

# SC055780

Registered provider: Autism Initiatives (UK)

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight young people who have an autism spectrum disorder.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in October 2010.

**Inspection dates:** 21 to 22 November 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 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** none

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/11/2017	Full	Good
29/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/12/2016	Full	Outstanding
16/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirement

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 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 home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b))</p> <p>This is specifically in relation to ensuring that an impact risk assessment is completed for each new referral to the home and that the young person's impact risk assessment considers the safer area report, to ensure that the area is safe for them.</p>	31/01/2019

### Recommendations

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) This is specifically in relation to updating risk assessments with emerging risks.

## Inspection judgements

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

The home provides care for young people who have an autism spectrum disorder. All the young people have different ways of communicating and a wide range of needs, such as

needing help with their personal care needs and with social interaction. These specific individual needs are fully known and understood by the staff. Professionals said that this high level of staff understanding allows each young person to express their views, wishes and feelings and enables them to be involved in decisions about their care. Therefore, personal communication needs are not a barrier to young people in the home.

Several young people have moved to adult services after being at this home for a long time. The young people's transitions have gone extremely well because the manager and staff have made good plans that include visiting different services, preparing the young people over a long period and working with their parents and healthcare professionals to ensure that the services that they currently receive are transferred with them when they move. As a result, all the young people are settled in their new homes and they and their parents stay in touch with the home.

One young person has recently begun to have weekend stays. The manager received good information about the vulnerabilities of the young person and the manager met the young person before he came to live here. A risk assessment was completed to show that the manager had considered the compatibility of the young people together, but it does not sufficiently address how the staff can meet the young person's individual needs.

Staff have high aspirations for young people. They place the well-being of each young person at the centre of their practice, irrespective of the challenges they may present. For example, they have supported the local authority and they have persevered in their pursuit of a tier four bed for one young person who needs a medication assessment. A professional said, 'The staff have had a difficult time, but they have stuck with him and they are to be commended for this. They are the best of the best and I could not ask for more.'

Education is promoted well. All the young people are in full-time education. Engagement in education has been extremely challenging for some young people, but individual packages of education and support mean that young people have excellent attendance and that they are meeting their potential.

All the young people are in good health. The home's staff work closely with a range of healthcare professionals, such as dietitians, speech therapists, counsellors and paediatricians to ensure that young people's emotional and physical health improves. Staff are fully trained in administering medication and in first aid. Medication is stored safely, and tight procedures mean that young people receive their medication in line with their prescription.

Staff understand that taking part in social activities can have a huge impact on some of the young people's anxieties. However, they have worked extremely hard to help individual young people gain social skills. The young people enjoy going to the beach or to the woods, where they can run and play. The home has an outside gym, swings and a sensory room that helps young people to have fun, burn off energy, have additional

exercise or enjoy quieter time. The young people have just received new sensory equipment. The young people and staff raised funds for this through a charity evening.

Young people live in a large home that gives plenty of space for each young person. A cook, cleaner and a maintenance person support the staff. Therefore, the home runs efficiently.

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

The inspector spoke and interacted with two young people during this inspection. They showed that they were happy and safe. Throughout the inspection, warm and supportive relationships were observed. High staffing ratios mean that young people receive the right levels of support to keep themselves safe. Professionals said that the young people were extremely safe here and that the staff fully protected them. One professional said, 'They go above and beyond without restricting him. Therefore, he can learn and grow in a safe environment.'

Since the last inspection in November 2017, there have been no episodes of young people going missing or being absent, and no bullying, use of sanctions, or safeguarding concerns. Staff are fully trained in a wide range of associated training. This training is refreshed regularly. As a result, staff are confident that they are able to take the required action, as and when necessary. The young people benefit from consistent boundaries and structure.

Risk assessments identify the known risks that young people face, and they give staff clear guidance of what action to take, if an incident was to occur. However, a risk assessment for one young person has not been amended to reflect emerging risks. This does not ensure that risk assessments are regularly updated, and that staff have all the information available to them to care for the young person well.

Sometimes, young people are held for their safety or that of others. The records are maintained well and show that young people and staff have the opportunity to discuss incidents that arise. The manager maintains good oversight of the records and evaluates them effectively.

The recruitment of staff is very thorough, and this helps to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with the young people. Also, all visitors now sign in and out of the home. Overall, these measures protect young people from unsuitable people.

Staff application of the strong health and safety procedures helps to protect young people. Staff carry out regular health and safety checks around the home, including regularly practising how to leave the home safely in case of a fire. Therefore, young people live in a physically safe environment.

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

An experienced and suitably qualified manager manages the home. Until recently, two part-time deputies supported her but they have both moved on to follow their careers. However, there is a long-standing core group of staff who support her in her role. The manager keeps good oversight of the home and works alongside the staff and with the young people. This means that she can observe the staff's practice and relationships with the young people.

The statement of purpose sets out the ethos and objectives of the home and it is kept under review. Professionals confirmed that they had been given a copy of the statement of purpose and that they receive regular updates about the young people's progress and care. The young people's records are now maintained well because the staff and manager sign to say they have read and understood any changes to the young people's plans for care. This means that staff work consistently as a team.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with a range of agencies and professionals who are involved in young people's care. When services have been slow or not available, the manager has challenged these shortfalls effectively. Professionals spoke very highly of the manager and staff. They spoke about the manager's and staff's unwavering commitment to the young people and to the young people's progress. They recognise that the staff's hard work has meant that some young people enjoy more time at home or are more relaxed when they are at home. One professional said, 'It has meant the world to his mum and it is really great to see them having fun together.'

Most staff hold a relevant childcare qualification. Two staff members will have completed their qualification by the end of December 2018. This is within timescales. Staff receive a good level of support through regular supervision, training and staff meetings. The manager includes practice-related articles on the staff meeting agenda, such as *change4life*. This article gave staff guidance on how to help young people be healthier, such as parking further away and walking to the beach or the woods. The manager said that the young people do not realise that they are getting more exercise and therefore do not object, because they like going to these places.

The home has a safer area report that shows risks in the immediate area and within the local community, such as the busy roads in front of the home. The manager has also used the police crime statistics to identify any known area of risk to the young people, for example local hotspots for selling drugs. This is now regularly reviewed. However, the manager did not use the safer area report when deciding whether the area was safe for the most recent young person.

There is a development plan in place for the home. However, there is no workforce plan in place that fulfils the workforce-related requirements of the regulations for children's homes. For example, it is unclear what the arrangements are for staff supervision, including agency staff, new staff and permanent staff.

Independent scrutiny of the home has now improved. The manager makes good use of

the information provided and this forms part of her internal monitoring of the home. The manager regularly seeks feedback from external professionals to assist her to improve and develop the home. As a result, good standards of care practice are maintained.

## **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:** SC055780

**Provision sub-type:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** Autism Initiatives (UK)

**Registered provider address:** Sefton House, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside L30 4XR

**Responsible individual:** Katharine Silver

**Registered manager:** Karen Taylor

## Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care regulatory 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 looked after children, 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](mailto: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](mailto: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](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2018