

1228522

Registered provider: Wood Grove (childcare) Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to offer accommodation for up to five young people. The home is registered to provide care for children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties and/or children with learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 15 to 16 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account requires improvement to be good

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be good

The effectiveness of leaders and managers requires improvement to be good

The children's home is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 10 October 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home requires improvement to be good because:

- Risk assessments are not always updated after incidents. In addition, staff do

not always follow strategies in risk assessments in order to keep young people and staff safe.

- Bullying incidents are not fully or accurately recorded. This means that professionals cannot make informed decisions about what actions are needed following incidents.
- Child sexual exploitation concerns are not always recognised by managers. As a result, the associated risks are not fully understood and shared so that effective action can be taken.
- When young people have health appointments, the outcomes are not always clarified by staff. This means that young people's health needs are not fully supported.

The children's home's strengths:

- Young people have positive relationships with staff. Members of the staff team are nurturing, and are committed to making a positive difference to young people's lives.
- Young people are engaged in hobbies and regular activities. This is having a positive impact on their health and well-being.
- Young people are encouraged and supported to attend education. When there are difficulties with the education provision, staff advocate on the young people's behalf.
- A new manager is now in post who, together with an experienced deputy manager, is committed to developing and improving the home. They are supported by a senior management team which is keen to improve services for young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/10/2017	Full	Inadequate
24/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
04/08/2016	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
<p>10: The health and well-being standard</p> <p>Requires the registered person to ensure that staff help each child to:</p> <p>achieve the health and well-being outcomes that are recorded in the child's relevant plans;</p> <p>take part in any activities, and attend any appointments, for the purpose of meeting the child's health and well-being needs. (Regulation 10 (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p> <p>In particular, with regards to asthma reviews, health investigations and establishing the outcome of appointments in respect to support that may be required.</p>	05/01/2018
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>The registered person must -</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare</p> <p>ensure the home's day to day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(i)(vi) 2(b))</p> <p>In particular, risk assessments must be updated after incidents, strategies must be followed and full information must be shared with relevant professionals.</p>	05/01/2018
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>Ensure that there is a registered person to lead and manage the</p>	05/01/2018

home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 13(2)(a))	
<p>32: Fitness of workers</p> <p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety;</p> <p>Full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1) (3)(d))</p>	05/01/2018
<p>34: Policies for the protection of children</p> <p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse and neglect. In particular, this refers to the decision of whether to suspend staff. (Regulation 34(1)(b))</p> <p>Additionally, decisions made following investigations must be clearly recorded.</p>	05/01/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person must specify the procedures to be followed and the roles and responsibilities of staff when a child is missing from care or away from the home without permission and how staff should support the child on return to the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.28)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Young people who live in this home enjoy regular hobbies and activities. The staff are consistent in their support to help young people participate in these activities. One young person regularly attends the gym and horse riding, and this has had a positive impact on her health and well-being.

Where young people are engaged in education, attendance is good. When there have been problems with young people having adequate educational opportunities available to them, the home has advocated on their behalf to ensure that young people receive a better service. One member of a virtual school team reported 'proactive and regular

communication' from the staff. When young people have finished secondary education the staff help young people to research their options and prepare for their future. However, when young people do not engage in further education or training, plans are not changed to address this. One young person was able to spend all day in bed with no intervention from staff. This means that when young people are not engaged in education or training their days are unstructured, and as such their motivation to engage is reduced.

The home has been proactive in addressing the shortfalls highlighted following the previous inspection with regards to the storage of medication. The managers ensured that there was a review of current systems, and ensured that medication was reviewed. As a result, less medication is now stored in the home. Young people are engaged with health services and attend the appointments that staff make for them. The requirement for young people to have health reviews has either been met, or appointments have been made to address the requirement. Despite this, the outcomes of appointments are not always known. For example, when medical tests have taken place there is no record of the outcome, and there has been a lack of professional curiosity to establish if the young person requires any medication, treatment or further support.

There has been some good practice in key working for one young person who displays self-harming behaviour, by a suitably skilled member of staff. Unfortunately, an opportunity to offer this work as part of a multi-agency response has been missed. Furthermore, there has been no liaison with a therapist who is also supporting this work outside of the home. This means that the young person is not getting a coordinated and planned response to meet her needs.

Relationships between staff and young people are positive. Young people report that they feel cared for, they like staff, and they enjoy spending time with them. One young person said, 'I can talk to any of them.' The staff have a good understanding of young people's needs and get involved in joint activities. For example, the young people and staff organised an event for Children in Need, involving the waxing of male staff members' legs in order to raise money for charity. The staff fully engage with young people and their plans, and this helps to ensure positive shared experiences and build relationships.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Following the last inspection, the managers have worked to improve the system to assess and record risk. The new risk assessments are clear and easy to read, and demonstrate where risk for young people has increased and decreased. However, following recent incidents at the home, risk assessments have not been updated for young people. This means that despite there being some strategies in place to keep young people safe, the risks are not identified in their plans, and the strategies to manage the risks are not recorded. This can lead to inconsistency, and ineffective action by staff. This also means that the manager of the home has been unable to test the robustness and effectiveness of the new risk assessment system.

In addition, even when risks were recorded clearly, there was an occasion when a staff member failed to follow the actions and strategies in place. This placed the young person and staff member at risk. Despite the staff member being identified and investigated by the home, there was no challenge to the member of staff about the failure to follow the risk assessment for the young person. The outcome and learning from this investigation, including the reason why this was not referred to the local authority designated officer, have also not been fully recorded. Any actions that were raised following the investigation remain outstanding.

There has been a serious bullying incident in the home. Although this has been shared with the relevant professionals, and strategies have been put in place to reduce the likelihood of further incidents, the recording of this incident is poor. There have also been further incidents of concern in the home that have not been recorded. Some information held in the home indicating further risk and concern has not been shared with the young people's social workers. This reduces the ability of social workers to make informed decisions about the ongoing suitability of placements for young people, and any action that they may need to take to ensure the safety of young people. It is also concerning that, following incidents of bullying, staff have not initiated any form of consequence for the behaviour displayed by young people. This lack of action in response to poor behaviour reduces the likelihood of young people learning from their behaviour. Furthermore, it does not reduce the likelihood of further incidents occurring.

However, some direct work has been undertaken with a young person who has been identified as a perpetrator of bullying. This work is thorough and sensitive, helping the young person to understand the impact of their actions on other people, and helping them to understand and manage their feelings and make amends for their behaviour. This is good practice, but has not been undertaken with all young people involved with incidents of bullying. This means that not only are young people receiving different care experiences at the home, but they are not benefiting from the opportunity to learn from their actions.

There are concerns that a young person is subject to child sexual exploitation. The home has reported its concerns to the relevant professionals and agencies, and appropriate action is being taken. However, despite this, there have been some further indicators of potential sexual exploitation at a time when risk was known to be high. These indicators have not been recognised by managers of the home, and as such the full range of concerns has not emerged at the earliest opportunity.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

A new manager is in post, and he has submitted his application to register with Ofsted. The manager has previously worked at the home, and is liked by the young people and has good relationships with them. The manager is supported by a deputy manager who is highly regarded by young people, staff and professionals. Together, they are keen and enthusiastic about making changes and providing a high standard of care.

The home has quickly and efficiently devised a plan of action to address previous shortcomings and improve the service. This is overseen by senior managers who are visible in the home and passionate about providing a high standard of care. They are supporting the implementation of the action plan. Robust external monitoring complements the internal monitoring of the home.

Professionals report good communication and relationships with management and staff. One social worker reported that she is regularly updated on young people, and that updated plans are shared with her.

The home is currently fully staffed, but additional staffing is also in place to reflect the current care needs of young people. A requirement of the last inspection was to ensure that checks undertaken as part of recruitment adhere to regulatory requirements and guidance. The manager has not fully satisfied this regulation when employing a new staff member. This means that young people are not benefiting from robust recruitment and selection procedures to ensure that only suitable people work at the home, and as such this requirement is repeated.

Staff who spoke to the inspector commented that they enjoy working at the home, and that they benefit from regular supervision, team meetings and training. As part of the commitment to improvement, the home has plans to further improve the quality of team meetings and ensure that mandatory training in safeguarding is revisited and supported by tailored sessions from the safeguarding lead at the home, to improve knowledge and skills.

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: 1228522

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Wood Grove (childcare) Ltd

Registered provider address: Suites 3 and 4 Stockley Park Business Centre, The Arena, Stockley Park, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB11 1AA

Responsible individual: Paul Brosnan

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector(s)

Jessica Forshaw, social care inspector
Elaine Clare, social care inspector

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