

SC461938

Registered provider: Crystal Care Solutions

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and provides care and accommodation for up to two children and young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties and/or learning disabilities.

There is no registered manager at the home. The interim manager has applied to register with Ofsted.

Inspection dates: 8 to 9 May 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: 17 April 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/04/2018	Full	Good
12/07/2017	Full	Good
25/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
26/10/2016	Full	Good

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 care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children’s home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child’s relevant plans are followed. (Regulation 14 (1)(a)(2)(c))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person should ensure that current relevant plans are in place to demonstrate that care is planned and delivered in accordance with the placing authority’s expectations.</p>	21/06/2019
<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home.</p> <p>In particular, the registered person must ensure that—</p> <p>a record is kept of the administration of medicine to each child. (Regulation 23 (1)(2)(c))</p> <p>Medication records should be clear and accurate. Any amendments should be clearly indicated by the author so that they are accurate and clearly identifiable for the reader.</p>	21/06/2019
<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>promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p>	21/06/2019

ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(2)(c))	
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Recommendations

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third-party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- Where the placing authority or another relevant person does not provide the input and services needed to meet a child's needs during their time in the home or in preparation for leaving the home, the home must challenge them to meet the child's needs (see regulations 5(c)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 12, paragraph 2.8)
The registered person should continue to escalate and challenge placing authorities when current relevant plans have not been provided.
- Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
Records of visitors to the home should clearly identify the time of their arrival and departure.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people are making good progress because of the care they receive at the home. They have positive relationships with the manager and staff team, who encourage them to achieve.

One young person, whose education was faltering, is now attending, engaging and enjoying a new placement. Another young person is being supported to attend additional revision at school for their GCSEs and enjoyed an overseas school trip. The home has been proactive and has acted as an advocate to ensure that meetings are held so that planning for young people's education is reviewed. Plans are in place for young people to continue in post-16 education.

Young people's health is improving, and they have been able to reduce and stop medication to support their behaviour or other health conditions, under the direction of health professionals. Staff ensure that they attend their health appointments. Their emotional well-being is being supported and one young person no longer feels that they

need help from the child and adolescent mental health services. One social worker commented on the transformation in a young person's presentation and level of self-care since moving to the home.

Staff support young people to see the people in their lives who are important. A parent commented that she knows her child is safe and well-cared-for, and that staff are approachable about any worries. Young people are encouraged to see friends and can enjoy overnight stays, once staff have made appropriate checks, as any good parent would. The young people living in the home get on well together and enjoy joint, as well as separate, activities in line with their interests. They both have pets and take their responsibilities of caring for them seriously.

Young people's confidence in their independence skills is growing. They are making progress on their individual programmes and being supported to develop their skills, for example in budgeting, shopping, cooking and making and attending appointments for themselves.

Staff consult with the young people regularly and listen to their views. For example, staff are currently exploring how best to reduce the amount of paperwork that young people sign, while ensuring that they are fully involved and aware of their plans. Staff praise young people and reward them for their achievements.

The home has good working relationships with other professionals in health, education, and social care to support young people's progress. However, several relevant plans were missing from young people's records, despite several requests to social workers. This hinders the ability to demonstrate how the home's care planning and delivery supports young people to make progress against the placing authorities' expectations.

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

Young people are protected and cared for by staff who understand, and are alert to, their individual risks. Strategies are in place to manage risks and are regularly reviewed, so that staff can respond effectively.

Young people rarely go missing from the home. Staff understand and follow procedures to ensure that young people return safely and are provided with independent return home interviews, so that any additional information to protect young people is known.

Specialist support is sought from external agencies if there are any concerns regarding young people using drugs or alcohol while away from the home. Staff are fully aware of procedures to follow if a young person appears to be under the influence of alcohol or substances, including seeking advice from health professionals, and careful monitoring of young people so that their health and well-being is not compromised.

Some young people take regular medication for health conditions. Records show where they may refuse to complete a course of medication. However, some records have been amended, without indication of the author of the changes. The records are unclear and

confusing to the reader. The manager ensured that this issue was addressed in supervision, and that further training would have been put in place, had the member of staff remained working in the home.

Where there are concerns for young people's safety, for example if they are harming themselves, staff complete room searches to ensure that items that may be used are removed. This is done with young people's consent, unless there are immediate safeguarding concerns and young people are not present in the home. Staff ensure that young people receive specialist support for their emotional well-being and provide tools to help young people distract themselves and reduce the risk of self-harm. More recently, staff have had additional training and are registered for further training in self-harm. However, it is unclear whether staff previously working in the home were fully trained in responding to self-harm when incidents initially occurred. In addition, the records completed after one incident of self-harm are not written in a way that is helpful to the young person.

Any complaints from neighbours about the young people who live at the home are responded to and resolved immediately. The manager met with complainants and ensured that a young person apologised for their behaviour. This encourages young people to reflect and take responsibility for their behaviour.

Young people who have mobile phones agree to staff completing spot checks on their online activity. This means that staff were able to identify a serious cause for concern and act immediately by working closely with social workers to protect young people. The home ensured that strategy meetings were held, an agreed plan was put in place, and that one young person moved to an alternative provision when it became clear that the plan was not sustainable. Staff remained vigilant to minimise further risk.

There is good communication between the home, police, education and social care professionals, following young people making disclosures. Staff ensure that young people feel emotionally supported and monitor them closely. Staff take steps to protect young people from further potential harm, for example by temporarily stopping independent time in the community. Young people understand the reasons why these actions are taken and recognise that staff care about them.

The use of sanctions has reduced over time, as the home has moved towards a restorative approach to behaviour management. This supports young people to reflect on their behaviour and how it affects others, with an educational approach. This restorative approach is also being incorporated into debriefs with young people following any use of physical intervention, incidents of which have also reduced. Young people are responding well to the consistency and boundaries put in place.

Visitors to the home are expected to record their visit. However, the visitor's book does not always record their departure in accordance with good safeguarding practice.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The previous registered manager has left, and the home is being led by an interim manager. He has transferred from another of the provider's homes, where he was the deputy manager. As part of a transition, he spent time working shifts with the young people, to develop relationships with them and to understand their needs. He is currently in the process of applying for registration and is completing a suitable management qualification.

There have been several changes in the staff team since the last inspection. A new core team of staff is now in place. Young people were consulted about their preferences for which staff they would like to work at the home, from familiar individuals who had completed shifts previously. They also provided insightful questions for use in staff interview processes. This had helped to reduce the disruption for young people and involves them in the development of the service. Young people said they are happy and like the new staff who work in the home.

The provider worked hard to ensure consistent cover during a period of high sickness levels in the previous staff team. When agency staff are used, this has always been consistent individuals who know young people well.

The new manager and staff team are enthusiastic, aspirational and highly focused on the development of the home and in providing high-quality care for young people. A current focus of the home is the development of an independent living skills programme. Young people's progress is carefully monitored and reviewed, and staff contribute to review meetings and complete regular reports to keep families and professionals updated.

Staff spoke highly of the manager and confirmed that there is regular supervision to reflect on their practice. Additional training needs are identified in supervision, and there are also monthly team meetings, to enhance and develop staff practice and continued development. Staff who have not yet completed a suitable qualification are in the process of working towards one. The manager is making good use of training opportunities offered by the host authority, in addition to those provided by the company.

There are robust monitoring systems in place to review young people's progress and the home's quality of care. The independent person will make additional visits to gain young people's views, if they are at school during monitoring visits. Good communication between the home and a range of external professionals and young people's families ensures consistency to support positive outcomes for young people. However, the manager needs to escalate his challenge to placing authorities when social workers do not respond to requests for current relevant plans.

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: SC461938

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Crystal Care Solutions

Registered provider address: Bank House, Market Square, Congleton, Cheshire
CW12 1ET

Responsible individual: James O'Leary

Registered manager: Matthew Perrett

Inspector

Karen Willson, social care inspector

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