

1232650

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Limited

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and managed by a sole provider. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children or young people who have emotional and/or behaviour difficulties.

Inspection date: 5 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: Good

Date of last inspection: 15 August 2017

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

This inspection

The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, the manager has addressed the previous requirements and recommendations. The manager has applied to be the registered manager and this is following due process. His presence at the home over several months has strengthened the management arrangements, with an external consultant continuing to help with his professional development.

One young person has moved into the home following a planned introduction. A good-quality assessment, looking at the suitability of the new resident with the existing young person, has resulted in limited disruption. The young person has settled well and both young people live together in harmony. They continue to have good experiences and make progress in their lives.

The new, child-centred placement plans make sure the young person's voice is present in their planning. This extends to young people having more 'My Chats' and informal discussions with staff, where young people's views are clearly considered about the running of the home. This has included young people being involved in ideas for the décor, and making the home look more modern and bright, particularly their personalised bedrooms.

Young people benefit from consistency of carers, with some staff having worked at the home since young people moved in. This offers stability and helps young people build positive relationships with staff. As a result, young people seek support from staff and attend medical appointments to have their health needs addressed. Young people enjoy going out with staff, with specialist activities such as a driving experience used as an incentive to encourage one young person to meet their targets.

Education attendance is mixed. One young person is still not fully engaged in further education or has found employment or training, whereas another has a weekly education timetable and has aspirations for their future employment. Currently, staff do not offer an independent living programme to help inform the placing authority where young people could live as adults and the support that they will need. Information about their ability to learn self-help and daily living skills therefore remains unknown.

Behaviour management has improved. The manager has implemented a contract of expectations for young people, which has resulted in a more consistent approach by staff when using consequences. The improved behaviour management plans, together with structured and informal key-working sessions, have led to an improvement in young people's behaviour and attitudes. Incidents of criminal damage at the home have decreased. Monitoring by staff has revealed that a young person has reduced their substance misuse.

Episodes of young people going missing from the home do occur, but they remain infrequent. The manager and staff are more proactive when engaging with the placing authority and police, which provides a coordinated approach to young people who go missing from the home. This is important for those who are at increased risk of offending behaviour or exploitation when absent. The improved multi-agency working contributes to the promotion of young people's welfare and safety. A professional said, 'Staff are prompt in reporting. They are doing checks and all they should be doing to find the young people, reporting after they have exhausted all options themselves.'

The manager and staff appropriately advise the regulator of any notifiable incidents. However, they have not always provided an update. This does not offer full information about the outcome of any action taken.

The independent visitor's monthly monitoring reports continue to provide rigorous scrutiny of how well the staff team safeguards young people. This action helps to maintain high standards of care for young people, with the manager quickly addressing any identified shortfalls.

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| 15/08/2017 | Full | Good |
| 02/05/2017 | Full | Inadequate |
| 17/01/2017 | Full | Inadequate |

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

Recommendations

- The home's record of the event must include a description of the action taken and the outcome of any resulting investigation. Following a notifiable event under regulation 40 the home should contact the placing authority to discuss the need for further action. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.14) Specifically, to ensure that notification updates are provided to inform the regulator of what action has been taken by staff.
- Staff must help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. This includes supporting the child to develop emotional and mental resilience to cope without the home's support and, where the child is moving to live independently, practical skills such as cooking, housework, budgeting and personal self-care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27) Specifically, to undertake and document independence living work with young people to prepare them for leaving the home.

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.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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: 1232650

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 7 Tenter Lane, Warmsworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 9PP

Responsible individual: Thomas Worthington

Registered manager: Vacant

Inspector

Tina Ruffles, social care inspector

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