

SC066129

Registered provider: Fairport Care Services Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This service is a privately run children's home that provides care and accommodation for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 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: 30 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 good because:

- Young people who have recently moved into the home have settled in well and established good relationships with staff.
- Staff develop positive relationships with young people, which result in good outcomes for them. Young people are able to fulfil their aims of moving on from the home successfully.
- Staff promote education and regularly liaise with professionals to ensure that young people have support to access learning opportunities when not in full-time education.
- Young people learn to take responsibility for themselves and to keep themselves safe with staff support. One young person is now able to reflect and calm himself down, when previously he would become aggressive.
- Managers work positively with others, offering professional challenge when necessary and working together to resolve any concerns.
- Staff make good use of therapeutic consultations to help them to respond to the young people's needs. Family therapy work has been successful in helping one young person return to live with his family.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The home's described key working system is not always implemented in practice.
- Not all staff sign care plans and policies.
- The registered manager does not record her wider analysis of physical interventions or share these findings with external professionals to inform them of any patterns. Staff are sometimes inconsistent in their application of agreed sanctions.

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 30/03/2017 | Interim | Sustained effectiveness |
| 07/12/2016 | Full | Good |

16/03/2016

Interim

Sustained effectiveness

24/08/2015

Full

Good

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and well-being to enhance, and supplement that provided by their school through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand, and where necessary work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy diet, exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.18).

In particular, ensure the various records used by staff to record their communication and interactions with young people are regularly analysed and evaluated.

- The registered person should ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that their use is fair and the above principles as set out in 9.35 are respected ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36).

In particular, ensure that staff are consistent in applying agreed sanctions, and that the registered manager records and shares her analysis of physical interventions with relevant professionals.

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4).

In particular, all staff should ensure that they record accurately and sign care plans and policies to evidence that they have read them.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Before moving in, young people are visited by staff who spend time to get to know them. Tea visits and overnight stays help staff to assess the suitability of the placement

and for the young person to familiarise themselves with the home. Young people who live at the home are well prepared for those moving in; consequently, they are welcoming and friendly towards them. The children's guide is personalised to the individual young person. This enables them to refer to this information during the move and later.

Regular house meetings ensure that young people have a say in the daily running of the home. These meetings help young people to air grievances and help staff and young people to discuss any issues they may have and address them positively. They are effective in helping young people learn how to work as a group and increase their sense of belonging in their home. A restorative, open and honest practice is effective in helping young people to understand about their impact on others and learn socially acceptable behaviour.

A key worker is allocated when the young person has settled in and positive relationships are formed. The young person is able to have a say about who they want as their key worker. Staff encourage young people to utilise structured key work sessions, as well as more informal conversations to talk about their feelings and situations. However, in one example, a young person has not received targeted, recorded key working for a specific need. The various records completed by staff capture day- to- day dialogue and interactions with young people but currently, there is limited evaluation and analysis of these records over time. This compromises the staff's ability to review the impact of their work and it also means that young people will have less opportunity to reflect on their experience when they move on.

Staff interact positively with young people and enjoy activities and holidays with them. One staff member took a young person on holiday with his family; this enabled him to have a safe, positive time with his family, with staff available for support if there were any difficulties. A camping holiday was successful, enjoyed by young people and staff alike. Young people are encouraged to join clubs in the community, including roller-skating, boxing and sea cadets. This improves their self-confidence in social situations and helps them to develop relationships within the local community.

Staff fully support young people to see parents, relatives and other individuals who are important to them. Staff supervise visits where this is part of the young person's care plan. They ensure that the young person's well-being is the priority and help young people to understand the reasons if they are not able to see their family.

Education is prioritised and tailored to young people's individual needs. Young people either attend mainstream school or receive in-house tutoring, supported by staff. All young people make good progress and engage with the services offered. Staff maintain positive relationships and communication with education providers; this results in young people's educational needs being well met.

Staff aim to work therapeutically with young people; they seek to understand young people's responses and help them to manage their emotions more effectively. One young person is now able to return to live with his family due to the successful intensive

family support offered. Another young person has reduced his incidences of aggression. He is more able to talk about his feelings and manage them better. A reward system helps him to remain motivated to change his behaviour. However, there have been circumstances when staff have not adhered to the therapeutic ethos of the home as stated in the statement of purpose. This has meant that a young person became confused about the staff's responses to him. The registered manager and responsible individual responded appropriately and addressed this in a debrief session, at team meetings and in response to a complaint made by the young person.

The home has a family feel and is in the process of being refurbished. The plans for changes in the design of the home incorporate an additional living space where young people can relax. This will further enable them to have individual quiet time with staff when needed.

Young people are encouraged to learn independence skills in preparation for when they leave the home. Chores after meals are part of the routine for all young people. Young people do their own washing and are encouraged to learn to cook meals and follow a healthy diet. One young person travels to school by public transport in preparation for life when he leaves this home.

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

Young people are kept safe by a staff team that demonstrates a good knowledge of safeguarding practice. For example, one young person is at high risk of exploitation; she has made positive relationships with staff and has expressed her aim to reduce risky behaviours. Staff are trained to recognise and prevent these behaviours and report any concerns if they should occur. Safeguarding training, including in child sexual exploitation and radicalisation, is refreshed on an annual basis.

Young people have good outcomes and missing from home episodes have significantly reduced. However, on the rare occasion they do go missing staff follow them and do their utmost to locate them. They ensure that young people are spoken to by professionals on their return so that they can work with them in regard to any issues that led them to go missing. Generally, young people are only missing for a short amount of time before they return.

Individualised risk assessments identify the risks related to young people. These are updated when a new incident occurs and are read and signed by staff to ensure that they follow any change in practice. For example, following a young person's dangerous behaviour staff undertake a comprehensive risk assessment prior to him travelling in the car. This helps to ensure the safety of all.

Staff are proactive in supporting young people to manage their behaviour. There are clear plans that detail known triggers and strategies that staff can use to support young people. Staff are trained in the home's preferred behaviour management approach. Young people are encouraged to express their views and the registered manager responds to any complaints arising out of the use of interventions. The registered

manager evaluates any physical interventions and ensures that the approach is proportionate. The registered manager has a good awareness of the trends and effectiveness of physical interventions; however, these are not recorded. Consequently, this information is not shared with external professionals, thereby reducing their ability to review the effectiveness of current strategies and to consider new preventive methods. Not all staff consistently apply agreed sanctions, which reduces the effectiveness of these in their efforts to change negative behaviours.

Parents and professionals value the service and the staff's ability to keep the young people safe. Parents report that staff keep their young people safe. A social worker reported that, 'Staff help the young person to reflect; they have turned his behaviour around; no other placement has done that.'

Staff have a good knowledge of e-safety. The home has software that helps to protect young people and the staff provide education about the risks. Staff ensure that young people are supervised and time on computers is limited. The positioning of the computer in a more public space gives an additional safeguard. Young people are encouraged to earn the trust of staff to be able to use electronic devices.

Young people are able to lock their bedroom doors to keep their personal belongings safe and retain privacy. They are consulted in regards to reviews of any use of door alarms fitted to their bedroom doors. These are individually risk-assessed and reviewed in line with the statement of purpose. Staff removed one young person's door alarm at his request in recognition of his increased maturity.

A medication error occurred during the inspection. The registered manager and staff responded by following the medication policy as soon as this was identified. One senior member of staff had not signed the medication policy to confirm that she had read it.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is well qualified and experienced to run the home. An established and committed senior staff team supports the registered manager and staff to ensure positive outcomes for young people.

New staff recruitment is subject to a thorough vetting procedure. The induction programme ensures that the staff have the necessary information and training for their roles. Experienced staff provide mentoring to help new staff to develop the necessary skills. This, along with increased levels of supervision during the probationary period, ensures that only competent staff care for the young people.

Team meetings take place regularly and include business meetings and more therapeutically based, child-focused meetings. Staff are supported through regular individual supervision and debriefs of specific incidents, particularly when incidents have included high-risk situations; they describe the process as helpful. Supervisions are evaluative, informative and include reflection on how the role affects staff emotionally. They are able to have protected time to discuss any issues they may have in a safe

environment. Staff spoken to were very positive about the support they receive from the registered manager.

Good professional relationships between the home and partner agencies result in real partnership working. A social worker said, 'They are really good at keeping me up to date in regards to any incidents that occur,' and another social worker reported, 'They are brilliant; communication is good; I can't fault them.'

There is very good monitoring of young people's care plans by the managers. This means that each young person's needs are recorded and all members of staff are aware of any changes of circumstances to their care plans. However, not all staff consistently sign the care plans to evidence that they have read them.

The registered manager is able to challenge the local authority plan if she feels that this is not child-focused. One young person, who has left the home, was not fully involved in the decision-making process. The young person and staff had built up a positive attachment, which the local authority care plan initially did not reflect. The registered manager advocated for the young person to have a slower transition, which was agreed. The plan for the young person to move to live with foster carers included outreach work by staff to address the young person's attachment issues while supporting the foster placement.

The staff encourage young people to attend their care plan reviews. If they can only manage part of their review, staff ensure that their wishes and feelings are heard. An independent reviewing officer reported, 'They advocated for the young person in his absence and presented as creative and proactive in how they planned to meet the young person's needs.'

The registered manager uses internal and external monitoring processes to inform her understanding of the service. She has a good understanding of the young people's needs and staff performance. She recognises areas that need improvement, learns from her evaluations of the service and works effectively to provide positive experiences and outcomes for 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: SC066129

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Fairport Care Services Ltd

Registered provider address: Bank Chambers, 1 Central Avenue, Sittingbourne ME10 4AE

Responsible individual: Philip Adams

Registered manager: Vanessa Dalton

Inspector

Suzy Lemmy, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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