

# 1250196

Registered provider: First 4 Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two children or young people who have learning disabilities and emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a private company.

**Inspection dates:** 6 to 7 March 2018

**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 **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** this is the home's first inspection

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** not applicable

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## **Key findings from this inspection**

This children's home is good because:

- One young person has recently been admitted to the home. Transitions to the home are highly individualised; effective planning ensured the young person was fully supported during this significant change in her life.
- The young people living at the home benefit from receiving stability and good-quality care from a committed staff team, enabling the development of positive and secure attachments.
- The staff have a good understanding of safeguarding procedures. Appropriate staffing ratios and supervision support the young people and enable the delivery of safe care.
- The young person currently in placement is engaging well in further education and continuity in her education is being maintained.
- Staff encourage young people to make positive choices that help extend their skills and learning opportunities. A range of activities is being explored that promotes emotional well-being and enhances life experiences.
- The manager promotes and facilitates staff development through a range of training opportunities. The staff feel well supported by the manager. They receive regular supervision.
- The manager recognises the strengths and areas for development of this service.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The submission of regulation 44 reports undertaken by the independent visitor has not been regular and timely. The manager has not submitted a quality of care review under regulation 45 since the home was registered. The newly appointed manager needs to ensure that these requirements are met in accordance with the regulations.

## **Recent inspection history**

This is the home's first inspection.

## 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, the 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>The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.</p> <p>The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—</p> <p>children are effectively safeguarded; and</p> <p>the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being.</p> <p>The independent person must provide a copy of the independent person's report to—</p> <p>HMCI. (Regulation 44)</p>	30/03/2018
<p>The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ("a quality of care review") at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children.</p> <p>After completing a quality of care review, the registered person must produce a written report about the quality of care review and the actions which the registered person intends to take as a result of the quality of care review ("the quality of care review report").</p> <p>The registered person must—</p> <p>supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is</p>	30/03/2018

completed; and

make a copy of the quality of care review report available on request to a placing authority, if the placing authority is not the parent of a child accommodated in the home.

The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(1), (2), (3), (4) and (5))

## Recommendations

- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children’s homes. All children’s case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home. Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. Staff should be familiar with the home’s policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraphs 14.3 and 14.4)  
In particular, ensure that relevant information is recorded in the daily logbook and information pertaining to a child is recorded and accessible to staff.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since registration, there has only been one young person admitted to the home. She is currently being supported towards independence. Leaving her previous care home was a very traumatic experience. However, due to sensitive planning and a highly individualised approach, the transition of this young person was managed well. The anticipated anxieties were eased through a well-coordinated introduction that ensured the young person’s views were clearly represented and acted upon. In conversation, [Name] said: ‘I was unhappy about leaving my previous care home and it has taken me a while to settle down. The staff have made me feel welcome; they are really nice and have made me feel safe and secure.’

The manager and staff are proactive in their communication, and are committed to supporting young people’s education. For one young person, this has ensured that, despite moving to a different area, continuity in her education has been maintained. Pre-existing peer friendships have been preserved and the young person continues to enjoy links in the area she has known for a significant period in her life. Social inclusion through participation in local activities is seen as important for the young person. Plans are in place for the young person to join the youth council and she has already signed

up for a dog-walking group.

Staff are experienced in assessing and understanding young people's needs, anxieties and behaviours. This is underpinned by well-documented, child-centred placement, care and behaviour management plans that clearly incorporate the views of the young people. This contributes to young people settling well and developing relationships with staff based on trust. As one member of staff commented: 'I have a really good rapport with [Name] and since she was placed she has become more confident and more relaxed and able to share her thoughts and feelings with me.'

Young people enjoy good health despite their disabilities. They attend all routine medical appointments and all controlled medication is stored and administered safely. To support individuals' emotional well-being, staff seek appropriate therapy for them. The manager has been proactive in liaising with the local child and adolescent mental health service to ensure that there is no gap in therapeutic support for one young person. Staff promote activities to improve young people's physical health and young people are actively involved in menu planning. In getting to know the young people, staff use social stories and 'my chats' that young people can record and look back on through their life story books.

The home has a cheerful and homely atmosphere. One young person has been able to personalise her bedroom with new curtains and matching bedding, and has a collection of memorabilia that decorates her room. The communal areas of the home would benefit from having a more personal touch with pictures and photographs of the young people.

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

Robust and up-to-date risk management plans help staff to understand and manage young people's individual risks. The manager has ensured that any new admissions to the home will be appropriately matched through comprehensive impact risk assessments. The manager commented: 'I have made a decision not to admit another young person until [Name] is really settled and is moving in the right direction towards progressing her independence skills.' With this in mind, balancing the young person's need for increasing independence with appropriate levels of supervision is managed well.

There are no actual concerns around sexual exploitation, drug and alcohol misuse and missing from care; appropriate safeguarding procedures, tailored to the plan in place for the young person, underpin all aspects of staff practice. The manager has ensured that staff receive relevant training in these areas, so that they have the skills to manage behaviours associated with risk. Staff are confident in their knowledge of following procedures to safeguard young people. One young person's vulnerabilities make her at risk of being exploited. Staff are mindful of this and one member of staff said: 'Every situation is very different. [Name] is very vulnerable to being exploited and at this stage she is on a one-to-one staffing ratio, and is supervised in the community and on social media. It's going to be a very small-steps approach.'

Recruitment and vetting procedures for new staff are good. This ensures that young people are cared for by adults who pose no risk.

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

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced to undertake this role and has been a registered manager for over two years in another home within the same company. The manager is in the process of being registered with Ofsted and will continue managing both homes, which are in close proximity to each other. The home is adequately staffed by a skilled and experienced staff team and retention of staff is good, providing the young people with continuity and stability of care.

The manager has extensive knowledge of the local community and the resources available. She knows the immediate neighbourhood very well. She has built and maintained good relationships with neighbours and other key professionals and services. There is a shared responsibility and openness within the staff team that is underpinned by sound management that facilitates effective communication around practice. Staff retention is good and some staff have worked for the company since the home opened.

Team meetings and supervision are undertaken regularly, and are reflective and focused on young people's needs, progress and experiences. In addition, staff development and training take place on an ongoing basis.. As a member of staff commented: 'We are a cohesive staff team, the manager is brilliant, she always keeps in touch when she is not around and is very hands-on and approachable.' The manager is adept at managing two homes. She is accessible and well-organised, and is respected by her staff team. There have been some oversights in the practice of recording information in the daily logbook. The manager has taken action to ensure that the sharing of information is recorded and appropriately shared with staff. A recommendation with regard to this has been made at this inspection.

The manager and staff actively and regularly monitor the quality of care provided; internal monitoring forms have recently been revised to include all aspects of service delivery. There have been and continue to be shortfalls in external monitoring processes and in meeting regulatory requirements. The independent visitor's reports have not been submitted regularly and within the correct timescales and the manager's quality of care reviews have not been completed since registration. The manager acknowledges this, and has already taken steps to resolve this deficit. The manager is dedicated to making sure that young people's needs are met, and is fully aware of the strengths and areas for development of this service. In this regard, a requirement has been made at this inspection.

## **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:** 1250196

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** First 4 Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** 313 Goodison Boulevard, Doncaster DN4 6TP

**Responsible individual:** Carolann Dodds

**Registered manager:** Post vacant

## Inspector

Cath Sikakana: social care inspector



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