

1227330

Registered provider: Positive Outcomes Childcare Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately operated, three-bedded home looks after young people aged nine to 17 who may display a range of emotional, social and/or behavioural difficulties. Ofsted registered the manager for this service in 2016, and he is suitably qualified.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 July 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	inadequate
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	inadequate
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	inadequate
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There are serious and/or widespread failures that mean children and young people are not protected or their welfare is not promoted or safeguarded.

Date of last inspection: 23 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/05/2017	Full	Good
24/10/2016	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
<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.</p> <p>(Regulation 5(c))</p>	10/09/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p> <p>that staff–</p> <p>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;</p> <p>have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1), (2)(a)(i)(iii))</p>	10/09/2018
<p>The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure–</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(1), (2)(d))</p>	10/09/2018

<p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that–</p> <p>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to–</p> <p>ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b), (2)(c))</p>	<p>10/09/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1;</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16(1), (3)(a)(b))</p>	<p>10/09/2018</p>
<p>Ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development and receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(a)(b))</p> <p>This is with regard to staff completing necessary training, and the support provided to casual staff.</p>	<p>10/09/2018</p>
<p>Subject to paragraph (6), the registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children.</p> <p>In particular, the procedure must provide that no person who is the subject of a complaint takes any part in its consideration or investigation, except at the informal resolution stage if the registered person considers it appropriate.</p> <p>The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39(3))</p>	<p>10/09/2018</p>

<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>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 completed. (Regulation 45(1), (3), (4)(a))</p>	<p>10/09/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises used for the purposes 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). When conducting the review, the registered person must consult, and take into account the views of, each relevant person. (Regulation 46(1), (2))</p>	<p>10/09/2018</p>

Recommendations

- Ensure that when a child returns to the home after being missing from care or away from the home without permission, the responsible local authority provides an opportunity for the child to have an independent return home interview. Homes should take account of information provided by such interviews when assessing risks and putting arrangements in place to protect each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.30)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: inadequate

Since the last inspection, the service has admitted young people with needs that it cannot meet. Challenging and disruptive behaviour by some young people has been unsettling for other residents and problematic for staff to manage. This has contributed to young people's progress being hindered and their experiences being of a poor quality.

Young people often arrive with significant mental health needs or drug dependencies. Although staff liaise with other professionals who can provide specialist support, some young people refuse to engage with this. Staff lack the skills and knowledge to provide young people with the levels of help and support that they need. As a result, some young people continue to engage in risky behaviour such as going missing, substance misuse and self-harming behaviour.

Not all young people benefit from placement stability. Four young people's placements have ended sooner than expected, because staff could not meet their needs safely and effectively.

Despite the challenges detailed above, young people enjoy some positive experiences. All of the children are given a range of opportunities to enjoy themselves and to become physically fit. For example, one young person attends the gym regularly, and this provides him with a valuable routine and new-found ambitions.

Despite robust efforts by staff to ensure that all young people attend school regularly, this has been successful only in some cases. Staff keep the effectiveness of young people's education under review with other professionals, and alter their plans accordingly.

One young person, who has lived at the home for over a year, has made some good progress. He has developed some positive relationships with staff, enjoys spending time with his friends and has learned to manage his emotions and behaviour more appropriately.

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

Managers and staff do not adequately assess and manage risk. This significant shortfall has exposed young people to significant harm. For example, despite known risks and vulnerabilities, managers and staff allowed a young person to go out on free time unaccompanied by staff. This resulted in two significant incidents, one involving an alleged serious assault and another whereby the young person put themselves and others in grave danger on a nearby railway track.

The manager and the police are aware that local drug dealers have targeted the young people living in the home. For young people who have a history of substance misuse,

this means that the level of risk to them has been raised, and this has not been well managed or minimised by staff in the home. Despite this, and the knowledge that the locality has an existing drugs problem, the home's manager has failed to conduct and update an accurate locality assessment. This means that the ability to conduct effective assessments of risk to inform decision-making prior to admitting new young people is severely compromised.

The manager's review of how safe the physical environment is has failed to identify some potentially dangerous issues. For example, one bedroom has no restrictors on the windows, although company practice is to have them on all bedroom windows. A child recently left the property through a bedroom window after tampering with the restrictors that were in place. Furthermore, the backdoor is jammed, which is an obstruction on a potential emergency escape route. The key safe is not secure, which increases the risk of unauthorised individuals gaining access to the medication cabinet and other important items.

Some young people go missing from the home regularly. When they return, an independent person contacts the young people to talk to them about why they went missing and what happened while they were away from the home. The manager does not seek this crucial information and use it to best effect. It is not used to inform risk assessments and to better protect young people.

One young person, who is new to the home, is at significant risk of going missing. This young person has on file a signed agreement allowing the use of a bedroom door alarm. Potentially, this is a useful safeguarding measure which supplements other strategies in place. However, no bedroom door alarm is in use. This means that although managers identify protective measures they do not implement them, and this does not adequately protect young people's welfare and safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: inadequate

The manager does not provide strong and effective leadership, and this undermines the quality of care provided to young people.

The manager has addressed the shortfalls in staff training found during the last inspection. Most staff have now received training on the topics of equality and diversity, radicalisation and e-safety. However, new shortfalls have arisen. Staff do not receive training to support young people who have mental health difficulties. Records do not support the manager's assertion that all staff have completed the necessary drug awareness training. Consequently, staff do not have the specific skills and knowledge to provide young people with the help and support that they need.

One member of staff has not achieved the necessary level of professional qualification within the required timescale. Furthermore, in discussion with the inspector, the manager showed a lack of understanding about the timeframes for staff to achieve this qualification. This lack of knowledge is of concern, and means that the manager is unable to provide comprehensive oversight of staff training and ensure that staff

development is progressing in a timely way. The impact is that, having admitted young people with significant psychiatric needs and drug dependency, the staff are unable to meet their needs and provide the quality of care that they require.

The last inspection found that there were delays in obtaining key documents from placing authorities, and the same shortfall still applies. The manager fails to escalate this and other concerns, such as not receiving the outcome of return-home interviews and clarification on whether actions arising from care planning meetings have been progressed. The failure to escalate concerns to try to hold others to account means that the manager does not advocate for children effectively. As a result, the arrangements for young people's care are not as thorough and well coordinated as necessary.

The registered manager and registered provider do not ensure that the statement of purpose, which describes the service, is adhered to or that it covers the issues required by regulation. Information relating to the ethos of the home, monitoring and surveillance and staffing is missing or inaccurate. This means that social workers and other readers do not have a full and accurate picture of the service. Also, the manager has not sent the latest version of the statement of purpose to Ofsted, as required.

The routine monitoring of the service is very poor. Since the last inspection, reports completed by the independent visitor have contained inaccuracies. For example, reports have included incorrect information about staffing and the number of missing from home incidents. Furthermore, they have contained some statements without context, for example 'Staff morale causing some concern'. Ofsted raised this issue with the responsible individual, and the latest report is accurate and improved. However, Ofsted has not received the manager's six-monthly reports about the service, as required. This reduces the ability of the regulator to monitor the service as effectively, as required.

Full-time staff receive regular supervision, and the records show that this is of good quality. However, the registered manager does not ensure that he keeps up to date with potentially relevant information relating to two casual members of staff who work across different homes in the organisation. As a result, he is unaware of what training they have had or need and whether they have any particular support needs. Furthermore, he does not ensure that these staff are kept up to date with relevant information about the young people living at this home. This has the potential to compromise the quality of care that these staff provide to young people.

The manager's lack of attention to comments and concerns from other professionals and people involved in the home compromises his ability to improve the service. The manager does not correctly record information relating to concerns. As a result, the number of complaints recorded as being received by the home is incorrect. This means that managers, independent visitors and inspectors do not have access to full information that enables them to monitor the nature of concerns and complaints received and to evaluate how well these are responded to.

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: 1227330

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Positive Outcomes Childcare Limited

Registered provider address: 3 Churchill House, Queen Street, Wellington, Telford, Shropshire TF1 1SN

Responsible individual: Neil Hedges

Registered manager: Winston Damerum

Inspector

David Morgan, social care inspector

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