

# 1250915

Registered provider: Meadows Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This is one of a number of children's homes operated by a private company. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 8 to 9 August 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 **good**

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

**Date of last inspection:** 14 February 2018

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** declined in effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/02/2018	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
21/11/2017	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
The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children's home. (Regulation 23(1))	28/09/2018

### Recommendations

- Both the arrangements for contact and any contact details must be included in the placement plan and agreed between the registered person and the child's placing authority and updated regularly. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.15)

Specifically, to ensure that all staff work in accordance with agreed contact plans.

## Inspection judgements

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

Young people make good progress across most aspects of their welfare, including physical, social, emotional and behavioural development, taking into account their individual starting points. There is evidence of change and improvement in the lives of young people. One young person commented, 'When I first arrived, I was angry, sad, lonely and unhappy. Staff have helped me change and I feel happier because of the support they have given me. It feels like a home. Nothing could be better where I live. It is impeccable.'

Young people enjoy good relationships with staff, and benefit from continuity of care which provides them with consistency and stability in their lives. Where there are barriers to positive outcomes, staff actively seek to challenge and work in partnership with other agencies to overcome them.

Feedback from professionals is consistently positive. Comments include:

- 'This has been a wonderful placement for [young person's name]. She is extremely

complex, but staff understand her well and I have 100% confidence in their ability. The care she receives is excellent.'

■ 'I couldn't be happier with this placement. I am amazed with the progress [young person's name] has made. It's better than expected. He is accepting of the care he receives and is responding to it. Initially, he was counting down the days to come back to his home area, but now he wants to stay where he is. This tells me that he is really happy there.'

Prior to living at the home, most of the young people had a history of very poor school attendance and a negative attitude towards learning. Staff highly value education and have helped young people to overcome barriers to learning. As a result, all young people regularly attend school, are making progress and are enthusiastic about their learning.

Outside of school, young people engage in a range of age-appropriate social activities. For example, attending local youth groups and sports facilities. This affords the young people the opportunity to make friends in the area, while enjoying hobbies and interests that enable them to develop confidence and self-esteem.

Staff continue to have strong links with the organisation's therapeutic service. This ensures that young people receive support for their emotional, social and psychological development. Staff receive regular training in the use of specific therapeutic models of care. The combination of these support systems has proved to be successful in helping young people to reduce negative behaviours.

Contact between young people and their families is organised from the point of admission and continually assessed as the placement progresses. Staff promote these links and understand the importance of maintaining positive family relationships. However, on at least one occasion, staff have not followed agreed contact arrangements. This resulted in some disruption for the young person.

Young people have made good progress with their independence skills. They are taking greater levels of responsibility as they move towards adulthood. Staff are helping young people to acquire emotional and practical skills through structured programmes where they can practice life skills. As a result, young people have matured and are more prepared for the demands of adult life.

The rural location of the home provides a tranquil environment where young people can relax and feel safe. There is a homely and inviting feel and the atmosphere is no different from that of a family environment.

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

The registered manager ensures that the whole staff team understands the importance of safeguarding young people and the need for vigilance. When concerns have arisen, the registered manager has responded to these quickly and effectively. The registered manager places a great emphasis on forming strong partnership working with the local

authority, the police and other agencies. This ensures that safeguarding arrangements stay rigorous and effective to protect vulnerable young people.

Staff know the young people well and recognise the impact of young people's early-life experiences on their behaviour. They work hard to provide a secure and reliable base from which young people can make progress in addressing what is difficult for them.

This staff team continues to de-escalate some extremely challenging behaviours. The staff team members continue to grow in competence and confidence and use their behaviour management training to good effect. They deploy de-escalation techniques tailored for each young person and are confident in conflict management and resolution. As a result, physical intervention is always the last resort, and when it is used, it is the minimum required to keep young people safe from harm.

There have only been limited occasions when young people have gone missing from the home. Records demonstrate that when young people have left the home without permission, staff respond quickly and make efforts to locate them and ensure their safe return.

A serious issue involving medication has been fully investigated and resolved. The manager has taken quick action to address the shortfall and has implemented new systems to ensure that medication processes are in line with protocol. That said, a requirement has been raised to ensure that safe medication processes are fully embedded in staff practice.

The recruitment of staff is sufficiently robust. The manager follows agreed procedures to ensure the thorough scrutiny of applicants prior to their employment in the home. This helps to prevent unsuitable people from being able to work with young people.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced, providing the home with visible leadership which promotes good quality of care and positive experiences for young people. He maintains a thorough oversight of care practices and has an excellent understanding of the individual needs of the young people living at the home. Professionals speak highly of the manager and feel that his competence is a key strength of the home.

All staff spoken with during the inspection confirmed that they feel well supported in their roles. Records demonstrate that they receive regular supervision and an annual appraisal. All staff in this home can discuss their practice, identify their development needs and demonstrate a sound knowledge of the young people's likes, dislikes, needs and vulnerabilities.

Despite some changes to the staff team since the previous inspection, the core team members are experienced, motivated and child-centred. Through challenging times, staff remain in good humour and this has a positive effect on young people. Staff are

supportive of the registered manager and invest into the culture, ethos and working practices developed in the home.

The training and development of staff is good. Staff confirm that their training is useful and informative and supports them to meet the specific needs of the young people.

The registered manager maintains highly effective partnerships with the police, schools, social workers and other professional agencies to ensure that young people benefit from the best possible help and all-round support. Concerns are escalated appropriately and the registered manager challenges decisions if he believes these are not in the best interests of young people.

Effective monitoring systems help to develop the service. The registered manager makes good use of evaluative tools to assess areas of good practice and areas of need. The independent monthly visits are sufficiently detailed and provide the manager with an overview of the quality of care and protection in the home. The registered manager acts to address any concerns raised and does so in a timely manner.

## **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:** 1250915

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

**Registered provider:** Meadows Care Limited

**Registered provider address:** Meadows Care Limited, Egerton House, Wardle Road, Rochdale OL12 9EN

**Responsible individual:** Karen Brandon

**Registered manager:** Lee Matthews

## Inspector

Ceri Evans: social care inspector

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