

SC423606

Registered provider: Reamcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care and accommodation for up to seven children who have a learning and/or physical disability. The home accommodates children on a permanent or short-break basis.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 November 2017

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

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

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: 14 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people make excellent progress in their home. They benefit from a warm, friendly and extremely supportive atmosphere.
- Young people learn an exceptional range of new social skills. This allows them to develop extremely close relationships with staff, each other, and friends and family.
- Educational achievement is at the core of care practice in this home. Staff work in partnership with schools and colleges to monitor young people's educational progress effectively.
- Key work is regular and thorough. Staff use a range of communication means to ensure that young people engage, process and understand objectives which help to develop their independence.
- Behavioural management is highly effective. The use of restraint is rare and young people learn to reduce previously high levels of incidents and outbursts.
- Safeguarding practice is very strong and is supported by comprehensive and thorough risk assessments.
- The home benefits from a committed and passionate management team that ensures that a child-centred ethos permeates throughout the home's care practice.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Staff turnover is high. This limits the development of the staff team. However, this does not affect the level of care offered to young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Outstanding
01/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
10/11/2015	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing to prevent disruption to children's attachments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people are extremely happy in their home and make exceptional progress. One young person comments, 'I would give my family 1000 stars, I love it here.' Progress is achieved via the exceptional care and support offered by the staff team. One young person moved from needing the support of two staff, towards a plan to live independently within a short space of time. Another young person is now able to manage without medication support for the first time. One independent reviewing officer comments, 'The change achieved by the home in such a short space of time is really quite remarkable.'

There is a genuine sense of community and shared ownership between staff and young people. The phrase 'our boys' and 'my family' is regularly heard from staff and young people alike. Staff strive very hard to consult with young people and involve them in care planning. Young people assist staff in the planning for important events such as a recent holiday to an adventure park. Resident meetings are an invaluable forum for planning weekly events and menus. Staff offer extremely inventive solutions when young people may struggle to express themselves verbally. For example, one young person recently used a computer slide show to illustrate to professionals his positive views of his placement.

Achievement in education is exemplary. An allocated teacher comments, 'The home is on top of everything, the support is amazing.' One young person recently made up six years in his chronological reading age within nine months of arriving in the home. All young people are engaged in structured educational provision with carefully chosen specialist providers. Case files show young people attending college open days and indicating their preferred college provider. Staff are proactive and keenly support allocated teachers. Academic topics are regularly incorporated into daily routines, such as the use of budgeting to support the development of mathematics. Planning for education is meticulous. For instance, prior to commencing tutorial support, staff spoke with the tutor concerned and provided them with a copy of the home's behavioural management plan. This tutorial provision assists the young person to progress well.

Young people develop social skills via a broad array of activities and hobbies. They enjoy attending air and army cadets as well as local football clubs. Young people have been helped by staff to complete confirmation classes at a local church, finish exams prior to

becoming senior cadets, and obtain work experience in a local café. Young people revel in these opportunities and develop close friendships and aspirations that develop their social skills, improve self-esteem and assist them to consider future career options.

Key work is extremely well planned and is informed by the latest research. Social story boards were recently used to remind a young person of the danger of the use of weapons and knives. Social story boards offered a clear and vivid visual prompt and reminded the young person of the dangerous consequences and reduced his interest dramatically.

Independence work is the major strength of the home. Each young person is allocated individualised independent care objectives tailored to their specific needs. Subjects are varied, relevant and include, for example, drafting emails and paying utility bills. Staff recently used a session to develop an understanding of empathy. This involved internet research and role play exercises relating to day-to-day interactions in the home to ensure understanding and as a link to building relationships.

Independence work links seamlessly with promoting a healthy living. Recent work on limiting portion size resulted in a young person gaining a healthier weight. This support improved the young person's health and self-esteem. Where appropriate, staff role model key routines, such as teeth brushing and sensitively encourage the importance of regular washing. Other young people learn the value of regularly taking their medication and move towards managing medication themselves, where assessed as appropriate.

Outcomes are excellent. All possible options are explored at the earliest possible opportunity, with the needs, wishes and feelings of young people given paramount importance. One young person has successfully moved onto semi-independence since the last inspection. Feedback on departure supports service development. Managers reviewed the care plan and listened to the feedback of the young person concerned. Following a review, staff have altered the semi-independence provision for future young people to ensure that key work fully replicates the reality of moving to a less supportive environment.

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

Behavioural management is outstanding. All negative behaviours are challenged sensitively by staff individually and, if appropriate, as a group, emphasising the effect of behaviours in the home as a community.

Incidents requiring restraint are extremely rare. Staff use their close knowledge of young people to recognise when they are struggling and take effective preventative actions, such as taking them for a walk or pre-planned relaxation techniques. Young people understand behavioural expectations and work closely with staff to identify solutions. One young person worked with staff to draft a 'sugar contract' with his key worker. This limits sugar consumption and has improved the behaviours of the young person.

Risk assessments are extremely comprehensive and show a deep understanding of the needs, wishes and feelings of young people. Young people comment on possible trigger factors for poor behaviour and how they would like staff to respond. This ensures the risk assessments effectiveness. Assessments are reviewed regularly and reflect the

changing needs and progress of young people. Assessments include insightful case recordings and assist managers in allocating staff support appropriate to respective needs.

Activities and routines are rigorously risk assessed and planned efficiently. This approach enables young people to take safe, managed risks during activities such as paint balling and the safe use of the internet. Young people now understand the risks of internet gaming with unknown strangers and switch off the internet capability on their games consoles. Alternatively, young people are able to use the map application on their smart phones to help them if they are lost.

Despite accessing a range of activities outside of the home, young people are very confident, and those who spoke with inspectors said that they feel safe. When concerns of bullying are raised, staff act quickly to liaise with the relevant professionals to safeguard young people effectively. One teacher describes staff as, 'On top of everything and always there for young people.' Staff adopt a patient and nurturing approach. Staff are creative and think 'out of the box'. For example, a young person's understanding of his daily routine is supported by the provision of an egg timer and numerous daily planners, which help to address and reduce his level of anxiety.

Young people access an extended range of specialist support. An occupational therapist is presently supporting one young person to develop fine motor skills by the use of a 'squidgy ball'. In addition, staff liaise with the child and adolescent mental health service to monitor young people's progress and support attendance.

Key workers have the knowledge and confidence to challenge difficult issues face-to-face and in groups with young people. Staff use clear, visual prompts such as body maps and issues raised in the media to discuss the issue of 'safe touching' and sexual consent with young people. Young people engage intensely and discuss issues among themselves without embarrassment.

Staff support young people in managing safe contact with their parents and relatives. Where contact is not positive, staff will offer advice and guidance to improve the quality of the contact. Young people now look forward to contact, where previously it had been a source of anxiety and distress. Staff supervise contact effectively and use sessions to develop young people's understanding of the family context to assist life story work. Positive life story work allows young people to reflect on the effect of their disability and how this impacts on difficult life histories.

Missing from home incidents have reduced to one incident in the last year. This is confirmed by local police. Close relationships with local police and a well-planned risk assessment ensured a priority response and the swift return of the young person concerned. An independent return to care interview and close staff support addressed the specific concerns of the young person involved.

Advocacy services for young people is a strength. Staff recently engaged a placing authority to consider a placement with a sibling for one young person under 'staying put' arrangements. This proposed placement would provide close sibling contact into adulthood. Independent advocacy is routinely offered to support young people in challenging care planning decisions which they may not agree with, or where a service is

not meeting their needs. Staff appropriately challenge placing authorities to ensure that young people receive specialist assessments. This ensures that additional needs, such as dyslexia, are identified so that young people receive the appropriate level of support.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home benefits from a strong and dependable management team. The registered manager has been in post for three years. She has an advanced management qualification and displays drive to develop practice. Succession planning is considered very well. The registered manager is well supported by a deputy and four seniors, all of whom have or are completing the required management qualification. Managers enjoy close relationships with young people and employ an 'open door policy'. One young person describes the registered manager as 'brilliant'. Managers speak of the achievements and progress of young people with obvious pride and pleasure.

Service development is ambitious. The home is presently seeking formal accreditation with a nationwide autistic spectrum disorder charity. Managers continue to explore new means of improving the service, such as providing individualised copies of the children's guide themed to particular interests, for example cars and trains.

Admissions are well handled. Where possible, managers seek to meet young people and conduct a full risk assessment. Excellent relationships with young people help managers to understand peer dynamics, support staff and inform positive admissions decisions. This ensures stability in the home.

Staff turnover in the home is high. Nine staff members have left the home since the last full inspection. This limits the development of the staff team. However, no detrimental effect on the welfare and progress of young people was observed during this inspection. Managers have taken steps to address this by revising conditions of employment and the existing recruitment process. Recruitment processes are improved. Interviews now include a literacy assessment, interview with young people and an induction shift if candidates are successful. Managers support staff in celebrating excellent pieces of work, such as recently giving evidence in a court case.

Despite the upheaval, staff morale remains high. Supervision and performance appraisals are regular and of high quality. Staff report an excellent level of training which is bespoke and adaptable to the changing needs of the service. Staff undertake their role with confidence and are able to link training to their care of young people.

Managers network effectively. They engage key professionals, such as local schools and police, to provide important learning materials. For example, local police provide learning materials and videos for staff and young people on the dangers posed by child sexual exploitation.

The home environment is well maintained. Accurate risk assessments and health and safety checks are conducted regularly. Young people enjoy the addition of a new artificial turf playing surface in the back garden. The home has been recently redecorated to suit the needs of young people.

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: SC423606

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Reamcare Limited

Registered provider address: 361 Ewell Road, Surbiton, Surrey KT6 7BZ

Responsible individual: Rayman Jeetoo

Registered manager: Nisha Patel

Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector

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