

1214396

Registered provider: River Valley Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A private company operates the home.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 November 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: 5 December 2016

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:

- Young people are cared for by a stable and committed staff team.
- Young people are supported to pursue individual interests.
- Young people make progress as a result of living at this home.
- Young people are supported to explore their cultural identities.
- Young people are supported to maintain links with family where appropriate.
- Young people live in a homely and nurturing environment.
- Staff benefit from regular supervisions that help them to develop their practice.
- Young people's going missing from care risks reduce.
- Communication with social workers is good.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The registered manager does not have sufficient oversight of the physical intervention record.
- Staff do not ensure that they reflect young people's views in key-work records or placement plans.
- The registered manager has not ensured that all the required recruitment checks are completed.
- The registered manager has not ensured that complaints made by young people are managed in line with the home's complaints policy.
- Not all staff have completed their level 3 diploma in residential childcare within the required timescale.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/07/2016	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 must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(3)(d))	31/01/2018
The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours (of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home), the registered person, or a person who is authorised to do so ("the authorised person") has spoken to the user about the measure, has signed the record to confirm it is accurate and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(c))	31/12/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure all children are actively encouraged to read their records and to add further information to them. They should be regularly reminded of their rights to see information kept about them and be given information about how they might be supported to access their records in later life. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.6)
- Ensure that young people's complaints are managed in line with Get it Sorted (2004) Guidance on providing effective advocacy services for children and young people making a complaint under the Children Act 1989. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 23, paragraph 4.20)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people experience positive care from a consistent and committed staff team. A social worker told the inspector that a young person had made progress because 'he has had the stability of the staff'. A young person said, 'I like everyone and they like me.'

Young people's outcomes improve because of living in the home. For example, one young person regularly attends school after a two-year absence. In addition, a young person has increased his attendance at health appointments. A social worker told the inspector that one young person had done 'remarkably well' at the home, having previously experienced many placement disruptions. As a result, young people enjoy better health and improved educational success.

Young people are encouraged to pursue individual interests. For example, young people enjoy football, basketball and fishing. One young person told the inspector that staff came to watch his football games 'even when they are not working'. As a result, young people feel valued and their confidence increases because of the opportunity to participate in these activities.

Staff implement detailed placement plans for young people. These are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect progress and the young people's changing needs. As a result, staff are working with the most up-to-date information to ensure that the young people are having all of their individual needs met.

Staff understand young people's cultural needs and respond to these. Staff took a young person on holiday to his home country. This allowed him to explore his culture and family links.

Young people are encouraged to develop self-care skills as part of their day-to-day routine. This is implemented at a level appropriate to their age and understanding. This means that young people receive care that responds to their individual needs.

Young people are supported to maintain links with family where appropriate. When this is not possible, staff work with young people to increase their understanding of the situation.

Young people participate in regular key-work sessions and house meetings. This enables them to express their views on day-to-day matters. Daily records are written to the young person rather than about them. However, staff do not always ensure that young people express their views in records. As a result, young people's consultation is not always evident.

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

Young people told the inspector that they feel safe. Staff understand the risks associated with each young person. Staff implement clear behaviour and risk management strategies to keep young people safe. As a result, risk-taking behaviour by young people has decreased.

All staff have received safeguarding training, including understanding the indicators of child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. Staff know how to identify concerns and respond to these.

Staff follow clear procedures when young people go missing from care. This includes notifying police and social workers.

Young people live in a homely and nurturing environment. The home has a warm, cosy feel with photos throughout of the young people and the activities that they enjoy. Young people have the opportunity to personalise their own rooms. The registered manager ensures that regular health and safety checks are completed and that the home is maintained to a high standard. As a result, young people live in a safe environment.

Despite all the good practice, the manager has not ensured that all checks are completed of staff employment history before they start work. This has the potential to place young people at risk.

All staff are trained in the use of physical intervention. Levels of physical interventions are low and staff only use this measure as a last resort. However, the manager has not ensured that all records are signed off in a timely way. This prevents the manager from having the necessary oversight of staff practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has been employed at this home since it opened in 2016. He holds a level 5 diploma in health and social care.

An independent person visits the home monthly. The manager uses the reports from these visits to inform the home's development plan. This ensures that he retains clear oversight of the safety and quality of care that young people receive.

Staff receive regular supervision and are appraised annually. Staff told the inspector that supervision supports them to develop their practice. Staff benefit from regular training opportunities, which increase their skills and understanding. This means that staff are equipped to care for young people. However, not all staff have completed the required level 3 diploma in residential childcare within the regulatory timescale.

The statement of purpose is regularly updated and accurately details the home's aims and objectives.

The manager ensures that placing social workers and other professionals are kept up to date regarding young people's progress. A social worker told the inspector that communication is good, with timely incident reports and weekly updates.

The young person's guide is updated regularly and is in a format that is individually accessible.

There has been one complaint since the last full inspection. The registered manager did not ensure that the organisation's complaints procedure was followed. This means that the complainant did not receive a clear outcome to their complaint.

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: 1214396

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: River Valley Care Limited

Registered provider address: The Stables, Chestnut Farm, Cuxham, Watlington, Oxfordshire OX49 5ND

Responsible individual: Quentin Carson

Registered manager: Jason Sellars

Inspector

Tracey Coglan Greig: social care inspector

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