

SC065684

Registered provider: J & R Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children. There is a registered school on the same site.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in May 2017.

Inspection dates: 30 April to 1 May 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account requires improvement to be 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 is not yet delivering good help and care for children and young people. However, there are no serious or widespread failures that result in their welfare not being safeguarded or promoted.

Date of last inspection: 18 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/09/2018	Full	Good
21/06/2017	Full	Good
23/02/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
02/08/2016	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: requires improvement to be good

Children feel able to share their views through daily meetings, the complaints process and general discussion with staff. However, children shared with the inspector their dislike of the closed-circuit television (CCTV) in the communal areas in the home. They have raised this with both the registered manager and responsible individual, but there are no records of children's concerns, or the managers' responses to them. Policies on the use of CCTV are contradictory and do not provide clear guidance to children or staff on its use.

Children have some strong relationships with staff and are making good progress in many aspects of their lives. Children are mostly positive about their home, and all have a member of staff whom they like and trust. Social workers commented positively on children's placement.

Children are all in full-time education either at college or in the on-site school. Most come to the home with little or no education attendance and, through staff support and close liaison with the education team, they progress, and their attendance increases. There is a clear understanding of what children's barriers to learning are, and creative approaches ensure that all access a full curriculum, including work experience when children are able. In addition to formal education, children attend local clubs, for example playing for the local football teams, to increase their confidence and friendship groups away from the home.

Children who are moving into or on from the home are well supported to settle into their new surroundings. This includes managers challenging plans if they feel a move is progressing too quickly or is not in the child's best interests.

Children's physical and emotional well-being is a high priority. Children who struggle to attend medical appointments receive physical and emotional support to explore why they do not want to attend. Children also have programmed individual sessions with the organisation's psychotherapist, who uses a variety of approaches to engage children in the therapeutic process.

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

Children said that they feel safe in the home, and all have staff they can go to if they are worried or upset or feel that other children are bullying them. They said that staff deal with problems in the group most of the time. It was observed that staff intervened and challenged behaviours that could be deemed by children as bullying. They also offered guidance when children were being drawn into joining in others' negative behaviour,

borne out of anxiety.

Staff are confident in their roles in safeguarding children and spoke knowledgeably of how they would respond to any concerns, including partner agencies that they could inform and the challenging responses taken by the managers if necessary. Safeguarding and child protection concerns are responded to swiftly, and managers report these to and work with partner agencies as required.

Staff are skilled in managing children's behaviour. There are high levels of anxiety in the home currently, resulting in increased negative behaviour. Staff recognise behaviour as a form of communication and know how children trigger each other's anxieties. The use of physical intervention has increased in recent weeks, and thorough evaluation and analysis of incidents by the registered manager allow for learning for staff and for potential changes in approaches to the children's unwanted behaviour.

Children are rarely missing from the home. Children who have moved to the home with a history of being missing or misusing substances have significantly reduced and, in some cases, ceased these behaviours since living in the home. Children who have offended or harmed others prior to moving into the home receive appropriate levels of supervision and support to consider their reasons for this behaviour and ways in which they can move forward. There is close working between the staff and youth offending teams.

Safer recruitment practice is followed, including a wide range of pre-employment checks and exploration of the working history of the applicant with children and vulnerable adults. Children are also involved in the recruitment process, sharing their views about the applicant.

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

Staff are committed to the children and said that they are happy in their roles. The current shortage of full-time staff is taking its toll on staff's energy levels. The home is using bank staff and regular agency staff to cover gaps in the rota, while it is seeking to employ suitably experienced staff. Staff said that they feel supported by the management team and that they have the training they need to meet the needs of the children. Staff supervision has been irregular, and there is no record of supervision for some bank staff. The responsible individual has acknowledged the shortfall and, in the last month, has supported the registered manager to ensure that staff are being adequately supervised.

The use of CCTV is described as a safeguarding measure. However, the policy is not clear on how this will be used or the rationale behind the perceived need for cameras in the home's communal areas. The statement of purpose is contradictory about CCTV. The statement of purpose has been updated regularly but has not been sent to Ofsted since June 2016. Staff are aware of their role in ensuring that they provide a caring environment in line with the ethos set out in the document.

Managers have a good understanding of the needs of each child, including the progress they have made and areas where they continue to require support. Children's plans are clear and detail their goals and targets and their successes when these are already met. Plans are vague regarding children's culture and identity beyond their ethnicity or religion. Due to the lack of full-time staff, children's individual sessions with staff have been inconsistent. Topics to be covered in individual sessions are reactive, rather than planned.

Transition planning by the placing authority of one child has led to increased anxiety and tensions in the home. This has led to an increase in damage around the property, which the full-time maintenance member of staff is currently working hard to remedy and ensure that the home is safe. This has led to the general decor being neglected, to the point that the home requires decorating throughout the communal areas.

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 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 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. (Regulation 12 (2)(d))</p>	14/06/2019
<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. The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	14/06/2019
<p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if the monitoring or surveillance is for</p>	14/06/2019

<p>the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children; the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance; so far as reasonably practicable in the light of the child's age and understanding, the child is informed in advance of the intention to do the monitoring or surveillance; and the monitoring or surveillance is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. (Regulation 24 (a)(b)(c)(d))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that the employment of any person on a temporary basis at the children's home does not prevent children from receiving such continuity of care as is reasonable to meet their needs. (Regulation 31(1))</p>	<p>14/06/2019</p>

Recommendations

- Any home using CCTV or other monitoring equipment should have a written policy describing how this will support the safeguarding and well-being of those living and working in the home in accordance with regulation 24. Homes must gain consent to any monitoring or surveillance by the placing authority in writing at the time of placement. The use of CCTV is regulated by the Protection of Freedoms Act 2012 and the Surveillance Camera Code of Conduct (Home Office 2013). ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- Children should be supported to express themselves as individuals and should be given an appropriate degree of freedom and choice in relation to day to day arrangements for their care, depending on their individual needs and the setting in which they are cared for. This is in relation to both activities and personal items such as clothing, technology and leisure items. Children's reasonable preferences in relation to day to day arrangements should be met with consideration given to safeguarding, particularly in relation to the use of technology. Where a child's preferences are unreasonable or cannot be met for safeguarding reasons, staff should discuss this with the child to help them understand why ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.21).
In particular, ensure that children's in-house care plans demonstrate the child's individual culture and identity beyond their religion and ethnicity.
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to children's homes regulations including the

quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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: SC065684

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: J & R Care Limited

Registered provider address: Ash House South, Ash Road, New Ash Green,
Longfield, Kent DA3 8JF

Responsible individual: Jane Parish

Registered manager: Eric De Mel

Inspector

Jennie Christopher, social care inspector

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