

1227335

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home provides care and accommodation for up to three young people who may present with a range of complex needs and functioning difficulties.

The manager has been in post since November 2018 and was registered with Ofsted in January 2019.

Inspection dates: 23 to 24 January 2019

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: 10 October 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: inadequate

Enforcement action since last inspection: Four compliance notices were issued in October 2018. The compliance notices were met in December 2018.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/10/2018	Full	Inadequate
08/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/04/2017	Full	Good
13/10/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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

Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) In particular, all fire drills that have taken place should be recorded.
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all staff consistently follow the home's policies and procedures for the benefit of the children in the home's care. Everyone working at the home must understand their roles and responsibilities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.20) In particular, staff should ensure that the young people do not have lighters in their bedrooms as per the home's policy.
- Homes have a key role in organising and ensuring each child's registration at the necessary primary and secondary health services. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.11)
- Any individual appointed to carry out visits to the home as an independent person must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, young people have had a more positive experience and made progress. There is a new manager at the home who has prioritised improving the quality of care. The staff have a clearer understanding of the young people's needs and the strategies required to meet their needs effectively.

Young people's views, wishes and feelings are now listened to and considered by the manager and staff. This means that the young people have a say in the care and intervention provided to them. This has resulted in improved outcomes and appropriate interventions for the young people, such as increased family contact and therapeutic support.

The education needs of the young people are prioritised by the manager and staff. One young person who has a history of not engaging in education is now engaging well in his alternative education provision. He now has high aspirations for his future. He said, 'I want to do well in education and get a good job in the future.' A young person who has recently moved into the home does not have an education placement. The manager and

staff are in regular communication with education professionals in the placing and host local authorities to secure a suitable education provision for her. In the meantime, they have provided the young person with education workbooks to complete at home. Young people now have good structure and routine to their day, which means they go to bed at a reasonable time and are up each morning and ready to engage in education. Consequently, the arrangements to support young people to overcome barriers to learning and to take part in any meaningful educational activities have improved.

Improvement has been made in how well the health and well-being needs of young people are met. Healthcare plans are detailed and demonstrate the health and development needs of the young people and how they are being met. For example, one young person's healthcare plan includes up-to-date information relating to his attendance at the dentist and the progress he is making because of the therapeutic support he is receiving. However, there has been a short delay in the new young person to the home being registered with local health services, such as the GP and dentist.

Care planning for young people is good. Plans for the young people are detailed and include relevant information relating to their needs and how the manager and staff are ensuring that their needs are met well. For example, the contact, education and health arrangements for the young people are clear. A thorough compatibility assessment was completed prior to a new young person moving into the home. The compatibility assessment considered the behaviour and risks to each young person. Additionally, the compatibility assessment included a good evaluation as to why the placement was suitable and how the manager and staff would manage the behaviour and risks. Furthermore, the young person already living at the home was consulted in this process.

The conditions at the home have significantly improved since the last full inspection. Young people's bedrooms are clean and tidy. Dirty mattresses have been replaced and new furniture purchased. Young people informed the inspector that they are pleased with the improvements in the conditions in their bedrooms. A new young person who has recently moved into the home has started to personalise her bedroom and the manager has agreed that her bedroom can be decorated to her personal choice of colour. The home conditions now provide young people with a safe, supportive and nurturing home environment.

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

Young people feel safe and are kept safe from harm. The manager has placed significant emphasis on raising awareness about bullying with the young people and staff. This has resulted in the young people and staff having a greater understanding of the signs of bullying and how to tackle it. Staff and young people have completed anti-bullying training and written information has been given to young people and staff about bullying. The children's guide has been updated to include clearer information about bullying. Policies and procedures about bullying have been enhanced. Consequently, there is no longer any bullying at the home.

Staff and young people are safeguarded from the risks relating to sharp or dangerous

items at the home. There is now a clear policy and procedure in relation to the safe storage of sharp and dangerous items, such as knives and tools. Furthermore, risk assessments for young people demonstrate the risks relating to sharps objects and dangerous items and the control measures to manage and reduce the risks.

Since the last inspection, the home is much more settled, and the young people have not been involved in incidents that have placed them at risk of harm. There have been no incidents of young people being missing from home or the need for room searches or physical intervention. The staff have completed safeguarding training about specific issues, such as sexually harmful behaviour, county lines, radicalisation and extremism, drugs and substances, and internet safety. This has helped the staff to better understand the risks that young people face and their role in safeguarding the young people from such risks.

Good health and safety practice helps to maintain good standards and safety at the home. The manager has strengthened the procedures for staff to undertake daily, weekly and monthly health and safety checks. Furthermore, the manager undertakes a monthly review where he has oversight of the checks that have been completed. However, although a fire alarm test was completed and explained to the new young person when she moved into the home, this was not recorded. Furthermore, there is an expectation that young people do not have lighters in their bedroom, yet, at the time of the inspection the inspector observed a lighter in one of the young people's bedrooms. This demonstrates that the staff failed to identify this and ensure that the policy about lighters was adhered to.

The young people and staff have a clear understanding of the expectations of behaviour at the home. The focus has shifted from consequences for negative behaviour to promoting and rewarding positive behaviour. The manager and staff understand that negative behaviour from the young people is often because of their circumstances and past experiences. Consequently, they understand the need to support the young people through their experiences by talking to them and offering advice and guidance to them to reduce negative behaviour. A social worker said, 'There is less blame on the young people now and it is no longer a constant battle between the staff and young people. There is much more reinforcement of positive behaviour.'

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager started working at the home shortly after the last full inspection. The manager is supported by a highly committed and competent staff team that shares his motivation for achieving the best possible outcomes for the young people. The manager has made significant improvements at the home and has addressed all the requirements and the recommendation made at the last full inspection effectively. This has resulted in the young people being safeguarded and them receiving a good quality of care.

Staff feel more valued and supported because of the good leadership and direction they receive from the new manager. The staff have been provided with training and

development opportunities to enhance their knowledge and skills. Consequently, they are able to help and support the young people well. Rotas demonstrate that there is now a consistent staff team working at the home and staff morale has improved. A member of staff said, 'Things are much better at the home now, you will be impressed with the good progress that has been made.'

The quality of records and plans has significantly improved. Plans and assessments are detailed and evaluative and include the views of the young people. Plans and assessments demonstrate the experience and progress of young people and the plans for them. This means that the staff and young people have a shared understanding of their circumstances.

The monitoring and review systems at the home have improved. The manager has completed a thorough quality of care review that focuses on the quality of care provided by the staff, the experiences of the young people and the impact that the care is having on the outcomes and improvements for young people. The quality of care review has helped the manager to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the home and what action is required to develop the home further. The independent person has developed a questionnaire to consult with stakeholders. However, the monthly visits from the independent person are not always helpful to the manager as the visitor only considers the information available to the end of the previous month rather than to the date of the visit.

The manager and staff work collaboratively with other professionals and family members to ensure that the young people receive a good quality of care and intervention. This collaborative working results in the young people receiving the best possible care to meet their individual needs. A social worker said, 'We are in regular communication and the home is a very different place to what it was at the time of the inadequate inspection.'

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: 1227335

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Ltd

Registered provider address: The Malthouse Business Centre, 48 Southport Road, Ormskirk L39 1QR

Responsible individual: Susan Rolfe

Registered manager: David Molloy

Inspector

Lisa Mulcahy, social care inspector

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