

1240801

Registered provider: Inspire Children's Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private organisation. It provides care and accommodation for up to two young person who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 October 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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 1 December 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Admissions to this home are sensitively managed. The admission procedure is a gradual process, and taken at the child's pace. This means that young people settle quickly and start to build trusting relationships with the staff.
- The two young people who live in the home are very happy, relaxed, feel safe and are settled. They get on well with each other and enjoy positive relationships with the staff team.
- Young people are treated and respected as individuals in their own right, which makes them feel loved and valued.
- Staff support young people to enjoy increased positive family contact that promotes their unique backgrounds and identity.
- Young people enjoy taking part in a wide range of age-appropriate, stimulating and constructive activities. Individual interests and talents are actively encouraged and supported. This develops young people's self-esteem and effectively develops their confidence.
- There are particularly good arrangements in place to ensure that the young people remain fit and healthy.
- Young people benefit from the clear and consistent routines and boundaries in place at the home.
- The staff team manages challenging behaviour effectively without resorting to police assistance.
- The appropriate use of restorative justice and reparation effectively avoids unnecessary criminalisation of young people.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The main shortfall arising from this inspection is in respect to records and the lack of attention to detail. This highlights the need for more stringent monitoring of all required documentation.
- There is limited documentary evidence to demonstrate that suggestions made about improvements to the service, by young people, their parents and stakeholders, are considered and acted on by the registered manager.
- Given the good progress young people have made, the current use of a monitoring device on the landing is no longer in line with the regulations and the home's own policy.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/12/2016	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
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if it is for the purpose of safeguarding and the child's placing authority consents in writing. (Regulation 24(1)(a) and(b))	10/11/2017
The registered person must maintain and keep up to date all the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child and in particular; sanction and medication records and placing authority care plans. (Regulation 36(1)(a) and (b))	10/11/2017

Recommendations

- The registered person should make best use of information from independent and internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement and in particular; demonstrate that any issues raised by young people and stakeholders are listened to and acted upon. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)
- Demonstrate that all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of up-to-date, careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) In particular regard to individual behaviour management plans and risk assessments.
- The registered person should use their professional judgement to decide what each internal review of the quality of care provided in the home should focus on based on the specific circumstances of the home at that particular time. They should also consider what information or data recorded will form part of the evidence base for their analysis and conclusions. There is no expectation that the registered person will review the home against every part of the quality standards. The resulting report should identify areas of strengths and weaknesses and actions to be addressed. The whole process should be used as a tool for continuous improvement of the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.4)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The two young people living in the home are very happy and settled. They get on well with each other and enjoy positive relationships with all the staff. Staff treat young people with respect as individuals in their own right, which makes them feel loved and valued. A recent comment from one young person includes, 'I am still really happy at this home and at school. The staff helped me to have contact with my dad, which is going really well, too. I like it because it is the same staff and I trust them. I'm buzzing [happy].' Another young person said, 'It is okay living here. It is quiet and I get on with the other young person and the staff. The house is good. I get to do lots of stuff and I enjoy my family contact.'

There are good admission processes in place to allow for a gradual and sensitive admission to the home at the child's pace. Since the last inspection, one young person moved from another home within the company. He was able to visit this home on a number of occasions and spend time with the young person already living there and the staff. The two young people went on activities together and found that they shared some common interests. Furthermore, the young person's allocated key worker who worked at his previous home transferred with him. Consequently, the young person settled very quickly and he has been able to sustain a positive relationship with his key worker. Staff also put in arrangements from the outset to enable the young person to maintain the positive relationships he had established at his previous care home. The young person's mum is very pleased with the progress he has made here and said, 'This home is much better for him than the previous home because it is much calmer, and he is doing really well.'

The staff are strong and effective advocates for the young people. In particular, staff have encouraged both young people to enjoy increased family contact that promotes their unique backgrounds and identity. One young person was thrilled to go camping with his dad over the summer holidays, which proved to be a great experience for both of them. As a result, the young person can now have regular overnight visits.

There are particularly good arrangements in place to ensure that the young people remain fit and healthy. These arrangements include regular health checks, the provision of homemade nutritious meals, and regular physical activities. Current examples include the gym, golf, rugby, cycling, roller skating, trampolining, football and swimming. In addition, one young person has achieved a sports leader's award.

A key strength of this home is the provision of a daily programme of age-appropriate, stimulating and constructive activities. Individual interests and talents are actively encouraged and supported, which increases young people's self-esteem and effectively develops their confidence. Young people are valued members of local clubs and organisations, which serves to strengthen their sense of belonging. Moreover, to their credit, they volunteer at local events and raise money for charity.

Young people have made and sustained good friendships outside the home, which are

actively encouraged by the staff. Another young person went abroad for the first time. Staff maintain photographic memory books, which young people take with them when they leave the home. These memory books help to remind young people of all their positive experiences.

Both young people attend education. They are making good progress from their individual starting points. One young person's attendance and attitude to learning has much improved in recent months compared to a previous history of disengagement. He has also enjoyed practising his reading and writing every weekday with staff after school, which has improved his academic levels. The young person received formal recognition of his achievements during a school ceremony at the end of the summer term. He received an award for 'The most progress made'. The young person said, 'I am climbing the ladder.'

Young people now involve themselves in daily household chores without staff having to remind them. They have also recently cleared the garage with staff and started gardening with a view to growing their own fruit and vegetables. They both love cooking. One young person said he 'loved' his bedroom that he helped to decorate it. This all demonstrates a strong sense of pride in the young people's surroundings and, in turn, develops practical independence skills.

Young people have an independence programme. This is age appropriate and staff discuss the progress the young people have made during key-work sessions. One young person has started doing his own weekly food shop and often prepares his own evening meal. He can now use tools safely and is competent in ironing his own clothes and using public transport. Recent individual sessions include budgeting, banking, paying bills, cooking, baking and decorating. Work continues around personal hygiene and internet safety.

There are good arrangements in place for regularly ascertaining the views of young people, parents and a wide range of stakeholders on the quality of care provided in the home. The feedback is overwhelmingly positive. One social worker said, 'This home is meeting my young person's needs to a good standard and the staff continue to work in partnership with the local authority. The young person tells me he is very happy with the staff and the level of care and support provided.' Another social worker said, 'I have a positive relationship with the staff, who keep me updated about progress and any incidents. They are professional and approachable. The home is well furnished and decorated.' Another professional said, 'I have nominated my young person for an award in recognition of the progress he has made, and I am pleased that the staff are now working on developing his independence skills.' However, it is not consistently evident within the records that, when suggestions are made to improve the service by young people, parents and professionals, the manager considers or acts on them.

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

The two young people living at this home feel safe and secure in the knowledge that they can stay until they feel ready to move out of the home. They have formed trusting relationships with staff. This means that the young people are starting to open up about past traumatic events and learning new coping strategies. Consequently, this helps to

build their emotional resilience.

There has been a noticeable improvement in one young person's behaviour since another young person moved out of the home. In particular, there have been no missing from home incidents. Given the young person's history, this is a significant improvement. His dad said, 'My son has come on leaps and bounds at this home and I am delighted with the progress he has made.' However, the home continues to use a monitoring device, in the landing area, which alerts staff if young people leave their bedroom during the night. Given the progress the young people have made, this is currently not required. This means that staff are not acting in line with their own statement of purpose. They also do not have written consent from placing authorities.

Young people benefit from the clear and consistent routines and boundaries. They respond well to the emphasis on positive reinforcement of good behaviours and effort. Consequently, serious incidents have significantly declined and there has only been one restraint in the last 12 months. Fire-setting has ceased and self-harm has decreased in severity and frequency. However, staff have not always included the progress young people have made from their individual starting point within their individual behaviour management plans and risk assessments.

From comments made by young people and professionals, it is evident the progress that young people have made with the support of the staff team. Young people said, 'I now feel like I can control my behaviour' and 'I like the staff at this home, they look after me and support me all of the time. They praise me when I do well. I haven't been restrained since October 2016 and I am very proud about this and so are the staff.' Recent feedback from one professional included, 'The staff keep me informed and handle any difficult issues in a caring and sensitive manner, and maintain my young person's safety at all times.' Other professionals stated, 'The handling of the one restraint incident is to be commended and shows that the staff really know the young person well. They ensured his safety throughout' and 'One young person has really matured, and another is so much more confident. In fact, the improvements in them both is second to none and all credit to the staff here.'

This staff team effectively manages challenging behaviour without resorting to police assistance. Furthermore, the appropriate use of restorative justice and reparation effectively avoids unnecessary criminalisation of young people, but still demonstrates to young people that there are consequences to negative behaviours. This enables young people to learn about socially acceptable behaviours.

All required external safety certificates are in place and staff complete internal checks at the required frequency. This includes fire drills and checks around fire safety. This helps to ensure that the home is a safe environment for young people, staff and visitors.

Staff files include all the required information to demonstrate an efficient recruitment and selection process, which ensures a safe and competent workforce. The interview process always includes at least one question from young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager of this home is suitably qualified and experienced and is particularly child

focused. He leads by example and provides clear direction to the staff team. Staff confirm that they are involved in the continuous development of the home. They feel confident in dealing with any safeguarding concerns and that they are very satisfied with the regularity and quality of supervision. Staff also explained that they have many opportunities to engage in training and learning. One staff member said, 'Since moving to this home in January, I have gained a greater knowledge of my role, improved in all aspects of my work, gained my qualification and have received support to help me to progress to a senior within the next six months.' Another staff member said, 'I am happy at this home and feel my skills are well suited to meet the needs of the young people.' Consequently, morale is high.

The manager has a clear and accurate insight into the many strengths of this home, and the areas for development. He can clearly demonstrate the good progress young people have made from their individual starting points, but knows administrative tasks need improving.

Staff have access to a wide range of relevant training courses to ensure that they are able to meet the specific needs of the young people. Staff receive opportunities for personal development and receive support to understand the expectations of the organisation. At a recent management development day, it was identified that the course for staff on recording is no longer fit for purpose. In response, the manager of this home is re-designing a more interactive course, which he will deliver. This will help and support staff in their learning.

The main shortfall arising from this inspection is in respect to records and the lack of attention to detail. As an example, there is an appropriate format in place for recording medication administered to young people, but some of the boxes are not always completed. In addition, staff had not recorded one incident in the appropriate format, which resulted in a young person receiving a sanction. This suggests the need for more stringent monitoring of required documentation.

There are good independent monthly monitoring arrangements in place. As the Independent person has undertaken the visits for three years, the young people know him and are comfortable talking to him about their home. The company chooses to undertake three monthly internal reviews of the quality of care provided in the home. However, the company is using a set format that requires the manager to consider a wide range of matters, which are no longer relevant to this home as the young people are happy and settled. There is no sense of professional judgement used to discern what matters to focus and report on, to aid continuous improvement.

The two requirements and three recommendations raised at the last inspection have been addressed. Consequently, restraint records now include all the required information. Notifications are sent to Ofsted, which now include sufficient detail to demonstrate that appropriate action is always taken to safeguard young people and to prevent a reoccurrence. Young people's bedrooms have been decorated and their specific education targets are understood and supported by staff.

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: 1240801

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Inspire Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: Ground Floor, 121 Church Street, St Helens,
Merseyside WA10 1AJ

Responsible individual: Paul Keogh

Registered manager: Michael Bradshaw

Inspector

Lynn O'Driscoll, social care inspector

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