

SC036917

Registered provider: Royal Borough of Greenwich

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority home provides care and accommodation for up to five young people who have social and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 2007.

Inspection dates: 27 to 28 February 2020

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **Outstanding**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **Good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **Outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 26 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: Outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: None

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/02/2019	Full	Outstanding
10/10/2017	Full	Outstanding
28/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/11/2016	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The registered manager and staff team in this home provide an outstanding quality of care. As a result, young people, including those with complex needs, make excellent progress in all aspects of their social, emotional and educational development. A young person said, 'I never want to leave.'

Staff clearly value the young people in the home. Staff record informal daily praise and compliments for every young person. Comments from staff, such as 'thank you for making me smile' and 'we are all so proud of you', are shared with the young people. This helps to reinforce young people's successes and builds their self-esteem.

Staff prioritise the young people's education and have high expectations for them to attend and achieve. If young people are waiting for a school placement, staff swiftly arrange professional home tuition. Young people succeed in their GCSE examinations and are successful in a wide variety of apprenticeships and work experience, such as those for plumbing and catering.

The experience of living at the home enhances young people's social skills and they grow in confidence. Young people help host the home's annual social events: they greet guests who enter the home and help prepare food for the celebrations. Young people develop self-confidence and actively contribute to their care planning and their family contact arrangements.

Staff excel at encouraging young people to take part in new experiences and a wide range of community activities. Young people enjoy the home's annual summer holiday, alongside trips to the theatre, cinema and golf range, as well as ice-skating. Young people develop healthy lifestyles and take up hobbies such as martial arts and football coaching.

Staff actively support the young people to gain age-appropriate independence skills and they successfully move on to semi-independent accommodation. The registered manager and staff team advocate unreservedly on behalf of the young people in order to ensure that they are able to move on to suitable accommodation or alternative residential placements which meet their needs.

The dedicated registered manager and staff team are very proud of the home's 'staying close' ethos and provide exceptional support to their care leavers. Care leavers benefit from staff's continued support and advice, which help address any of their welfare needs. Care leavers are welcomed back to the home to celebrate their birthdays, and for summer barbecues and Christmas celebrations. The 'care leavers group' has helped to develop the home's young people's guide. As a result, the guide is accessible and relevant to the young people living at the home.

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

Staff have an excellent understanding of the risks and vulnerabilities of each young person. Risks are identified, and staff take steps to reduce those risks. Staff are persistent in their approach to minimising young people's risks, and they complete a daily monitoring record to help identify any emerging concerns. Young people said that they feel safe at the home.

Leaders and managers actively seek out specialist advice and multi-agency contributions to support risk-reduction plans. This is enhanced with specialist professional in-house staff training. Individual key-work sessions further enhance young people's safety, addressing risks such as substance misuse, criminal exploitation and unhealthy relationships. Staff create detailed safety plans for the young people. Community risks are identified, and young people read and agree to their safety plans. Young people become increasingly safe while at the home.

Regular team meetings and case-management discussions consider each young person's welfare needs. All staff contribute to the agenda that sets out 'what is working well, what are we concerned about, and what needs to change' for each young person. Actions are agreed, and risk management plans are updated. However, not all staff had signed to acknowledge the changes made to a young person's recently updated risk-management plan. This may limit staff's knowledge of young people's current risks.

Physical restraint is rarely used in the home. There have been no episodes of physical restraint since the last inspection. A newly created staff post of restorative justice lead provides young people with opportunities for reflective discussions. This helps prevent conflict between young people and helps them to build and maintain positive relationships with each other.

Where young people's sanctions for any challenging behaviours are not effective, staff are forward-thinking. They have developed and introduced a research-informed positive consequences programme. Positive behaviour is promoted in the home, and young people receive suitable rewards for their participation.

The home is fastidiously maintained and all of the relevant health and safety checks in the home are regularly completed. Emergency fire drills are carried out to ensure that young people are able to respond accordingly and keep safe in the event of a fire. However, at the time of the inspection two young people who had recently moved into the home had not experienced an emergency fire drill. This means that they may be unsure of what to do in the event of a fire emergency.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The leadership and management of this home is exceptional. The registered manager has many years of experience in young people's residential care. She is dedicated and passionate about improving the lives and outcomes of the young

people who live at the home. A member of staff said, 'I am always happy to come to work.'

The home is an exemplar of good practice and development. The registered manager and staff team continue to innovate and develop the service. The recently trained child exploitation and online protection ambassador in the home provides support and advice in relation to safe internet access. Staff have created a 'child's journey through care' record alongside ongoing life-story work. This helps staff to understand each young person from a holistic point of view and tailor their care accordingly.

The registered manager actively shares best practice with other professionals. She provides training to local authority social workers and student social workers. Prospective foster carers visit the home to help enhance their understanding of the skills required to care for vulnerable young people.

The home has recently launched a formal outreach service to families facing challenges in their own homes. Staff's dedication and support help young people to remain with their families.

Staff training is comprehensive. Staff undertake additional bespoke training to help ensure that they have all of the necessary skills to support the young people in their care and help keep them safe. Team away days and staff team meetings include regular group-learning sessions which further enhance staff skills.

However, the team-training matrix requires updating. Furthermore, two staff working at the home have higher education qualifications which may not correspond to the appropriate residential children's home qualification. The registered manager should reassure herself that staff's alternative qualifications are suitable. The home's statement of purpose requires updating. These shortfalls do not impact on the outstanding quality of care that young people receive at the 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 registered person must—</p> <p>keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and</p> <p>notify HMCI of any revisions and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days of the revision.</p> <p>(Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))</p>	<p>30/06/2020</p>
<p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must –</p> <p>ensure by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as is reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire.</p> <p>(Regulation 25 (1)(d))</p>	<p>30/06/2020</p>

Recommendations

- All children’s case records must be signed and dated by the author of each entry, and kept up to date. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.3)

In particular, staff should sign to confirm that they have read young people’s risk-management plans.

- All staff in a care role must have the qualification in regulation 32(4). The term ‘equivalent’ as used in the Regulations in relation to qualifications will be a judgement for the registered person based on whether the content of any qualifications held by the individual closely corresponds with the qualifications set out in regulation 32(4) (for those in a care role). (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraphs 10.12 and 10.13)

- The registered person should have a workforce plan which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: SC036917

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Children's Services, The Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington Street, London SE18 6HQ

Responsible individual: Bryan Edmands

Registered manager: Deborah Forde

Inspector

Victoria Jones, Social Care Inspector

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