

1232650

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The children's home is owned and managed by a sole provider. It provides care for children and young people whose plan is for them to live in medium- to long-term residential care. The qualified and experienced manager has held registered manager status since December 2017.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 October 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: 12 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/09/2018	Full	Good
05/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/08/2017	Full	Good
02/05/2017	Full	Inadequate

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young people have built positive, trusting relationships with staff and their views are listened to. This helps the young people to build better self-esteem and they feel that their opinions are valuable.

Young people who are new to the home get a warm welcome, which helps them to settle in. They meet with their key worker about their likes and dislikes. They receive a friendly young people's guide book that is relevant to their age and understanding and describes the workings of the home. They are also supported to individualise their bedrooms with decorations, accessories and photos of their family members to make them homelier.

The young people who have moved to independence have received practical and emotional support from staff during and beyond the transitions. They are still in touch with staff and visit the home every now and then. This increases their feeling of belonging and continuity.

The young people's positive behaviour is promoted, and clear boundaries are in place of what is expected of them. The young people get incentives for positive behaviour, such as money towards items they want to buy. They get to celebrate their achievements. For example, they go out for a meal to celebrate success in exams and receive special treats of their choice.

The young people know how to complain. They have access to an advocacy service, and any concerns that they raise are taken seriously. For example, a young person complained that one-to-one staffing was not what she wanted because it impacted on her feeling of freedom. The staff arranged to have less intrusive support in place for her, which she is happy with.

The young people get help from staff to make healthy lifestyle choices and to attend health appointments. They access therapeutic services to improve their emotional well-being. Their individual needs, which for one young person includes severe communication difficulties, are well met. This has improved their overall well-being.

The young people see their families regularly. This helps them to maintain and develop their identities. A young person said that as a result, 'I get on with my mum much better now.' The support that young people get helps them to rebuild the relationships with their family members. The young people can choose the activities that they take part in, such as going to the cinema and doing things like go-karting. The young people have been on short breaks with the staff and are encouraged to try new activities on a weekly basis, which gives them a range of positive experiences.

The young people have access to education and overall have been making good progress academically and socially in the past year. This has been an improvement from

their starting points. Some of the young people have disengaged from their education very recently. This has not yet affected their overall outcomes adversely. The staff are proactively working with young people, the colleges and the local authorities to get them back into education.

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

The young people report that they feel safe and they have staff who they can speak to if they are concerned about anything. The young people have frequent key-working sessions, which give them an opportunity to talk through any issues as well as those things that are going well. The staff follow up any issues promptly.

The young people take age-appropriate risks to develop their independence. They are trusted to go out and return on time. They use public transport and make new friends in the community. The staff do regular checks via FaceTime or phone calls to the young people while they are out to ensure that they are safe and well.

The number of missing from home incidents is low. This is an improvement for many of the young people compared to their situations prior to coming to live in the home. Staff know what to do if young people go missing and will do their utmost to find them. The home has good links with the local missing from home coordinator, who reports that the staff work well to try to get young people back home as soon as possible.

The staff know the risks presented by the young people's behaviours and have strategies in place to deal with these. Risk assessments are now up to date for the young people who are currently living in the home. However, over the past year, this did not always occur. This did not impact on the safety of the young person at the time as the staff took appropriate steps to keep them safe. The staff had also received training to deal with the behaviours and knew how to deal with them.

Prior to accepting new admissions, the staff consider the needs of the young person and how these can be met. However, the impact risk assessment lacks detail on how the young person will match with the other young people currently in placement. Although the lack of a thorough assessment could have a negative effect on all the young people, this has not occurred. The most recent admission to the home has settled well and made positive relationships with the other young people.

The staff know the risks associated with internet use and safety measures are in place to prevent any harm to the young people through this. The staff have been taking appropriate measures when there have been any concerns about sexual exploitation through connecting with unknown people on social media. The staff did not report one such incident to the police and the regulator. However, the young person's social worker was informed, and the professionals concerned put in place measures to prevent this from happening again.

The staff have good links with the local authorities, designated officers and education professionals. As a result, young people's needs and issues are dealt with more

effectively through the shared multi-agency approach.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager has a good knowledge of the young people and he is committed to achieving good outcomes for them. The staff team is stable, and its members are dedicated to their roles and report that they get good support from the manager and each other.

The young people's records are up to date and of good quality. The young people have access to their records and are encouraged to make their comments in them. This helps the young people to gain a better understanding of their own experiences and the plans to support them.

The manager and the staff are in regular contact with other agencies and families to update and report on the progress of the young people. External professionals fed back very positively about the support to the young people provided by staff and managers at the home.

The manager is proactive at challenging agencies when the response from them does not meet the needs of the young people. For example, he has challenged a local authority when they stopped a service for a young person without notice. He has also taken steps when a young person was not settling into the home to review their plans with the placing authority. As a result, the plans were changed, which positively impacted on the young person's well-being.

The staffing levels are good and ensure that young people receive individualised care and support. The staff are suitably vetted, which includes consideration of their previous experience of working with children and young people. New staff starting at the home receive a good induction and training that is relevant to the needs of the young people such as British Sign Language.

Monthly team meetings are productive and include discussions about the young people. The manager ensures that all actions from the meetings are followed up. In addition, the staff benefit from professionals such as a therapist attending meetings to give advice about how to better manage the young people's complex behaviours such as self-harming.

Regular supervision focuses on the needs and progress of the young people. The staff also discuss their developmental needs and reflect on practice and their personal well-being. The staff have opportunities to progress to senior roles in the home.

The majority of notifications relating to notifiable incidents have been sent to the regulator appropriately. This means that the regulator has been able to keep an overview of any safeguarding issues within the home. However, there has been delay and not all notifications had been sent to the regulator but measures were in place to keep the young people safe.

The manager has taken steps to improve the outcomes for the young people in the home. Most of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection have been fully delivered. There are two areas in which further work is needed in respect of notifications and risk assessments. However, these have not impacted on the overall positive outcomes for the young people.

The home is safe and well maintained. It looks and feels like a family home.

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—</p> <p>that staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that:</p> <p>all risks and behaviours of children and young people are considered prior to admissions against those who are already living in the home; and</p> <p>risk assessments are updated following incidents of new behaviours and include all the potential risks and methods to prevent further harm to individual children and young people.</p>	12/12/2019
<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 staff—</p> <p>take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(vi))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that any concerns of possible sexual exploitation are reported to the</p>	12/12/2019

police.	
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if—</p> <p>there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p> <p>Specifically, the registered person must ensure that notifications of all serious incidents in relation to children in the home are notified to HMCI and in a timely manner.</p>	12/12/2019

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: 1232650

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Friends Together Care Homes Limited

Registered provider address: 7 Tenter Lane, Warmsworth, Doncaster, South Yorkshire DN4 9PP

Responsible individual: Thomas Worthington

Registered manager: Gary Jones

Inspector

Krista Hardy: social care regulatory inspector

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