

# SC484402

Registered provider: Footsteps To Futures Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care for up to three young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties (EBD).

**Inspection dates:** 1 to 2 August 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:** 12 January 2017

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

**Enforcement action since last inspection**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The home provides a warm, nurturing, family-orientated environment.
- Staff do a great job in making sure that young people feel valued and cherished.
- Young people have a good experience during their time at the home. They enjoy

activities with staff and participate in community clubs, such as dancing.

- The home's therapeutic model is well planned and delivered. The model makes a positive difference to young people who need a lot of help to come to terms with what has happened to them in the past.
- Young people's behaviour improves. They learn about how to manage their anger. This leads to them feeling better about themselves.
- The manager's performance is very strong in some areas. She motivates her team to provide consistently good quality care. Staff feel empowered, enabled and all speak very highly of her approach.
- Young people's episodes of going missing reduce because of staff's proactive response.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There are some shortfalls, particularly in relation to the leadership and management of the home. Several requirements and recommendations are made to address these shortfalls. At this time, the shortfalls do not have an impact on young people's day-to-day experiences, which are clearly good. However, there is the potential for the shortfalls to do so if they remain unaddressed.
- Staff training is not well organised. There are gaps in some staff members' knowledge and skills as a result of the lack of training undertaken in relation to first aid, self-harm, drug-taking behaviours, sexual exploitation, radicalisation and female genital mutilation. This has the potential to have an impact on the quality of care provided.
- The manager has not challenged other professionals effectively to ensure that all the required paperwork in respect of young people is available. For example, records of return home interviews after episodes of going missing and some education information are not available for staff to refer to and inform plans.
- The building looks tired and unkempt in places. For example, there are two boarded-up windows and the bathroom looks unsightly and dirty. The bathroom door on the outside is marked and stained and the conservatory window is cloudy and unattractive.
- Risk assessment information presents as a little confusing for one young person. This has not affected their safety or welfare.
- There are some gaps in some safeguarding records. As a result, it is difficult to build up a full picture of what happened and when. This limits the manager's ability to monitor safeguarding issues.
- Restraint records lack detail about how young people are supported when they are restrained and fail to detail young people's views following restraints.
- Some references for staff contain limited information. All references should contain sufficient information to demonstrate that the recruitment procedures are robust.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/10/2016	Full	Good
11/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/09/2015	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><b>The quality and purpose of care standard</b></p> <p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who —</p> <p>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children</p> <p>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard requires the registered person to — 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(2)(c)(i))</p> <p>In particular, two windows need repairing and the bathroom and conservatory require some attention to improve the home environment.</p>	20/08/2017
<p><b>The leadership and management standard</b></p> <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that —</p> <p>helps children to aspire to their full potential</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard requires the registered person to —</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos and delivers the outcomes, set out in the statement of purpose. (Regulation 13(2)(a))</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(2)(c))</p>	20/08/2017

In particular, staff should be trained to address issues of self-harm, drug taking, child sexual exploitation, radicalisation, female genital mutilation and restraint.	
Ensure that at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a first aid qualification. (Regulation 31(2)(a))	20/08/2017

## Recommendations

- Staff must be aware of whether a child has an Education and Health Care plan and the information in it. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 27, paragraph 5.4)
- Ensure that staff have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.11) This is in particular relation to staff attending parent and carer meetings at schools and ensuring that all young people have up-to-date personal education plans.
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) This is in particular relation to the recording of safeguarding matters.
- Ensure that when a child returns to the home after a period of being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have a 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 records of restraint are kept that enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint, to identify practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59) This is in relation to improving the manager's monitoring of restraint records, to identify shortfalls and improve practice.
- Ensure that any child who has been restrained is given the opportunity to express their feelings about the experience of the restraint. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)

## Inspection judgements

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

Young people have excellent relationships with staff. Young people learn to trust them and to accept the support that they need from them. Staff are kind, nurturing and caring. One young person said: 'The best thing is that staff are loving.'

The home's embedded therapeutic approach works in practice and makes a positive difference to young people. Therapeutic support is well planned and individualised. Young people explore a range of issues relating to their history and current feelings. This work progresses at the young person's own pace. Before they arrive at the home, the manager explains to young people what help and support are available. Young people then take part in devising their own support plans. This means that they know what to expect and 'buy into' the home's approach.

Staff support young people particularly well in relation to their emotional and physical well-being. Staff understand that young people's behaviour, safety and overall well-being are linked to how they are feeling emotionally. The therapeutic environment helps young people to work through their past trauma, to feel better about themselves, and to be more confident. Progress is far-reaching. One young person has spoken at a training event about her experiences and how the home has helped her. Staff said: 'This is a massive achievement for her.' Another young person is already developing more positive strategies to manage their behaviour and to reduce their anxiety, after only living at the home for a few weeks.

Each young person's education arrangements are individualised to meet their specific needs. Staff 'go the extra mile' to support young people in their learning. For example, one young person found it difficult to study for her qualification at college. Staff organised for a tutor to come to the home, to help her successfully finish the course. All young people are engaging well in their education. Given their complex needs, this is a significant achievement. There are close working arrangement with schools on a day-to-day basis and a focus is on young people's emotional well-being, reducing their anxiety and supporting them to learn. However, in one instance, arrangements were not made for a member of staff to attend one young person's parents' evening. Additionally, staff have not had sight of one young person's education, health and care plan or personal education plan. The manager is yet to chase these up. The information in these plans is essential for staff to know how best to support the young person. This has not impacted on young people to date, but it has the potential to do so if not rectified.

Staff nurture young people's talents and help them realise them. One young person enjoys drawing. They have completed artwork to hang on the home's walls and they have produced pictures for a charity colouring book. Another young person likes music and singing. She is currently dancing in a local dance group and there are plans in place for her to record some of her music. Young people receive praise at every opportunity. These experiences help build their self-esteem.

The majority of young people's case records are of a good quality. However, there are some key dates missing from some documents and some records of safeguarding discussions with other professionals are missing, for example in relation to how staff supported a young person after an incident when they had taken drugs. This has the potential to hinder effective planning.

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

Young people feel safe and are kept as safe as possible. One young person told the inspector that they are safer now than they were before coming to the home. Young people are much safer in relation to going missing as incidents of this occurring have significantly reduced. When young people do go missing, staff are very proactive in finding them. Staff work well with other professionals to share information. This helps young people to return safely and as soon as possible. However, independent return home interviews arranged by placing authorities do not always occur. The manager does not always chase these up. This is a missed opportunity to learn from them. The impact of this is minimised as young people trust staff and they readily tell them where they have been following incidents of going missing. This creates opportunities for individual work with young people about the risks and dangers of going missing. Young people engage well with this work and as a result develop an improved sense of safety.

Improvements made in relation to risk assessments since the last inspection have strengthened safeguarding practice. However, one risk assessment remains confusing about one young person's free time. This shortfall does not detract from the fact that staff supervised her very well and did everything they could to keep her safe during a period of high-risk behaviour.

Staff give young people a strong message about expectations for good behaviour. Young people soon learn about what behaviour is socially acceptable and what is not. Young people's behaviours improve as staff help them to develop strategies to manage their anger. Staff only carry out restraints when it is necessary and in order to protect individuals. Restraints reduce over time. This is a reflection of staff members' abilities to de-escalate challenging situations well. One young person commented: 'I am less angry,' and 'you get the help you need'. Another young person said: 'They help you to get over arguments.'

Restraint records clearly describe what happened and when. However, they could be improved to show how young people are supported during a restraint, especially when they are held for longer periods of time, and by including young people's views about the restraint. Listening to young people is an important part of monitoring in this area and as a consequence, opportunities to develop practice are missed.

Recruitment procedures protect young people. A number of checks are undertaken, so that an informed decision is made about suitability. There are thorough checks on employment history, through the application form and interview. There are always two references, verified by the manager. However, the organisation has been satisfied with some references that contain only limited information. Seeking additional information in

such circumstances would make recruitment practices even more robust.

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

Staff training is poorly organised, which in turn has the potential to impact on the quality of care provided to young people. One young person's health condition requires a staff member, trained in first aid, to be on duty at all times. During the inspection, the manager had overlooked this. Although the manager put this right as soon as she became aware of it, this lack of planning could have put the young person's health at risk.

Other gaps in staff training were also evident, which means that staff may not know how to help young people effectively in respect of every aspect of their lives. Some staff have not received training in how to help young people to reduce their self-harm and drug-taking behaviour. Some have not received training in relation to child sexual exploitation, radicalisation and female genital mutilation. As a result, untrained staff may not know how to identify potential harm and risks. Additionally, one staff member has not received training in the home's method of behaviour management and restraint. As a result, when they need to carry out a restraint, they will not know how to do this effectively or safely.

The home's physical presentation requires improvement. Two boarded-up windows are unsightly. A double-glazed window panel in the conservatory is cloudy and unattractive. In the bathroom, the door is marked on the outside, there is no side panel on the bath, and in the shower mould has collected on the tiles. The dirty shower and sink seen during the inspection could present a health hazard if not put right. Such shortfalls prevent young people from taking pride in their home environment.

The manager has not been as proactive as she should have been in some areas of her monitoring. She has not ensured that all safeguarding records are up to date and she has overlooked the poor recording of two important safeguarding matters. Although in these instances young people's safety was not jeopardised, poor recording and insufficient management monitoring of incidents have the potential to do so, as full information is not available to inform risk management planning.

The manager has otherwise led the staff effectively to provide good-quality care. Meeting her young people's needs is her absolute priority. She models good practice and has very high expectations of staff. Her drive and enthusiasm filter down to the staff team. Together, she and the staff make a very positive difference to young people's lives. One staff member commented: 'The management is brilliant.'

The manager has helped young people to make progress. She has 'spoken out' to make sure that they have been listened to by other professionals. When one young person had issues with their emotional well-being, she challenged other professionals effectively. She regularly does this when young people are not getting the service that they need or deserve. The manager always bases her decisions on young people's needs and safety. When staffing levels need to be increased to protect individuals, she is assertive and professional in her communication with placing authorities. Young people have great



confidence in the manager, describing her as 'amazing and 'a good manager'.

The home's therapeutic model is very clearly set out in the home's statement of purpose. This model strictly follows the standards set out by the Royal College of Psychiatry. The home's trainee forensic psychiatrist plays a key role in the management team. He supports the manager to lead the therapeutic work. An appropriately registered professional supervises his practice. There are regular, external peer reviews and consistent evaluation of how the model is working. The organisation has started to share its good practice. It has delivered its first training session to other professionals, about how the model has worked well for young people. One young person participated and spoke confidently about how the home had helped her. The company has started to influence the work of other professionals in the wider sector.

The manager continues to drive forward improvements. Improvements are evident in relation to care planning. There is also a new handbook for staff to aid their understanding of the therapeutic model. This home is developing all the time.

The manager is currently working towards her level 5 Diploma in Leadership and Management and is suitably experienced. She is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses. She is also aware that her monitoring has not been as effective as it should have been in some areas. She is committed to making improvements. She also shows the capability and drive needed to rectify the shortfalls identified in this report.

## **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:** SC484402

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

**Registered provider:** Footsteps To Futures Ltd

**Registered provider address:** Footsteps To Futures Ltd, 20 Wheatley Drive, Carlton, Nottingham NG4 1FE

**Responsible individual:** Joseph Rafter

**Registered manager:** Zoe Dixon

## Inspector

Caroline Brailsford, 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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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