

1256658

Registered provider: Lytham Care Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private company owns this home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two young people who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

The current manager was registered with Ofsted in June 2019. One young person talked to the inspector during this inspection.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 July 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 **requires improvement to be good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **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 July 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/07/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be good
17/01/2018	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 registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality of care review') at least once every 6 months.</p> <p>In order to complete a quality of care review the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating—</p> <p>the quality of care provided for children;</p> <p>the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and</p> <p>any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. (Regulation 45 (1)(2)(a)(b)(c))</p>	30/09/2019
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees—</p> <p>receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	30/09/2019
<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—</p> <p>that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(b))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that risk assessments reflect the individual young person's history and emerging needs.</p>	30/09/2019
<p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>ensure, by the means of fire drills and practices at suitable</p>	30/09/2019

<p>intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that new admissions to the home complete a fire drill.</p>	
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Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
In particular, ensure that staff receive bereavement training to support young people.
- Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. Staff should help children to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)
- If there is a risk that a child may run away or go missing, staff should do their best to help them understand the risks and dangers involved and make them aware of how to seek help if they do run away. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.27)
- The behaviour management strategy should be understood and applied at all times by staff and must be kept under review and revised where appropriate. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.34)
- Staff must help each child to prepare for any moves from the home, whether they are returning home, moving to another placement or adult care, or to live independently. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 17, paragraph 3.27)
In particular, ensure that the home has a transition plan that supports young people to move in or out of the home.
- Where children placed in a home are not participating in education because they have been excluded or are not on a school role for some reason, the registered person and staff must work closely with the placing authority so that the child is supported and enabled to resume full-time education as soon as possible. In the interim, the child should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 28, paragraph 5.15)
This is in relation to having a clear education timetable in the home.

Inspection judgements

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

Since the last inspection, there has been a period of instability at the home. The manager, along with several staff, left. However, there is a new staff team, and a young person said that the home is much better. He said, 'I particularly like the new manager. She is great and spends time with me.'

Young people have a strong voice in the home. On a day-to-day basis, young people are routinely involved in planning their meals and activities and decorating their home. Furthermore, they are fully supported to take part in the review of their care plans, and the staff team clearly advocates for young people's wishes and feelings. This meaningful engagement with young people is helping them to feel valued, listened to and respected. One young person participates in the children's care council. He has recently been away for eight days on a sailing ship with other young people. He has also been on an interviewing panel for the local authority, and he is helping a local authority design a children's home. He said, 'It is brilliant. I love it, and I hope to continue on the care council when I am in semi-independence.'

Staff encourage young people to attend their education placements, but one young person has struggled to attend. He briefly attended his nominated school when first placed but has not done so since. The manager has worked closely with education professionals to identify several other alternative options, but the young person has not taken up these opportunities. Although the manager and staff acknowledge the challenges that they face in supporting young people in education, for this young person there is no education timetable in the home to support his learning and his reintegration into school. On a positive note, both young people have an identified college provision to start in September 2019.

Systems to secure good health outcomes in the home need improvement. Staff ensure that young people receive timely health checks, that they benefit from regular physical exercise and that they are provided with varied, homemade and nutritious meals. However, some young people have a history of using cannabis. The manager and staff have ensured that the young people receive advice and support from the youth offending service (YOS). However, staff have completed little work in the home, such as reflective sessions with the young people, to consider the effects of cannabis use on their health and emotional well-being.

Staff make suitable attempts to support young people to maintain their sense of identity and belonging. Staff help young people to visit their family and friends.

Staff ensure that young people have frequent opportunities to develop age-appropriate skills needed for future independent living. Both young people are due to leave the home soon. Although the home has the local authority pathway plan for each young person, there is no supporting transition plan to ensure that young people's transition to adulthood and independence is suitably planned and detailed in order to maximise the

chances of a successful move.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good

Staff are aware of the need to keep young people safe. They know and understand the plans and protocols that they need to implement should any concerns arise, as they receive adequate safeguarding training.

The manager and staff make attempts to support young people who display behaviours that are of concern. Mostly, staff understand the risks and plans that are in place to support young people in addressing their risk-taking behaviours. However, not all risks or emerging risks, such as violent and aggressive behaviours, have been assessed. Therefore, staff do not have clear information about the strategies and action to take if an incident was to occur. Further to this, some of the young people have had weapons in their possession, including in their bedroom. Again, the home has relied on the YOS team to educate the young people about the dangers and implications of having a weapon in their possession. The staff have not completed reflective sessions with the young people about the consequences for their safety and that of other young people and the staff in the home. Neither have the expectations, boundaries and rules of the home been explicitly discussed.

Behaviour management strategies are ineffective at supporting young people to improve their entrenched, complex and challenging behaviours because incentivised systems are ineffective. For example, the young people have three targets a day to achieve, such as attending education, completing independence tasks and being respectful to staff. One young person does not attend education and, therefore, does not receive a monetary gain for this. The staff have not looked at breaking this down into smaller achievable steps. In conjunction with this, young people may not have met any of their daily targets, but they often earn extra money for having a positive week. These plans are ineffective at promoting any positive change for young people.

Incidents of young people going missing from care are significantly decreasing. When young people do go missing from the home, the staff act swiftly and rigorously, following agreed protocols. Additionally, the manager ensures that independent return interviews are consistently undertaken. These interviews provide young people with the opportunity to discuss the reasons behind their behaviour, which helps to prevent reoccurrence. However, there is little evidence in the home that shows that staff use reflective sessions with the young people to discuss being safe when out in the community.

Partnership working is a key strength of this home. Positive links have been established with many safeguarding agencies, for example the local community police officer, specialist sexual exploitation services and YOS projects. This proactive approach to partnership working is helping young people to develop positive and trusting relationships with safeguarding professionals, who teach them how to stay safe. However, it appears that the staff rely heavily on these services to educate and to give

the young people advice on matters such as the dangers of drugs, carrying weapons, being missing from the home and becoming involved in the periphery of child criminal exploitation. Positively, the manager has made her concerns known and has requested a strategy meeting with the local authority and safeguarding professionals when she has become concerned about the vulnerability of a young person, so these concerns can be explored.

The physical safety of young people and staff within the home is maintained. The manager and staff complete a range of health and safety checks and audits. She also ensures that regular and periodic inspections of gas, electrical and fire detection equipment are carried out as required. However, when young people come to the home, they are not routinely taken through a fire evacuation procedure. This does not ensure that they are aware of how to safely evacuate the building, in the event of a fire.

The company follows the safer recruitment guidance. As a result, only those adults who are deemed safe and suitable work with the young people.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A new registered manager manages this home. She has been in post for six weeks. In this short time, she has focused on making sure that the staff team draws a line under past difficulties and that staff are focused on moving forward under her direction. She has made sure that there is a consistent staff team and that team members are all working towards the same goal. The new registered manager has embedded a nurturing environment, and this is evident in the young people's comments about the home. Young people said that they feel relaxed, are able to share concerns, that they are listened to and are fully included in decisions about their care.

The registered manager is child focused and provides clear direction to her team. She leads by example. She is a qualified social worker, and she aims to complete the required level 5 management qualification within timescales. She is currently reviewing and evaluating the service, drawing on the independent visitor's reports, consultation with the young people and professionals and the paperwork systems in the home. As part of this evaluation, she has already highlighted some of the areas identified within this inspection report, such as the quality of reflective sessions with the young people on their safety. As a result, her six-monthly monitoring report is nearing completion. However, Ofsted has not received the previous report. This impedes Ofsted's ability to maintain an oversight of the home and fails to meet regulation.

The manager has now strengthened the staff team with new members of staff. A good induction and probation process, along with adequate training opportunities, supports new staff to deliver sufficient care and support to young people. The provider ensures that the staff are provided with appropriate training opportunities so that they can deliver a good standard of care to young people. However, this has not included training on bereavement and loss, so that staff can help young people through such experiences, while being able to manage their feelings at such emotionally demanding times.

Three members of staff have a relevant childcare qualification, and three others are registered on a similar childcare qualification. Since May 2019, all staff have benefited from monthly or fortnightly supervision. However, previously to this, some staff had not received regular supervision and had not had the opportunity to reflect on and improve their practice.

Staff meetings are regular. The manager makes good use of team meetings and uses a range of resources and topics to help ensure that staff have up-to-date knowledge of current research and practice issues.

A professional said that communication between her and the home is very good. She said that she receives informative monthly reports and is very complimentary about the home. She said about her young person, 'He is more mature now and he is making better decisions. The new manager is really good and informs me straight away if there are any concerns. She [the manager] has challenged the local authority to have a strategy meeting to discuss child criminal exploitation and we are just waiting for an assessment from YOS. This is a nice home, and I would place another child here.'

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: 1256658

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Lytham Care Limited

Registered provider address: Lytham Care, 400 Longmoor Lane, Fazakerley, Liverpool L9 9DB

Responsible individual: Pamela Constance

Registered manager: Cheryl Clarke

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care regulatory inspector

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