

1232650

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Ltd

Full 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 provides care for children and young people whose plan is for them to live in medium- to long-term residential care. The qualified and experienced manager has held registered manager status since December 2017.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 September 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: 5 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
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?

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>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes—</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure;</p> <p>a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")—</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and</p> <p>within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(iii)(viii)(b)(i)(ii) and (c))</p> <p>Specifically, that suitable debrief arrangements are made when the registered manager is involved in physical intervention.</p>	31/10/2018
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>a child is involved in or subject to, or is suspected of being involved in or subject to, sexual exploitation;</p> <p>an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious;</p>	31/10/2018

<p>there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there;</p> <p>a child protection enquiry involving a child —</p> <p>is instigated; or concludes (in which case, the notification must include the outcome of the child protection enquiry); or</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(a)(b)(c)(d)(i)(ii) and (e))</p>	
<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>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(h))</p> <p>Specifically, that decisive action is taken to meet the above and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep the statement of purpose under review to ensure that it accurately reflects the services offered to the young people. ■ Take prompt action to repair the damage to the bedroom wall and settee and repair the ground-floor bathroom and kitchen doors for ease of access. ■ Ensure that risk assessments include all the potential risks to individual young people. 	<p>31/10/2018</p>
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only—</p> <p>employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p>	<p>31/10/2018</p>

<p>The requirements are that— the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d))</p> <p>Specifically, this refers to the registered person scrutinising any issues raised during the recruitment and vetting process to feel sufficiently satisfied that all the information has been considered and checked so that sound suitability decisions can be made.</p> <p>Demonstrate how the current arrangements with the agency work transparently and effectively to satisfy the registered person that safe vetting and care practices have been undertaken and that any potential conflicts of interests and confidentiality issues have been fully explored, risk managed and recorded.</p>	
<p>In meeting the quality standards, the registered person must, and must ensure that staff—</p> <p>seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs;</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>	<p>31/10/2018</p>

Recommendations

- 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.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young people benefit from carefully planned and risk-managed placements against those of the existing group. Matching has been effective in ensuring placement stability in most cases, leading to a safer and more cohesive abode for young people to settle and thrive. Most of the young people resident at the time of the last inspection who have since left had a positive departure and still remain in contact with the staff. This is testament to the worthwhile bonds and quality relationships formed during their stay. The registered manager and staff speak highly and with emotion about the departing young people. They relay with pride how their support has influenced their outcomes. A professional said, 'They do over and above. Their outcomes are pretty impressive.'

The young people are building positive, trusting and nurturing relationships with the registered manager and the staff, which has enabled them to settle into home life quickly and treat the home as their own. The close and nurturing relationships forged between the staff, including the agency staff, and young people promote their self-esteem and nurture their personal growth. A parent said, 'I am really impressed that she is now thinking about her future.' A family member said, 'I think she is getting good-quality care.' A professional said, 'I think she is doing brilliant.'

Care plans hold good, clear information about the young people. Individual cultural and language needs are carefully considered. Any gaps are filled with the appropriate resources, for instance the commissioning of agency staff that are trained and skilled in British sign language. A family member said, 'The staff are working very hard to sign so they can communicate with her.' Young people know how to complain. Their wishes and feelings are listened to and reasonable requests are acted on with an explanation should staff refuse the request.

The committed staff members facilitate the young people's daily attendance at school, often travelling the distance. Young people who have achieved exam results but are not in college are supported to apply as the staff recognise their potential to achieve.

The staff actively encourage the young people to lead healthy lives and attend health appointments. Staff continue to express positive affirmations to the young people, helping them to boost their self-esteem and confidence in their abilities. Key-work sessions address the pertinent issues in the young person's life and behaviours.

The young people engage in activities that promote social integration and provide fun times. The staff team supports positive contact with the young people's families and friends and they have forged good relationships with them. The young people invite their

friends to visit and spend time with them as they would in a family environment. 'Eligible' young people do not have formal pathway planning documentation or in-house independence plans. However, they are learning how to budget, shop and cook for themselves, which will increase their resilience to care for themselves when they move on to independent living.

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

The young people can identify a trusted adult whom they can talk to with any concerns or worries. They report feeling very safe in the home, with one young person rating their safety '10 out of 10' and another '7 out of 10', only because the area was not familiar to them. Professionals and carers raise no concerns about the staff's practice, rating young people's safety highly. A family member said, 'I do think she is safe.'

The young people's vulnerabilities and most of their risks are well documented. Staff, including agency staff, also share any issues about the young people as they arise, which helps to clarify and consider any potential risks. However, remedies to address potential aspects of self-harming behaviour, the use of certain hair products and professional boundaries have not been thoroughly scrutinised to ensure that they are safe and appropriate.

Good relationships with the local police help to protect the young people when they go missing. Positively, the occasions that the young people have gone missing have significantly reduced since one young person left. A police representative said that the staff 'do more than most', going out looking for the young people to encourage them to return home, which, they said, 'is more than other homes do'. The young people are not considered to be involved in radicalisation or drug and alcohol misuse. The young people subjected to child sexual exploitation or considered a risk prior to moving into the home are monitored and supervised. The registered manager has confirmed his contact with safeguarding professionals to ensure their continued support to prevent the sexual exploitation of the young people in the home via indirect sources, such as social media.

Staff promote and implement the routines and boundaries, and sanctions and rewards that the young people are learning to accept. Young people who present with unacceptable behaviours are challenged by the staff, so they can develop socially acceptable behaviours. Restraints are rare, which is indicative of the positive and influential relationships that are forming between the staff and the young people. A family member said, 'While she has been living at [Name of the home], she has not shown as much anger towards [X]. She must be feeling safe.'

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

The registered manager is new to the management role. He was found suitable by Ofsted in December 2017. He has previous residential experience that includes deputising and acting manager roles. He holds the level 5 leadership and management qualification. The responsible individual and other professionals support him, and appropriate deputising arrangements enable the home to operate without disruption in

his absence.

The team morale is positive. It is due to the motivated and confident staff team that firm boundaries are being instilled. Staff speak in complimentary terms about the young people and express positive regard towards them. Most feel supported by the registered manager and find working at the home a pleasurable experience. One staff member said, 'I really enjoy it.' Similarly, the registered manager has a good relationship with the young people, who speak with affection about his treatment of them. Professionals and family members speak positively about the quality of care provided by the home and the quality of the communication shared with them.

Staff practice is supported by regular supervision, team meetings and training, with opportunities for further advancement through mentoring. The external independent monitoring visits and reports are evaluative and thorough, and they contribute towards the young people's safety and well-being.

The registered manager's internal monitoring review is due for submission to Ofsted. However, he has not monitored all areas of weakness with sufficient rigour. For instance, not all the recruitment practices are robust. This does not ensure that any issues raised during the vetting process are resolved to make sound suitability decisions. Further scrutiny has not been undertaken to ensure that the suitability of the agency staff has been formally verified to satisfy the registered manager that safe care recruitment practices and confidentiality agreements are in sync with the home.

The registered manager has dealt with a safeguarding concern in partnership with the relevant authorities. However, Ofsted was not notified as it should have been within the required timescales. Consequently, this did not allow Ofsted to have sufficient oversight of the actions taken with regards to the concern.

Physical intervention records do not comply fully with the regulations and several shortfalls are noted. In such instances where the registered manager is involved in the intervention, the provider should make suitable debriefing and monitoring arrangements.

The maintenance records do not indicate a repair plan, or the work undertaken to ensure close monitoring of progress and completion. Therefore, action to remedy property damage, some which was caused several weeks ago has not been attended to with sufficient speed to maintain the homely environment.

The registered manager has not maintained close oversight when staff are chasing documentation from placing authorities and then leave the organisation. This hinders the speed at which information is received to progress the young people's independence plans and does not afford effective challenge when the information is not forthcoming.

The statement of purpose was reviewed in July 2018. It needs further review to ensure that it meet the regulations with regards to family contact in the home, how the competence of staff in restraint is to be assessed, making explicit the details of the staff's experience and qualifications and an amendment to the registered manager's status. The arrangements for caring for young people with additional needs, including

staffing arrangements and training, contain insufficient detail. The registered provider was reviewing the shortfalls during the inspection, which shows a commitment to improve.

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: 1232650

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Ltd

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

Responsible individual: Thomas Worthington

Registered manager: Gary Jones

Inspector

Jacqueline Malcolm, social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for children looked after, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018