

1255743

Registered provider: Homes2inspire Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered for five children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 September 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 **outstanding**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: not applicable

Overall judgement at last inspection: not applicable

Enforcement action since last inspection: not applicable

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children in this home are making progress, in some cases exceptional progress, from their starting points. They are benefiting from consistent care arrangements, structured routines and positive reinforcement.

- Children have positive, nurturing relationships with staff. With staff support, children develop new interests and take part in a range of activities. As a result, they have enhanced confidence.
- This home has a stable, motivated staff group and an inspirational leader. Staff and managers are aspirational for the children in their care and children are achieving well.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The managers should ensure that as new information emerges about changes to children's behaviours that this is added to risk assessments in a timely way.
- Staff should be alert to any concerns about developing peer relationships in the home.

Recent inspection history

This is the home's first inspection since re-registration under new ownership.

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

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details and steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- Children should be encouraged to develop positive relationships with others both in and outside the home as set out in the positive relationships standard. However, staff should be alert to the possibility that children may be at risk of such relationships including with other children in the home... and they therefore should take appropriate steps to protect a child where there are concerns for their safety. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.14)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children have made very good progress from their starting points. There is a robust admissions process. This ensures that only those children whose identified needs can be met move into the home. A pre-admission risk assessment has been developed to ensure that careful consideration is given to the needs of the children living in the home as well as the new admission. Children, their families and social workers are given the opportunity to visit the home as part of the admission process. Managers seek information from a range of sources in addition to the information in the social care referral. The manager is very careful, when accepting emergency referrals, to gather as much information as possible about the needs of the child.

Staff are skilled at engaging children and building positive relationships. Staff share detailed information with children when they move in. Children's views, wishes and preferences inform their placement plan and decisions about their daily routines. In this way, children have a positive start and are supported to settle into their new home.

Staff ensure that children have access to the resources necessary to meet their needs. For example, some children are receiving a service from the Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) and some children are receiving services from voluntary organisations. Staff contribute well to assessments, sharing relevant information so that children's plans are progressed.

The children have all had difficulties accessing education in the past. They are now making exceptional progress in education. They are responding positively to structure, boundaries and routines. The home prioritises education attendance. Staff support

transport and homework arrangements very well.

Staff work closely with the provider's education lead and education specialists from the placing authorities to ensure that children have appropriate education placements. The manager has been tenacious in advocating for one child to ensure that a full education and health assessment is undertaken. This is now being progressed and will provide essential information to support this child's progress.

Children have detailed health plans and attend regular preventative health appointments. Individual key-work sessions address health needs, provide information to raise awareness of healthy lifestyles and encourage healthy choices. Children are supported to lead an active life with a healthy diet. Staff also identify and respond to children's emotional health needs. Any substance misuse issues are addressed in health plans and in key-work sessions. This means that children have improving health.

Staff and managers demonstrate an excellent understanding of children's individual needs, histories, likes and dislikes. The manager and staff are aspirational for children. They are supportive, encouraging and always celebrate achievements. There are certificates of achievements in children's records. Photographs of celebrations and important events are displayed around the home. Staff constantly reinforce progress so that children grow in confidence.

Two children have been successful in securing part-time employment. Another child has joined a 'loan a pony' scheme. This has enabled her to further develop her riding skills and she helps to look after the pony. Another child is having a poem published. This success helps young people to be ambitious and have high expectations for their futures.

Children report that they have excellent relationships with staff. There is a fun atmosphere in the home. Children are proud to show their rooms, the decor they have chosen and photographs of holidays and activities. Children are encouraged to share their views, attend their planning meetings and influence decisions about their care. Children raise requests or concerns directly with staff. Any concerns are dealt with promptly.

Following consultation with children, a room was changed into a 'cinema room'. The children loved the fact that they were listened to. They talked to the inspector about enjoying a film night and making popcorn.

This provider has a good independence skills package that supports children to develop useful skills and knowledge. Staff work closely with social workers and accommodation providers to support positive transitions from the home.

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

Children report that they feel safe in this home. There is evidence of consultation with children, who each complete 'safe zone' questionnaires. Children have also responded positively to consultation about relationships with staff.

Staff receive safeguarding training. There are robust safeguarding policies and procedures and staff demonstrate an understanding of each child's vulnerabilities. Children's histories inform their risk assessment and behaviour management plans. Care

plans include advice to staff about managing and reducing risks.

Concerns about children who have been vulnerable to exploitation reduce over time. There is also a reduction in incidents of self-harming behaviour as children settle in the home. This is because staff work with specialist services such as CAMHS and voluntary organisations to meet children's needs. Staff use a range of tools to engage children and support them to share their feelings. Plans are regularly reviewed, with significant input from children, in multi-agency meetings and in key-work sessions.

There are markedly reduced incidents of going missing and unauthorised absences. Staff work closely with social workers and police. They are proactive in responding to incidents of going missing, and report concerns appropriately. Children who have been missing regularly in the past respond to advice, positive relationships and structured care; they become safer. A police officer reported that there are excellent partnership working arrangements with the staff, which include informal visits from the local community officer.

Children respond very well to the incentives and positive reinforcement that form part of behaviour management plans. Some children have complex needs and there have been incidents when staff have needed to defuse and de-escalate challenging behaviours. There have been a small number of physical restraints used by staff in order to prevent children harming themselves or others. Managers carefully review the records, including children's views, following each incident to ensure that each restraint is necessary and proportionate.

Managers and staff have all received safeguarding training. The manager is experienced in liaising with and making referrals to the local authority designated person. There has been one allegation about a member of staff that was appropriately referred and has concluded. There are no concerns about the safety and welfare of children living in the home as a result of this allegation. Arrangements are in place for safe recruitment in this home.

One serious safeguarding incident resulted in a child moving on from the home. Staff followed safeguarding and going missing procedures. Managers reviewed events leading to this incident and recommendations have been made to strengthen practice. This inspection found that information about changing behaviours of children had not been added to risk assessments. In addition, preventative work with the children concerned about peer relationships had not been completed. Recommendations are made to address this.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is experienced and has relevant management qualifications. She is a role model for the team because she is aspirational and supports children to achieve to their full potential. She said she wants each child 'to be the best version of themselves they can be'. She has established a stable, motivated team that reports that morale is excellent. Staff have a range of strengths, skills and interests.

Team meetings are held regularly and focus on children's needs. They are also learning and development forums because they are used creatively to consider practice developments. For example, the manager worked closely with the provider's health and

safety lead and the local fire service to support research arising from a recommendation in a recent serious case review. This provided an opportunity for staff and children to learn about the prevention of fires in domestic premises. Staff receive regular supervision and appraisal that add value to their practice and support professional development.

The staff team is clear about the role and function of the home and ensures that children's plans are progressed in a timely way. The home's practice is underpinned by a good understanding of equality and diversity.

Managers have developed case tracking mechanisms that support staff to monitor children's progress. They are also in the process of implementing improved care plans for children. The manager welcomes the reports from the home's independent visitor. Any recommendations are addressed thoroughly. Staff are involved in learning from the visits, and children always have the opportunity to talk to and share information with the visitor.

A particular strength of this service is that managers strike a balance between working effectively with partners to support children and challenging professionals if there is delay in progressing children's plans. The manager confidently requests meetings to discuss children's needs if there are concerns about increased risk. Social workers report that the staff are excellent advocates for children. Staff send weekly summaries of children's progress to social workers, in addition to timely communication with social workers, professionals and families if there are significant events and incidents.

All professionals reported that this team is achieving exceptional outcomes for children, from their starting points. One social worker noted that a child, 'has developed trusted relationships with all staff. He has a fantastic relationship with his key worker. He has been supported to change what were very challenging behaviours and now he has a belief in himself.'

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: 1255743

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Homes2inspire Limited

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

Responsible individual: Kenneth Farrimond

Registered manager: Rachel Gillott

Inspector(s)

Cathey Moriarty: social care inspector

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