

# SC483220

Registered provider: Compass Children's Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is a privately operated children's home. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children or young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 10 to 11 October 2017

<b>Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,</b> taking into account	<b>outstanding</b>
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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:** 6 March 2017

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

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- The young people make exceptional progress relating to their behaviour, education, health, social and independence skills.

- The staff have built exceedingly strong and trusting relationships with the young people.
- Collaborative working with professionals take place frequently and is recognised as a very important aspect to support young people's success.
- Significant importance is given to ensure that the young people are provided with a nurturing environment within structured and safe boundaries.
- The extensive work undertaken on keeping young people safe is successful.
- Strong and aspirational leadership ensures that the staff receive training, guidance and support to undertake their roles and duties to a very high standard.
- The young people are empowered through frequent consultation to have a voice that is listened to and, at every opportunity, influence the care and support that they receive.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Repair and decorate the bathroom, and maintain the high environment standards of the home throughout.
- All staff to progress and complete their level 3 diploma in caring for children and young people within the timescales set.
- Pathway plans should be explicit, including timeframes in the placements and transition strategy for young people who are preparing to move on and leave the home.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/06/2016	Full	Good
15/03/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
25/08/2015	Full	Good

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

### Recommendations

- All staff who are in a care role, including external agency or bank staff, must have the qualification in regulation 32(4) within the relevant timescale listed in regulation 32(5). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)
- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food hygiene, etc.). However, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to remain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

In particular, repair the damage to the ceiling and the floor covering to reflect the high standard maintained throughout the rest of the home's environment.

- As well as longer-term support for children to move on from the home effectively (regulation 6(2)(b)(vi)), the home has an important role in supporting each child leaving the home in the period immediately before their departure. The registered person should work with the placing authority to ensure that each child's transition is planned and help each child to prepare for leaving, both practically and emotionally. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.9)

In particular, ensure that there are clear, written pathway or transition plans. These should detail the work to be completed and the young person's next placement, including timescales for the move.

### Inspection judgements

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

A young person said: 'This is a really nice place to live. I get on with all the staff, but especially my key workers.'

Specifically tailored support and care for each young person ensures that they are provided with highly individualised care. The young people benefit greatly from a team of staff that is child focused, ambitious and committed to making certain that the young people have enjoyable childhoods and make progress in a nurturing environment. The frequent evaluation of each young person's care and progress ensures that the areas identified for them to grow and develop are achieved and sustained.

Strong, enduring and trusting relationships are established between the young people and the staff. This enables the young people to consistently listen to the advice and

guidance given, and embrace the support provided by the staff team. This helps the young people to thrive.

The young people make significant progress as they take part in the weekly therapy and key-work sessions. The therapist works in close collaboration with the staff team. This close relationship provides the strategies and guidance to support the staff to manage the young people's presenting behaviours, emotional health, and promote their well-being. Great attention is given to making sure that all the young people receive routine health checks and identified assessments. Therefore, staff ensure that the young people's health needs are met. As a result, the young people have improved health and make substantial progress to reduce their anxieties and harmful behaviours.

All of the young people benefit immensely from the home's embedded culture that promotes the importance of learning. This, in turn, has resulted in the young people's advancements in school attendance and attainment from the starting points of their placements. Consequently, the young people have made academic progress, passing examinations at foundation levels to support them into further education.

The young people demonstrate great confidence in expressing their views and preferences. They know how to make a complaint if they need to. This is a positive consequence of the ethos of the staff, which encourages young people to actively pursue their opinions. The young people give feedback to the staff about their daily lives, menu choices, activities, house rules and boundaries, and on such matters as family contact. This is achieved through a number of forums that include general discussions, weekly young people's meetings and key-work sessions.

The young people enjoy positive relationships with their families. A committed staff team works tirelessly to rebuild and maintain family relationships. As a result, the young people have regular contact and visits with family members. A young person said: 'My relationship with my mum was not good, it is now. This is great.' This helps to provide the young people with a strong sense of identity, as well as a support network, and ensures that they keep in touch with those who are important to them.

There is a significant emphasis on ensuring that the young people have new life experiences. The staff make sure that they support the young people with leisure hobbies and interests that promote positive social engagement. This increases the young people's confidence and awareness of the world around them. The young people engage in a number of activities that include playing on the Xbox, fishing, going for walks, visiting the cinema, cycling and going to music concerts. In addition, the young people went on a summer holiday, enjoying the experience tremendously. A young person said: 'My holiday this summer was great. I had a really good time.'

The young people develop good independence skills that enable them to be able to care for themselves. These skills will serve them well in adulthood. The young people undertake household chores that include doing their own laundry and cleaning their bedrooms. Depending on their age, some young people plan menus and cook meals. They arrange their own health and other appointments and learn to manage their finances. However, pathway plans do not include sufficient detail on the new placement, timeframes, and the work to be completed to ensure that the staff can fully prepare the

young people for leaving the home.

The home is clean, furnished and decorated to a high standard. The young people benefit greatly from the comfortable surroundings, which are influenced by their choices for personalising their home. A young person said: 'I have a lovely bedroom. I chose the wallpaper. I have my fish tanks and this is just for me.' Photographs and other personal items reflect the young person's interests and identify. However, the decoration of one bathroom is showing signs of wear and tear, which detract from the otherwise excellent homely environment.

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

The highest priority is given to the safety and well-being of young people. A professional said: 'The risks for [Name] have really reduced. This is due to the work the staff have completed with [Name]. [Name] is going from strength to strength.' A young person said: 'Staff work with me on keeping safe. We have rules and staff explain them. This is helpful for me.'

The staff are clear that it is their responsibility to safeguard young people. All the staff are fully aware of the individual vulnerabilities and risks for each young person in their care. The young people have detailed risk assessments that include specific safeguarding strategies to minimise or eliminate risks. The staff fully implement the identified safety measures. This has reduced the young people's risks, including sexually harmful behaviour and going missing. Due to the high-quality work undertaken with professionals, including the advice, guidance and support from staff, the young people become progressively safer.

The young people benefit greatly from the close supervision from the staff. This makes certain that the staff can intervene promptly and take action to de-escalate situations before they intensify and stop inappropriate behaviour. This further protects young people from harm. The young people confirm that there is no bullying taking place, and that staff would stop such incidents immediately. Professionals say that the work the staff do with the young people is reducing the identified risks and that this helps to keep them safe.

There is great emphasis on young people having individualised incentives and rewards. This results in young people willingly engaging in socially acceptable behaviour. The young people respond extremely well to the explicitly detailed and written behavioural strategies that the staff use to support their continued engagement in positive behaviour. The staff are proactive in frequently reviewing and revising behaviour strategies, ensuring that they meet the young person's needs. In addition, embedded practice includes staff debrief sessions when incidents occur. These debrief sessions allow the staff to reflect on when improvements and changes are required, which effectively assists in preventing further occurrences. Consequently, the young people respond to this positive support approach and make continued progress.

There is excellent collaborative working with safeguarding agencies. The staff promptly inform and consult these professionals on all safeguarding concerns and agree protection strategies. The established and trusting relationships with staff enable the young people to follow the advice and guidance given to them. This further helps

protects the young people from harm.

The young people benefit greatly from the frequent monitoring of the environment that includes all relevant health and safety checks. This provides young people with a safe environment in which to live.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding**

The registered manager has the relevant experience of caring for children, as well as the relevant managerial experience. She has been registered for this service since 2013 and holds a degree in psychotherapy in transactional analysis. She is currently undertaking the level 5 qualification in management as required by regulations.

The manager leads by example and communicates to the staff team her high aspirations for the young people. This ethos extends to staff and young people alike, and forms an important part of the home's aims and objectives. This ensures that the progress of the young people living in this home is sustained. Young people have new and positive life experiences that ensure that the aims and targets in their individual care and support plans are met.

The young people benefit immensely from the close supervision achieved through the constant high staffing levels, resulting in the excellent support and care provided by the staff. The staff speak of the supportive team in which they work, and the first-rate communication systems, along with the strong emphasis on staff development and learning. This provides staff with a wealth of knowledge and expertise to care for young people.

Professionals report that communication with them is excellent. A youth offending officer said: 'The staff communicate very well with me. Any incidents are swiftly sent to me. The staff always arrive at meetings with the relevant information and reports. I am always kept in the loop.' Outstanding partnership working with local authorities, the police, youth offending teams and the clinical teams supports the provision of excellent care. This is apparent in the substantial success and progress of the young people during their time living at the home.

A number of new staff with experience have joined a skilled and stable core team. The staff team has swiftly joined together to consistently care and meet the needs of the young people. All staff are child focused. Staff access a wide range of training, with all mandatory training areas kept up to date. In addition, staff access more specialist training, which includes radicalisation, sexually harmful behaviour, attachment and trauma. This equips staff exceptionally well to meet the needs of the young people in their care. A staff member said: 'This is a great team to work in, the manager is really approachable. The young people are doing well and make progress.' However, a number of staff are yet to complete the level 3 diploma qualification required by the regulations.

The staff have robust communication systems that keep them up to date on the care to be provided to sustain young people's progress. The extensive use of reflective practice relating to the therapeutic approach provides staff with high-quality supervision. Furthermore, daily shift handovers are comprehensive. The review of incidents through each debrief session looks at lessons learned as part of routine practice. These processes

and methods inform the change needed to the care of the young people. Staff learn from experience and this prepares them extremely well to meet the needs of the young people.

The needs of the young people are in line with the home's statement of purpose. The manager fully understands the home's strengths and weaknesses. The development plan for the service clearly sets out the identified areas that require progression to improve the care provided to the young people. The progress against goals in the development plan is constantly reviewed. The implementation of the two recommendations that were made at a previous inspection ensures that the progress of young people is clearly documented in their case file. The statement of purpose details how the needs of the young people over the age of 18 are to be met along with the rest of the young people in residence.

Thorough and extensive internal and external monitoring systems exist. These include the frequent review of young people's progress. This continual reviewing of the quality of care supports young people's positive care experience and ongoing progress, and maintains the outstanding standards of care.

## **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 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:** SC483220

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

**Registered provider:** Compass Children's Homes Limited

**Registered provider address:** Mountfields House Off Squirrel Way, Epinal Way,  
Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 3GE

**Responsible individual:** Benjamin Jordan

**Registered manager:** Janine Sharkey

## Inspector

Debbie Foster, social care inspector



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