

1256058

Registered provider: Homes2inspire Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home was re-registered in June 2017 following the sale of the business. The home is owned and run by a private organisation. It is registered to accommodate and care for up to five young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 6 to 7 September 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **outstanding**

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: Not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: Not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- There are excellent relationships between staff and children.
- Children trust and confide in the staff and their peers.
- Children said that they love being in the home and that they feel like they are living with a second family.
- Children's emotional well-being improves significantly.
- Children make exceptional progress in their education attendance and attainment; some exceed expectations.
- Children take part in a range of activities even when they initially refused to take part in anything.
- Children's development in their independence skills is impressive.
- Work with families is of a very high quality.
- Children's behaviour improves significantly, and they now take responsibility for their actions.
- The manager is held in high regard by professionals and parents, as are staff.
- There is a strong commitment in the management and staff team to support children to reach their full potential.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Implement the new risk assessment process when admissions are being considered.
- Clarify, by seeking medical advice, what arrangements should be in place for a child's emergency medicine during their travel to and from school.
- Ensure that local authorities provide care plans for each child. From these, ensure that internal care plans and behaviour management plans are up to date.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- The registered person should only accept 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)
- Where the home has questions or concerns about a child's medication, they should approach an expert such as a General Medical Practitioner, community pharmacist or designated nurse for looked after children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

In particular, seek advice about what arrangements should be in place for emergency medication during a child's travel to and from school.

- All children's case records must be kept up to date. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

In particular, ensure that for each child there is a copy of the current local authority care plan and internal care plans are updated in line with the new care planning arrangements. Additionally, when risks for a child reduce ensure behaviour management plans are updated in line with practice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children make excellent progress in all areas of their lives. The exceptionally strong, trusting and respectful relationships that children and staff develop have a significant impact on children's progress. Children know that they are cared about. One child spoke about how he views each staff member. He said, 'Some are like brothers or sisters to me, others are father or mother figures.' All of the children agreed that the staff, and the children's peers, are like a second family to them. Children who used to live in the home keep in touch with staff and their peers through telephone calls and visits. During the inspection, one person who had left the home brought his partner and new-born baby to the meet the staff and children. This shows that children have a strong sense of belonging and that relationships are long lasting and valued by children.

Children's wishes and views are considered by staff to be a high priority. Staff listen to children and help them to think about ways in which any difficulties they are facing can

be sorted out. Staff go the extra mile to support children in their care. For example, staff provided significant levels of practical and emotional support to a child who had suffered a bereavement. The social worker for the child said that the support from staff was excellent.

Children's development in their emotional well-being is impressive. A social worker said that a child had 'made enormous ground in his emotional development'. Another said that a child was now 'admitting and taking responsibility for his mistakes'. A third described how a child had 'made excellent progress; so much so she now has the confidence to take part in her statutory reviews'. Children's self-view and esteem has improved, and their confidence and emotional resilience have developed significantly. Children are far more self-aware and self-critical; they take responsibility for, and reflect on, the mistakes that they make. Children have learned to talk about and deal with difficult situations in a mature and respectful way.

The manager and staff have been instrumental in ensuring that children receive the education that will best meet their needs. Children make really good progress in their educational attendance and attainment. A social worker described how the child she works with is now exceeding expected grades. This is a significant achievement for this child, who previously refused to attend school. High levels of praise are given to children for their achievements, and this spurs them on to try to succeed further.

Children, even those who did not initially want to be involved, are now enthusiastically involved in a range of activities that they enjoy and learn new skills from. Children are encouraged to take part in a wide range of activities, from being involved in activities in the home, such as learning to cook and maintaining their bicycles, to taking part in clubs and team sports in the community. Children attend residential trips away from the home that provide them with good opportunities to mix with their peers. They also take part in charity events. For example, all of the children and staff were excited about supporting two staff members who took part in a charity boxing match. They all dressed up for the occasion, and £5,000 was raised for charity. Children have developed a strong sense of community spirit through their charity work. Staff also support children to celebrate their cultural and religious needs. For example, staff and children celebrated Eid to help to promote a child's interest in their faith.

Children's health improves as a direct result of living in the home. They learn about and practise healthy living and reap the benefits of exercise and healthy eating. Staff have achieved a high level of success in getting children who are reluctant to go to routine medical appointments to attend these. Exceptionally patient and focused support has also led to some children who previously refused appointments in relation to their psychological and mental health to engage with these professionals. Overall, arrangements for the storage and administration of medication are safe, although, for one child, the plan for their medication to be transported to and from school was not clear.

Since living in the home, children have progressed extremely well in developing their practical skills. The improvements that children have made in reducing their risk-taking

behaviours, and their emotional well-being, have led to them becoming more independent. For example, one child who used to go missing from care is now trusted to walk home from school alone. Another child is taking on the responsibility for helping staff do the health and safety checks in the home. A third child said that he now keeps his room tidy, does his own washing and cooks meals. He said that these were not tasks that he had any idea about how to do before he came to live in the home.

Work with children and their families is of a very high quality. When required, staff have supported parents to develop their parenting skills. Some parents have become far more confident in supporting their child to manage their behaviour. Staff are skilled at supporting children to see their parents and others important to them, and this has enabled more meaningful relationships to develop. A social worker said that staff are 'highly motivated to promote family contact, and they manage it effectively'.

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

Children are safe and feel safe. Children trust the staff and confide in them without hesitation.

Risk management is effective and ensures that children are kept as safe as possible. A minor shortfall is that when risks have significantly reduced, the written behaviour management plans do not always reflect these improvements, although practice does. Children have a clear understanding about their own behaviour management plan and the reasons for any restrictions to their daily lives. The staff have been effective in supporting children to cease their more risky behaviours, such as going missing.

Children have learned to manage their frustrations and behaviour far more effectively, and there are very low levels of disruptive incidents. A parent said that her son's behaviour has improved significantly, stating, 'I am amazed at the improvement.'

The clear boundaries and routines have helped children to develop a sense of security and predictability. For example, staff verbally reprimand children when they do something wrong, such as swear. This is usually enough for children not to make the same mistake again. Staff use a restorative practice approach to support children to make changes in their behaviour. This has been successful, and children's behaviour has improved; they admit their mistakes, own them and are able to move on from them. Physical interventions are rarely used.

Staff know what to do if they have a child protection or safeguarding concern about a child. Staff understand the part that they and other agencies and professionals play in safeguarding children. When there was a concern raised by a child about an incident in school this was rigorously followed up by the manager, and appropriate action is being taken by the school and the police. The staff and children have strong links to the local police officer, who is a regular visitor to the home. He said, 'Staff are great and there is strong management of the home.'

Extensive work is undertaken with children about the benefits and dangers of using the internet. Safe internet use is promoted. There have been no issues of bullying within the home. It is clear that bullying is not tolerated by the staff or by the children living in the home.

The environment is kept safe through regular assessment, checks and maintenance of the premises. Staff recruitment is thorough, and this limits the potential for unsuitable people to be working in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

This home is led and managed highly effectively. The manager has only recently been registered. However, she has been managing the home under the previous organisation since spring 2016. She is passionate about each child and unrelenting in challenging other agencies or professionals whom she feels are not acting in the best interests of a child.

The manager takes a hands-on approach to the work. She has clear understanding about each child's progress and how the staff have supported them in their achievements. She is ambitious for the development of the service. She is thorough in her monitoring of the quality of the work and has a clear understanding about the strengths and areas for improvement. She has addressed the requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. A recommendation made about the arrangements for assessing the compatibility of children when considering referrals has not been able to be tested, as there have been no admissions. This recommendation has been repeated.

The environment that children live in is furnished to a high standard, and the atmosphere is nurturing and caring. The environment gives children a clear message that they are valued.

The staff share the manager's passion for supporting children's growth and development. Staff are competent in their roles and clear about their responsibilities. There is a strong sense of team spirit, and staff advocate for children and influence decisions about their care appropriately. A parent said, 'Staff are brilliant.' A social worker said, 'Staff are amazing, child focused and excellent role models for the children.'

The good-quality, research-based training that staff receive is used by them effectively in their practice. Staff are supported well through good-quality formal and informal supervision, team meetings and peer support.

Case records reflect children's everyday lives and the work that is undertaken with them. These will be useful for them should they want to access their files in the future. Not all local authorities had provided up-to-date care plans for children. During the inspection, these plans were obtained. The internal care plans were in the process of being updated,

and these should now take priority to ensure that staff have the most up-to-date information when working with a child.

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 differences 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: 1256058

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Homes2inspire Limited

Registered provider address: Prospects House, 19 Elmfield Road, Bromley BR1 1LT

Responsible individual: John Parker

Registered manager: Kim Murray

Inspector(s)

Rosie Dancer, social care inspector

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