

1227335

Registered provider: Exceptional Care Limited

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: 30 to 31 July 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	requires improvement to be good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	requires improvement to be good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement to be good
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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: 23 January 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/01/2019	Full	Good
10/10/2018	Full	Inadequate
08/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/04/2017	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 quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children's home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children and that they use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</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 and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation (6)(2)(c)(i))</p> <p>Specifically, this is in relation to replacing the damaged bed in a young person's bedroom and ensuring that there is an effective home maintenance programme in place that staff follow.</p>	13/09/2019
<p>The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on—</p> <p>mutual respect and trust.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff—</p> <p>strive to gain each child's respect and trust; de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children. (Regulation 11(1)(a)(2)(viii)(xi))</p>	13/09/2019
<p>The care planning standard is that children—</p> <p>receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home;</p> <p>and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p>	13/09/2019

<p>that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Reg 14(1)(2)(a))</p>	
<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>helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Reg 13(1)(2)(a))</p> <p>Specifically, 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.</p>	<p>13/09/2019</p>

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, that plans and assessments should include sufficient and up-to-date information about each child.
- 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)
- Children should be encouraged by staff to see the homes records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.6)
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that all their staff have been adequately trained in the principles of restraint and any restraint techniques

appropriate to the needs of the children the home is set up to care for as defined in the home's Statement of Purpose. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 48, paragraph 9.57)

Inspection judgements

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

The young people currently living in the home are making progress in some aspects of their lives, for example there are fewer incidents of risk-taking behaviour and a reduction in missing from home episodes. However, some shortfalls in staff practice are potentially jeopardising the children's well-being and progress.

The current arrangements to support the young people to take part in meaningful education are limited and this affects their educational progress. The lack of suitable education provision for the young people also affects their education opportunities and impacts on their later life chances. While the registered manager has taken some action through speaking with education professionals and arranging meetings to address the concerns, young people in the home do not engage in sufficient educational activities.

Young people's health and well-being are promoted and their health needs are being addressed, which is demonstrated in their health plans. Routine and specialist health appointments are attended as necessary to ensure that young people receive suitable support and intervention to meet their physical and emotional health needs. Staff spend time talking to the young people about health-related issues and encourage them to access the necessary support to meet their physical and emotional development and needs. Furthermore, the young people benefit from regular therapy sessions that are targeted to their circumstances and needs.

Young people spoken to during the inspection do not feel that they have positive relationships with all staff. The young people do not have confidence in the care provided by all staff, which impacts on their relationships with them. A young person said, 'I feel that I could talk to some staff if I had a worry or concern and they would help me, but not to others.' The manager and staff team should ensure that the day-to-day care within the home is delivered in such a way that fosters mutual respect and trust between the staff and the young people.

Contrary to the home's admissions policy and procedures as outlined in the statement of purpose, not all young people have benefited from a detailed compatibility risk assessment or a thorough appraisal of their needs. A placement was offered to a new young person without staff clearly identifying, assessing or addressing the young person's full range of needs and the subsequent impact on others living and working in the home. As a result, the young person moved from the home because she could not be safeguarded and her needs could not be met.

The home is clean and tidy and has a domestic, homely feel. It is well maintained and

decorated and furnished to a good standard. However, staff did not take effective action when a young person's bed was broken. As a result, the young person spent four nights sleeping on a mattress on the floor. The registered manager was made aware of this during the inspection and took immediate action to rectify this.

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

The registered manager and staff have a good understanding of the risks young people face and the action required to safeguard them. However, risk assessments lack sufficient information relating to the individual risks for young people, for example consideration of their previous known risks in relation to substance misuse, physical aggression, exploitation and smoking. Although this has not yet compromised the safe care provided, it has the potential to result in shortfalls in safeguarding young people.

Following some safeguarding incidents, the manager identified that staff could have managed the situations more effectively. On one occasion, a young person was arrested. Furthermore, staff did not follow the home's reporting procedures, which resulted in the young person unnecessarily spending the night at the police station. The manager and staff believe that this is a situation that could have been avoided, and the manager ensured that the staff involved were spoken to and that they reflected on their practice. Some staff have received additional training and the procedures for reporting incidents at night and weekends have been strengthened.

The safeguarding practice of the registered manager and staff results in a reduction in risk-taking behaviour, and risks to young people have reduced from when young people moved into the home. Staff spend time talking to the young people about the strategies required to reduce the risks that they face. Accordingly, staff and young people work together to manage and mitigate risks.

The staff use their professional judgement and knowledge of the young people to decide if and when physical intervention should be used. Physical intervention is only ever used to keep a young person or others safe from harm. Young people are given the opportunity to discuss their views, wishes and feelings following the use of any physical intervention. Additionally, staff discuss and reflect on the intervention. However, not all staff are suitably trained in the use of physical intervention, which places the member of staff and young people at risk.

Regular health and safety checks are making the home a safe environment. Additionally, the local area assessment is reviewed and updated at least annually to make sure that the team is aware of any potential risks in the local community.

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

The registered manager is suitably qualified and has the experience to undertake his role. He demonstrates the ability to reflect on practice and take positive action to constantly improve the quality of care provided.

The company has implemented a new electronic recording system, and this has resulted

in some records at the home not being as detailed as they have previously been, including care plans and risk assessments. Furthermore, records do not demonstrate that young people have been consulted and have contributed to their records. Care plans and risk assessments do not include the young people's views, wishes or feelings.

The internal monitoring and review systems help the manager to identify the strengths and areas for development for the home and the staff team. The registered manager acknowledges the shortfalls identified at this inspection. He recognises how they impact on the day-to-day running of the home and the outcomes for young people. He shows capacity and enthusiasm to make all the required improvements and has already begun to take corrective action to address the shortfalls, for example in recording and reporting systems and relationships between the young people and staff.

The external monitoring by the independent person needs to be strengthened. The independent person developed a questionnaire to consult with stakeholders, but this has not made a significant difference to the amount of feedback received. The monthly visits are carried out over the weekend, when the registered manager is not at the home. This does not enable the visitor to gain an insight into the how the home functions at different times or to consult with the registered manager during visits.

Recruitment practice is robust and safe. Recruitment checks, including Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) checks, gaps in employment and references are obtained, explored and verified to make sure that only the most suitable staff care for the young people.

Staff receive regular supervision that helps them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the young people. The continuous professional development of staff is a priority and staff receive regular training and development opportunities. Team meetings allow the manager and staff the opportunity to discuss the needs and progress of the young people, staff practice, and to share information from training and research, which enhances their knowledge and skills.

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 Limited

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

Responsible individual: Susan Rolfe

Registered manager: David Molloy

Inspector

Lisa Mulcahy, social care inspector

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