

# SC055912

Registered provider: Verve Life Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care for four young people up to the age of 18. The home offers care for young people who have learning and/or physical disabilities. The home is privately owned.

The manager is experienced, suitably qualified and has been registered since October 2015.

**Inspection dates:** 13 to 14 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:** 13 November 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Good

**Enforcement action since last inspection:** None

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/11/2017	Full	Good
01/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/08/2016	Full	Good
22/12/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

## 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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children;</li> <li>use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</li> </ul> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to—</li> <li>meet the needs of each child; and</li> <li>enable each child to participate in the daily life of the home.</li> </ul> <p>(Regulation 6(1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i)(ii))</p>	9 January 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 that staff—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>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.</li> </ul> <p>(Regulation 12(1)(2)(a)(i))</p>	9 January 2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that—</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the privacy of children is appropriately protected;</li> <li>children can access all appropriate areas of the children's home's premises; and</li> <li>any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises—</li> <li>is intended to safeguard each child accommodated in the home;</li> <li>is necessary and proportionate;</li> </ul>	9 January 2018

is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as is possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(a)(b)(c)(i)(ii)(iv))	
If the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005(a) applies to the home—  the registered person must ensure that the requirements of that Order and any regulations made under it, except for article 23 (duties of employees), are complied with in respect of the home. (Regulation 25(2)(b))	9 January 2018
The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month.  The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether—  children are effectively safeguarded; and  the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44(1)(4)(a)(b))	16 January 2019

## Recommendations

- Ensure that the home's records on each child represent a significant contribution to their life history. Children and their parents should be supported to understand the nature of records kept by the home and how to access them. Staff should understand their important role in encouraging the child to reflect on and understand their history, according to their age and understanding. Staff should keep and encourage children to keep appropriate memorabilia of the time spent living at the home and help them record significant life events. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.5)

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff care about young people and want to achieve the best outcomes for them. Staff take care to match young people sensitively. This enables the young people to live alongside each other well and cope with one another's differences, despite being different ages and having diverse needs.

Motivated staff work hard to make sure that their relationships with young people are positive, nurturing and supportive. Young people enjoy spending time in the home. Young people's families are positive about the care that the children receive. One family member said, '[My child] is always smiling and happy.'

Young people experience care from skilled and supportive staff who understand their individual needs well. As a result, young people make good progress. Staff support young people's learning; all young people are in full-time education and doing well.

The registered manager and staff know how important it is to young people to be able to maintain family relationships. They support young people to spend positive and safe time with people who are important to them.

The home is large and spacious, and some young people have personalised their bedrooms. When young people are away from the home, their property is not stored securely until they return. Furthermore, the registered manager does not always ensure that repairs and day-to-day maintenance are completed quickly, and when work is carried out that the impact on young people is minimal.

The registered manager and staff do not work creatively with young people to capture their views in records and do not document the young people's experiences while living at the home. This is a missed opportunity to enable young people to capture memories that they can then look back on in the future.

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

Positive and supportive relationships between young people and staff help young people to feel safe and secure.

The registered manager responds quickly to safeguarding concerns. An independent reviewing officer told the inspector, 'When there have been concerns the registered manager has kept me updated until the situation is resolved. Communication is good.'

Staff do not use physical intervention to manage behaviour. Instead, staff focus on encouraging socially acceptable behaviour and use distraction techniques and redirection. Rewards and sanctions are used appropriately to encourage positive behaviour and to reinforce expectations regarding behaviour.

Staff have a good understanding of the risks presented by each young person and they update records regularly. However, some parts of young people's risk assessments are not individualised. Furthermore, risk assessments are numerous and lengthy and not easy for new staff to understand quickly.

Restrictive physical barriers are used in the home, without a clear explanation of why; for example, stair gates are fitted to the kitchen door and the bottom of the stairs. These practices detract from the domestic nature of the home and potentially infringe on young people's movements unnecessarily.

Staff prop fire doors open on occasion. This is a potential hazard in the event of a fire.

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

The registered manager has a clear vision for the home. She is an experienced manager and she is appropriately qualified. Staff speak positively about the registered manager and appreciate that she leads by example. The registered manager is passionate about achieving the best outcomes for young people.

Some members of the staff team are new and inexperienced. Half of the members of the team are qualified, with the remaining staff either completing their probation or undertaking their level 3 qualification. The registered manager is taking appropriate steps to develop their knowledge and understanding with a clear induction and training programme. The manager is using skilled and committed bank and agency staff to support and complement the core staff team. This means that young people enjoy the care from a consistent staff group.

Staff enjoy working at the home, receive regular supervision and feel valued by a supportive manager. As a result, staff have the opportunity to reflect on their practice and this helps them to develop their learning. When staff practice falls below expected standards, the manager responds quickly. This helps staff to learn from what has happened and contributes to maintaining good-quality care for young people.

The registered manager and staff have positive working relationships with a range of professionals. The registered manager advocates well for each young person and ensures that the home and other agencies respond quickly when there is a change in young people's needs. Together, they make sure that young people's needs are met.

Managers continuously review systems and processes to improve them. They take action to address shortfalls identified by themselves and others, such as Ofsted.

The registered manager needs to ensure that the independent visitor's reports are carried out monthly and that they provide sufficient evaluation of the service.

### **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:** SC055912

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

**Registered provider:** Verve Life Limited

**Registered provider address:** 198 High Street, Burbage, Marlborough, Wiltshire SN8 3AB

**Responsible individual:** David Powell

**Registered manager:** Clare Alele

## Inspector

Debbie Holder, 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](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