

1230268

Registered provider: Kites Children Service's Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is one of two operated by a private provider. It is registered to provide accommodation and specialist therapeutic care and treatment for five young males. The provider also operates a school and an independent fostering agency as part of a separate but linked company. The suitably qualified manager has been in post since the registration of the home in 2016.

Inspection dates: 10 June 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: 14 August 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/08/2018	Full	Good
28/11/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
14/06/2017	Full	Good
20/10/2016	Interim	Not judged

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

Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Staff need to have the knowledge and skills to understand each child's education and training targets and their next steps for learning. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.11)
- Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. Records must be kept of the administration of all medication. Regulation 23 requires the registered person to ensure that they make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- 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. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- Ensure that staff understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording and that information regarding the child is 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)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Meticulous pre-admission planning means that the staff are confident that they can meet the children's needs. The manager matches children effectively. Because of this, placement breakdown is rare. The staff create a warm and nurturing home in which the children thrive.

The children build close relationships with the manager and staff. All of the boys said

that they like the staff and like living at the home. There is good-natured banter between the boys and staff. Together, they enjoy family-type activities such as playing on the games console and football in the back garden. The positive relationships that the children have with the staff underpin the good progress that the children make. A youth offending team member said, 'It's an unusually positive house. It's the only home that I walk in at 5pm and the kids are all in the kitchen cooking dinner and chatting with the staff. It's a great atmosphere.'

The staff help the children to develop healthy lifestyles. The children enjoy lots of outward-bound activities such as long walks and cooking on the beach. A child is delighted to have lost a lot of weight through the healthy eating and slimming programme that he and his key worker do together. The child's trimmer figure has given him much more confidence. The skills and knowledge that he has gained will support him to make healthy choices throughout his life.

The children have weekly therapy as part of the package of care and support. The staff are well trained in therapeutic approaches. They provide nurturing individualised care that meets the children's complex emotional needs. A parent said, 'My child's whole attitude to life is much better. It's nice to have my son back.'

Some of the children have moved from a resistance to education to flourishing in their new school environment. All the children have 100% school attendance. The staff motivate the children to aspire and achieve. However, the staff have not kept abreast of changes to GCSE arrangements. They therefore do not have current information to provide the good-quality education and career advice that they wish to.

The children are supported to develop good independence skills that will help them in adult life. The children do their own laundry and take turns to cook independently for the house. The children were keen to show off their newly decorated bedrooms that they have painted and wallpapered themselves. A child planned his first flight with the support of a favourite member of staff. The child managed his budget and researched the flight times, transport arrangements and destination. He was proud of his achievement and delighted to have this opportunity.

The house has been subject to significant wear and tear. The manager ensures that repairs to damages are undertaken, and some repainting has taken place. However, one bedroom is missing a fire seal to the fire door, which means that this bedroom may not be fully protected in the event of a fire. The lounge, hallways and kitchen feel stark as they lack the accessories and personal touches that make a home cosy.

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

The staff understand that the children use behaviour as a means of communication. The staff seek to understand and anticipate each child's needs. The staff skilfully help the children to navigate group conflict and build positive relationships with each other.

The children are safe and are well supported by the staff. The children believe that the staff have their best interests at heart. A parent said, 'The staff are very attuned to my child's personality and behaviours. He definitely feels safe and secure with them.'

The staff undertake individual risk assessments for each child and develop personalised risk management plans. A traffic-light system shows the level of risk. The children understand what this means and how to move to the next level of independence. Risk assessments are reviewed by the manager, staff, safeguarding manager and partner professionals at regular safeguarding meetings. These meetings are coordinated by the provider to ensure a comprehensive and consistently applied approach to safeguarding each child.

Medication arrangements are not consistently strong enough. Suitable permission to give a child non-prescribed medication is not always held on file. Although staff receive online medication training, not all staff who give medication have undergone a practical assessment of their skills to do so. One child has often been given non-prescribed medication to help with indigestion. The records of the administration lack essential information such as the name of the medication that has been given. The staff have not consulted a suitably qualified medical professional before giving non-prescribed medication. Therefore, there is potential for the child to be given medication that is unsuitable for them or by staff who do not have sufficient skills and knowledge.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is an active member of the care team. He has high aspirations for the children and leads the team in a highly child-focused way. Consequently, the staff deliver good-quality therapeutic care and support. The children feel cared about and valued.

There are some staff vacancies at the home. Regular agency staff are used to fill these gaps, which provides the children with continuity. The safe recruitment procedures for substantive and agency staff mean that there is effective scrutiny of applicants' suitability to work with children.

Most staff have undertaken a variety of suitable and relevant training. The therapeutic systems and models of care are understood by staff. Consequently, the staff operate at an enhanced level and reflective practice is embedded effectively.

Partnership working with professionals and families is very effective and promotes the children's well-being. Partner professionals and parents are consistently highly

complimentary about the service.

There is not a consistent approach to the management of written and electronically held information. There is no clear strategy about what information is held electronically and what is held on the children's files. Staff do not maintain the children's records to a consistently high enough standard. Some records do not include important up-to-date information, are undated or are misfiled. This makes it difficult to always understand the care and support given.

The staff feel valued and well supported. However, formal staff support systems are not fully implemented. Three staff, including a new member of staff, whose files were sampled during the inspection had received only two documented supervisions in the past six months. There are no written records of the manager's monthly supervision with the responsible individual. Therefore, there is limited evidence to demonstrate that the manager and staff receive suitable formal support, guidance and professional challenge.

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: 1230268

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Kites Children's Services Limited

Registered provider address: The Forge, Langham, Colchester CO4 5PX

Responsible individual: Rosslyn Parsons

Registered manager: Peter McGugan

Inspector

Joanna Heller, social care inspector

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