

1254316

Registered provider: Rite Directions

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home may provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who have learning difficulties.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 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: 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:

- The young people live in a homely environment with staff who are committed to them and provide them with stability, nurturing and warmth.
- The young people are responding well to the positive environment.
- The staff understand the needs of the young people and are able to respond to these effectively and sensitively.
- Young people are protected from harm. They do not routinely go missing from the home, and clear individual protocols are on the young people's files to protect them in the event that this happens.
- The young people's health needs are responded to effectively, and they are supported to manage any health-related anxieties.

Recent inspection history

This is a newly registered home and this is the 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, 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>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff-</p> <p>if the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5(c))</p>	01/06/2018
<p>The children's views, wishes and feelings standard is that children receive care from staff who develop positive relationships with them; engage with them; and take their views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that each child is given appropriate advocacy support (Regulation 7(1), (2)(b)(iii))</p>	01/06/2018
<p>The enjoyment and achievement standard is that children take part in and benefit from a variety of activities that meet their needs and develop and reflect their creative, cultural, intellectual, physical and social interests and skills. (Regulation 9(1))</p>	01/06/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff 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. (Regulation 12(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>This is with particular regard to ensuring that risk assessments contain full information about previous and ongoing allegations or investigations of abuse.</p>	01/06/2018
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers</p>	01/07/2018

the matters listed in Schedule 1.	
Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(1), (5))	
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. (Regulation 44(1))	01/06/2018
The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purpose of the children's home at least once in each calendar year taking into account the requirement in Regulation 12(2)(c) (the protection of children standard). (Regulation 46(1))	01/06/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person must demonstrate every effort to achieve continuity of staffing so that children's attachments are not overly disrupted. ('Guide to the children's home standards', page 51, paragraph 10.1)

Specifically, staff need to undertake the training required for their role.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young people enjoy living in a well-maintained terraced property that is close to local amenities and services. The exterior of the property looks the same as its neighbours. This means that the young people who do not like being viewed as 'in care' are protected from any obvious indicators that they live in a children's home.

A relaxed family atmosphere is evident in the home. No areas are out of bounds, and the young people are encouraged to be involved in the daily activities that constitute family life. The young people have their own bedrooms, which gives them the opportunity to enjoy personal space. There are a number of shared rooms which the young people are encouraged to spend time in. This gives them the opportunity to develop their relationships with each other and staff members. In some of the shared areas there is a lack of personalisation. Such personalisation can only benefit the environment for the young people and, if done well, increase their sense of belonging.

The impact of a new young person moving into the home is considered in consultation with the young people already living in the home. Anxieties about the impact of new people moving in are appreciated, and reassurance and support are provided through key working and daily practice. Differences in developmental stage and cognitive functioning are negated by the good matching process. The young people socialise and play well together. They demonstrate an understanding of and tolerance towards others which they will take forward with them throughout their lives.

The young people have particular members of staff whom they have better relationships with. During the inspection, this knowledge of the young people's preference was effectively applied to help a young person to overcome his anxieties about going for medical treatment. The flexibility of the staff team to accommodate the appointments for the young person demonstrated its commitment to meeting his needs. The young people are therefore able to have confidence that when they need to address difficult situations they will have the best support that is available and that works for them.

Tensions in relationships between the young people and staff members are identified. Work is undertaken to minimise these tensions and improve the relationships. The young people learn what is and is not acceptable behaviour, that relationships can be repaired and that there are different ways of dealing with feelings of anger and/or distress.

The young people who have chronic health needs are supported to meet these. Appointments out of county remain necessary, but there is consultation with local health professionals. A health professional working with children looked after confirmed that staff have engaged well with her, and all young people are registered locally to receive service for all health-related matters. This ensures that there is no delay in meeting health needs.

Social activities are encouraged and, for one young person, interests provide a positive

distraction to negative feelings or behaviours. The staff encourage and support the young people to step outside their comfort zones to try new things. As a consequence, the young people experience a sense of achievement and increase their long-term socialisation skills, sense of adventure and understanding of safe risk-taking.

There is no male member of staff to support the young people, when appropriate, to attend a local mosque. This has impacted on young people's opportunity to pursue their cultural individuality. The home's manager has been in touch with the mosque regarding support for this, but so far has had no response.

Where young people are in education, there is a notable improvement in attendance and progress. The staff team has been proactive in identifying potential schools for young people not in education. Delay in the local authority providing the necessary information and the manager's lack of escalation when this matter remained unresolved mean that not all the young people are receiving the education that is expected.

The young people's views are sought and acted upon in daily matters in the home. Activities are identified, and the young people are given opportunities to make choices about what they want to do. An independent advocate is available for one young person, but this remains an area of unmet need for another. The lack of an independent advocate for the young people who are estranged from their families and who live some distance from home means that their independent voice is not heard. For the young people who have limited communication skills and cognitive functioning, the impact is compounded.

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

The young people are provided with consistent boundaries by staff, whom they are able to talk to and share concerns with. The staff team uses restorative practice to reinforce positive behaviours so that sanctions are not used. There have been no restraints. This gives young people the confidence that the staff have the skills to keep them safe without having to resort to physical intervention. One young person is reported by the social worker to be showing positive changes in behaviours. The young people learn that resolutions can be reached calmly, without physicality. The consistency of such an approach will help the young people to develop appropriate strategies for managing difficult situations in their own lives.

Care plans and individual crisis management plans are kept up to date, and are reviewed by the manager. The staff team understands the young people and how to respond to them in times of crisis. When local authority/police investigations have been undertaken in respect of the young people, it is not easy to see or understand how the decisions have been reached. The lack of recorded rationale behind decision-making means that the young people's records about these events are vague. It also means that the young people's risk assessments for these matters lack depth. Any gaps in fully identifying the needs of the young people limit the effectiveness of the safeguarding measures that are in place.

The young people do not routinely go missing from this home, but staff are aware of the

steps to take in the event that this occurs. There are no incidents of bullying within the home. There is mutual respect growing between the staff team and the young people already. When relevant, the young people make sure that the staff team knows where they are and that they are safe. This allows the young people to develop independence and take age-appropriate and managed risks.

Staff are aware of the mechanisms for whistleblowing and whom to raise their concerns with. Staff demonstrated their safeguarding knowledge and were able to explain the steps that they would take to ensure that the young people remain safe and well. For the young people, this means that timely and effective safeguarding measures will be taken and that their safety in the home is prioritised.

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

This is a newly registered children's home. The manager is still recruiting to a number of vacancies. There are enough staff members to care effectively for the young people currently living in the home. One young person shared anxieties with the staff about the impact on him when a second young person was due to move in. While he was supported and prepared for the new admission and reassured that there were enough staff to care for both of them, this demonstrates how the young people can worry about what it will mean to them when someone new arrives.

The staff are fully supported by the manager and deputy manager in meeting the needs of the young people. Supervision is regular and assists the staff in understanding their role and keeping the young people in focus. Rotas show that each shift has at least one experienced member of staff. On the one occasion when this was not possible, the management team was available for support, if needed. Recruitment practice is safe and appropriate. All of the care staff members have been suitably vetted. Many are new to children's residential care, although they have skills from other professions and experiences to inform their care of the young people.

Mandatory training has been provided to the staff team. The care staff are not qualified, although all are enrolled to undertake the required learning and gain the necessary qualification for their role. The support provided through supervision is ensuring that the lack of qualifications does not affect the capacity of the staff to provide good care to the young people.

It is acknowledged by the management team that the young people are not actively pursuing religious and cultural traditions at this time. One young person has stated that he does not wish to go to prayers or to engage in them at home. However, this position has not been appreciated in the context of the significant loss and changes in this young person's life and how these events may have impacted on his decision-making. It has to be noted that, in time of distress, the young person has improvised with items in the home to be able to pray. Limited information and practical provision from a local authority has meant that opportunities to follow cultural practice have not been prioritised.

Visits undertaken by the independent person have produced evaluative reports, but

these have not been provided regularly to Ofsted. The statement of purpose does not contain the necessary information, as detailed in schedule 1. The locality assessment has not been updated in line with the timescales referred to in the regulations.

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 difference 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: 1254316

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Rite Directions

Registered provider address: Tan Y Marian, Constitution Hill, Penmaenmawr,
Gwynedd, Wales LL34 6BA

Responsible individual: Daniel Macmillan

Registered manager: Karen Danby

Inspectors

Angela Norrie, social care inspector

Debbie Foster, social care inspector

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