as to— meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (c) (i))</p> <p>This is with particular reference to ensuring that the home seeks as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. In relation to this, ensure that case files are not visible from the kitchen window and replace the carpet on the stairs.</p>	31/07/2017
<p>The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must—</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (f))</p>	31/07/2017

<p>This is with particular reference to ensuring that all of the outcomes for young people leaving the home are recorded and evaluated.</p>	
<p>Independent person: visits and reports</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ('the independent person's report') which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether— the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (a and b))</p>	<p>31/07/2017</p>
<p>Review of quality of care</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system of monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the quality of care provided for children; the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided to children. (Regulation 45(2)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	<p>31/07/2017</p>

Recommendations

- Challenge the child's education provider if the child does not receive sufficient support to progress as outlined in their relevant plans. Act as effective advocates for or on behalf of a child who may be experiencing difficulties with education as a good parent would do. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', pages 27– 28, paragraphs 5.11– 5.12)
- Devise a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should
 - detail the necessary management and staffing structure (including any staff commissioned to provide health and education), the experience and qualifications of staff currently working within the staffing structure and any further training required for those staff, to enable the delivery of the home's statement of purpose;
 - detail the processes and agreed timescales for staff to achieve induction, probation and any core training (such as safeguarding, health and safety and mandatory qualifications);
 - detail the process for managing and improving poor performance.
('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards',

page 53, paragraph 10.8)

- Ensure that the registered person only accepts placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)
- Make sure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children and staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases, it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour, and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)
- When a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from home without permission, 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 45, paragraph 9.30)
- Ensure that the registered person and staff work closely with the placing authority so that the young people are supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. The focus should be on the provision of support to sustain or regain young people's confidence in education and engagement in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.5)
- Ensure that staff make a full and valuable contribution to the pathway planning process. They should actively seek to make the fullest contribution by working with relevant persons. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.28)
- Keep records detailing all individual incidents when children go missing from the home (regulation 36 (schedule 3(14))). This information should be shared with the placing authority and, where appropriate, with the child's parents. Evaluation of missing incidents should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', pages 45 and 46, paragraph 9.31)
- Ensure that sufficient staff are on duty to meet the assessed needs of all children in the home and that those staff are able to respond to emergency placements where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)
- Assist each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are

returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope with the home's support and, where the child is moving to live independently, practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)

- Encourage young people to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19)

Inspection judgements

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

The home is judged as requires improvement because management has failed to implement all of the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. In addition, poor pre-admission planning and risk assessment have had a negative impact on the young people living in the home. Overall progress for young people is variable, and some young people make little progress from their starting points.

Educational attainment is mixed. Two young people recently completed college courses and plan to further their studies in the new academic year. This is significant given their difficult starting points. Staff are aspirational and consistently emphasise the benefits of attainment and engagement in education. However, during this inspection, one young person spent a large part of the school day in his room playing computer games. His daily planner lacks any programme of educational input or activities. There is limited evidence of challenge to the placing authority. Staffing levels are insufficient to offer the level of support required. This seriously limits personal, academic and social development.

Independence work lacks formal structure. Despite young people indicating that budgeting and cooking work occurs, this is not recorded appropriately and progress is not measured accurately. One young person aged over 17 years is still to commence a pathway plan assessment. This limits information for key professionals and preparation for moving on from the home and may result in poor care planning decisions.

Consultation with young people is limited. Despite young people's good knowledge of the complaints procedure and regular residents' meetings acting as a useful forum for addressing any concerns or gripes, the voice of young people is lacking in case recordings, care plans and risk assessments. This limits an assessment of their effectiveness and impact.

Young people are happy in their home and recognise the progress they make. Young

people build a sense of trust and belonging. One young person commented, 'I have really worked on my temper with staff's help. I now feel mellow and can stop myself.' Staff push young people to pursue their individual interests, such as street dance. This helps young people to build self-esteem. Staff are proud of young people and celebrate their achievements. Young people spoke fondly of trips and outings completed with staff and feel that there is a 'good vibe' in the home.

Placing professionals and court-appointed guardians commented on the achievements made by young people. Professionals commented that, when concerns arise, staff act quickly to meet the needs of young people and maintain regular communication. This helps to keep young people safe.

Young people understand behavioural expectations and said that staff are consistent in managing behaviour. The reward system actively encourages positive behaviour. Behavioural goals are reviewed regularly and offer clear and achievable targets for young people. Young people respond well to the behaviour management system, and there has been no use of restraint since July 2016. Concerns about the lack of restorative sanctions expressed at the last two inspections continue. Staff continue to use financial penalties, for example issuing a financial penalty for untidiness in the kitchen area, and decline to offer more creative and relevant measures. This limits young people's understanding of behaviour consequences and their ability to make amends.

Young people benefit from managed contact with friends and family both inside and outside of the home. Visitors are actively encouraged. Recently, staff recorded a party with a video set to music. One father attending the birthday party concerned commented, 'I like to come here. This is the first place I have seen my daughter happy. The staff are really good to her.' Regular contact helps to support young people and reduces incidents of their running away from the home and exposing themselves to possible risk.

Young people benefit from a number of specialist services. Young people are offered appointments with drug prevention workers and access the local sexual health centre. In addition, specialist workers from a local child sexual exploitation agency offer support. One young person is beginning to repair relationships with his immediate family with the support of family therapy. Contact is being managed by the professional network, and the wishes and feelings of the young person are paramount. Improved relations with family support placement stability and offer a source of support as the young person enters adulthood.

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

Young people feel safe in their home and develop resilience. They reported that staff act swiftly to address any issues of bullying. Staff de-escalate situations and mediate effectively. Young people reported that key work occurs on a regular basis and allows them to discuss any pertinent issues in a safe and secure manner. Young people feel that keyworkers understand them and their trigger behaviours and 'try their best to

make things good for us'. Positive relationships help to maintain close and trusting relationships between young people and staff.

Young people reduce risk-taking behaviour with close staff support. One young person has reduced missing episodes by 65 per cent compared to the last three-month reporting period. Her allocated social worker attributes this to the close relations with key workers and remarked that this progress is 'good'. Key work recordings evidence that staff persistently monitor and discuss important areas of risk, for example the impact of negative peer group influence. Another young person has worked to reduce incidents of self-harm. These achievements are warmly celebrated by the staff team and are a source of pride for young people.

Impact risk assessments for admission are of poor quality. The most recent admission matched the needs of the young person concerned with three young people who were no longer resident in the home. The lack of preparation was evidenced by the presence of DVD material in the home which was inappropriate for the young person concerned. This posed a possible risk to all of the young people in the home.

Staff value the importance of multi-agency work. They work well in partnership with professionals in education and youth offending services to monitor attendance and compliance. This ensures a holistic level of support for young people.

Safeguarding is improved in the home. Any concerns are shared quickly and promptly with professionals. The home works well in partnership with placing authorities to monitor and implement safety plans and support young people who are subject to the child sexual exploitation risk register.

There is a stronger response when young people go missing from the home. Managers have invited the local police into the home to discuss good practice and share any concerns over the reporting of missing young people. Staff follow the missing from care protocol and take good notes of young people's appearance when leaving the home. Staff forge good relationships with parents and friends. This provides a constant flow of information about the possible whereabouts of young people. The home now tracks the movements of young people more effectively via the oyster card system. Despite the improvements, the home does not evaluate and reflect on statistics about missing episodes effectively. Furthermore, independent return to care interviews are not occurring regularly. This limits risk assessment and safety planning for young people.

Notification of serious events to Ofsted now occurs more regularly. One notification has been received since the interim inspection and evidences a coordinated and appropriate response from staff. This supports the effective monitoring of the home by the regulator and assists effective safeguarding.

The young people have use of the internet at the home. Staff work hard to educate young people about the dangers posed by the internet. E-safety is provided with parental controls and filters, which protects the young people's associated online risks.

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

The registered manager has been in post for three years and is qualified to level 5. He is supported by a deputy manager and two seniors. The deputy manager has been in post for over 10 years and is qualified to level 5. He has a comprehensive knowledge of the services available to young people in the local area. The senior workers plan to complete their level 5 qualifications in the latter part of this year.

Managers acknowledge that there has been limited progress in meeting the requirements and recommendations of the interim inspection. Two requirements and five recommendations are repeated, with the addition of a further requirement and six recommendations from this inspection. Some concerns, including the lack of independent return to care interviews, persist from the full inspection conducted in July 2016. These concerns have not been addressed during the monthly visits to the home conducted by the independent visitor.

Management recording and monitoring systems are insufficient. Managers do not monitor outcomes for young people effectively. Case recordings do not outline where young people are placed on leaving the home. There is no evaluation of how the young people feel on leaving the home. This limits any opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the work completed and to gain lessons for future practice.

The home benefits from a committed, stable and dedicated staff team. There is no use of agency staff and there has been only one staff departure since the last full inspection. One staff member commented, 'We work together well and are passionate about our young people.' The resulting stability and consistency are beneficial to young people. This inspection notes staff attending the home in their own time to acknowledge the birthday of one young person. These gestures are greatly appreciated by young people and further evidence staff commitment.

Staff feel valued. They understand the whistleblowing procedure and feel actively involved in the running of the home. Staff reported improved levels of supervision and appraisal. Training is sourced from local authorities and private providers. It covers a broad range of subjects, including the risk of child sexual exploitation and female genital mutilation. This promotes a learning culture, allows staff to link theory to their own practice and helps to keep young people safe. Staff practise with confidence and good levels of knowledge. However, despite the positive staff morale, the home is lacking a comprehensive workforce development plan. The current document does not clearly identify plans for future staff training and development and offers insufficient information about the future development of the home.

Managers have acted to tighten recruitment practice. Induction and probation periods are appropriately monitored. Gaps in employment are now fully explored and references verified consistently. This ensures that young people are safeguarded and preserves the stability of the staff team.

Important policies, such as the behaviour management and safeguarding policy, are updated regularly. These offer clear guidance for staff and signpost important sources of advice, such as the designated officer in the local authority.

Staff have worked hard to improve the home environment. Young people are very happy with the new furniture in the main living room area of the home and improvements to the front and rear of the home. On a less positive note, the carpet which required replacement at the previous interim inspection remains. In addition, old case files and storage items are in view from the kitchen window. This creates an untidy impression for 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 whom 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: SC039213

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Apartment 14, Centurion Building, 376 Queenstown Road, London SW8 4NW

Responsible individual: Stellakis Miltiadous

Registered manager: Abubakaar Sesay

Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

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>

© Crown copyright 2017