

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	25 May 2016
Unique reference number	SC433430
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Esland North
Registered person address	Unit 1 and 5 Foundry Lane, Milford, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 0RN

Responsible Individual	Linzi Sim
Registered Manager	Laura Mumford
Inspector	Rachel Griffiths and Ros Chapman

Inspection date	25 May 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC433430

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- This is the home's second full inspection this year. It follows a previous inspection in April 2016 in which significant safeguarding concerns were identified. However, as a result of robust actions taken by leaders and managers, these concerns have been fully addressed. Safeguarding practice is now good. Children and young people are kept as safe as possible by a staff team that understands the risks that they face and that works in accordance with their risk and behaviour management plans.
- Children's and young people's outcomes improve and they make good progress in many aspects of their lives.
- Children and young people enjoy positive relationships with the majority of the staff team. They receive high levels of praise and encouragement to try new experiences and to succeed.
- Partnership working is well developed. This ensures that all the relevant services are kept up to date and are engaged to provide prompt and appropriate support.
- Relationships with parents are good. Staff are particularly skilled at helping families to rebuild relationships and to support parents, children and young people through difficult periods.
- One area for improvement has been identified regarding consultation with children and young people in relation to placement planning. This is not having a negative impact on the safety and well-being of children and young people.

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- Encourage children to see the home's records as 'living documents', supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voices on a regular basis, with particular reference to including children's and young people's views in their placement plans and behaviour and risk management plans ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 58, paragraph 11.19).

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private organisation. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children and young people. The main house can accommodate two children and young people and the cottage annex on the other side of the driveway can accommodate one child or young person.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11 April 2016	Full	Inadequate
15 December 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25 August 2015	Full	Requires improvement
10 March 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
A newly formed staff team, comprising established, experienced and new staff provides children and young people with good and consistent care, as outlined in the children's and young people's individual placement, risk and behaviour management plans. As a result, children and young people are now receiving the stability and security that they need and deserve. The manager has sensitively explained to children and young people the reasons why some staff changes have been necessary and as a result, they have been more receptive to these changes. Observations of children's and young people's relationships with staff during the inspection were positive. Staff provide high levels of praise and emotional warmth. Children and young people are encouraged to try new experiences, to have fun and to achieve. For example, one young person has recently raised money for charity by participating in a 'fun run', and another is preparing to take part in the 'race for life'. Children and young people speak positively about their experiences. One young person said: 'I have a laugh with the staff. I have been on holiday and I have been getting out and about.' By engaging in activities in the local community, children and young people have fun. They get fitter, have the opportunity to socialise and are helped to feel that they are valued members of the local community. Staff support children and young people to make educational progress. For some, the progress is excellent. One young person, who historically had very poor school attendance, proudly said: 'I am currently taking eleven GCSEs, and the exams are going fine. I have also started doing voluntary work at a farm and I will be doing this during the summer holiday.' As a result, future life chances improve. Children and young people are physically healthy. They attend all core health appointments. They are encouraged to make healthy eating choices and to participate in physical activity. Children and young people who have significant or complex emotional health needs are well supported through good partnership working and multi-agency packages of support. This ensured that when the need for emergency intervention for one young person was identified it was provided without delay. Their parent said: 'If it [had] not been for the good team work, we would not have got the help my son needs.' Staff understand how important friends and family relationships are to children and young people and, when appropriate, welcome regular visits to the home. One parent recently stayed overnight at the home, resulting in quality time being enjoyed by all involved. She said: 'Staff have been amazing. They have supported me and my son so well.' Improved family relationships help children and young	

people to develop more positive identities, which help to raise their self-esteem.

Major improvements made to the physical environment mean that the home is now a more welcoming and homely environment for children and young people. In particular, the garden area, with the help and guidance of children and young people, has been transformed into an area that can be enjoyed by all. A young person said: 'I have chosen the flowers and planted them and I have chosen the garden furniture. I am really pleased with the improvements and am looking forward to the summer in the garden.' Such input and involvement from children and young people helps them to develop a sense of pride in their environment. It helps them to feel valued.

Children and young people are regularly consulted about their day-to-day care, through regular key-working sessions, house meetings and feedback questionnaires. They know how to complain and they have access to independent advocates. Children's and young people's placement, risk and behaviour management plans do not, however, reflect children's and young people's views. By involving children and young people in the setting and review of individual targets, they are more likely to be motivated to work towards the aims of their plans.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Shortfalls in relation to safeguarding identified at the last inspection, which resulted in an inadequate judgement and requirements being set, have been fully addressed. Some staff have been disciplined, some have been redeployed and all remaining and new staff and have undergone extensive training in relation to the home's safeguarding policies and procedures. As a result, all staff, at every level are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities, including whistle blowing, and know how to respond should they identify practices in the home that could potentially place a child or young person at risk of harm. Safety in the home has thus significantly improved. Staff, leaders and managers have demonstrated learning in the way in which a recent allegation about a member of staff has been dealt with. Prompt reporting to the local authority designated officer, the young person's parent, their social worker and Ofsted enabled an immediate interim safeguarding plan to be agreed, pending full investigation and independent review of the situation. A thorough and detailed investigation then followed. In this instance, no safeguarding concerns were identified following the investigation. However, the prompt actions of the staff and managers and their good understanding of safeguarding practices	

significantly reduce the risk of harm to children and young people.

Staff are now helping and protecting children and young people through the consistent implementation of comprehensive risk and behaviour management plans. In addition, staff engage young people in programmes of work, targeting specific areas of vulnerability and need. For example, work undertaken with one young person in relation to self-injurious behaviours has been effective. This young person has developed a level of insight into her emotional triggers and has explored strategies that she can use when feeling under pressure. As a result, incidents of self-injurious behaviour have reduced, and the young person is safer.

Despite some children and young people having a history of going missing and of being assessed as being at high risk of sexual exploitation, instances of missing continue to be low. An independent reviewing officer confirmed: 'I am very impressed. This young person does not run away as much. The placement really works for her.' On the one occasion since the last inspection when a young person went missing, staff implemented her individualised missing procedure. They kept in touch with her during the period of missing and, when she was located, welcomed her back into the home. The rural location of the home and good relationships with the police and a specialist child exploitation service provide a good level of protection in this area.

Challenging and complex behaviours are well managed. Proactive approaches, which include high levels of praise and rewards as well as consistent rules and boundaries, are effective. The use of physical intervention is low, which is a testament to the skills of the staff in de-escalating difficult situations. There have been four physical interventions since the last inspection. Following each, children and young people and staff receive debriefs, allowing them to reflect on each incident. This enables staff continually to explore different ways to manage difficult situations and continually to improve their practice.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager is experienced and is on target to complete the required management qualification within the timescales stipulated in the Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015. She is very committed and enthusiastic. She, alongside a newly restructured management and senior team, has provided strong leadership and high levels of support to the staff team, to ensure that the shortfalls identified at the last inspection have been addressed. All staff have attended additional training and team development days in order to unpick and identify the root causes of the shortfalls and to address them. As a result, morale in the home	

is improving, eight requirements and one recommendation have been met and a newly established and motivated staff team is working more cohesively to meet the needs of children and young people to a good standard.

Management monitoring systems have vastly improved. As a result of a 'golden hour' daily checklist being introduced and increased management monitoring of daily logs, case records, incident forms, the visitors' book and rotas worked, the manager has a much clearer understanding of what is happening in the home on a day-to-day basis. As a result, there have been no further shortfalls in staffing levels, and the quality of recording has significantly improved.

All staff who are not in their probationary period are suitably qualified or working towards the required qualification within agreed timescales. All have completed mandatory training and participate in additional training provided by specialist professionals in relation to attachment and trauma. As a result, staff are equipped to meet the needs of the children and young people living in the home, to a good standard.

Good-quality and regular supervision, facilitated by a new and improved supervision template, promotes good reflective practice. In each supervision session, staff are given the opportunity to reflect on the needs of each child or young person and their progress, as well as on their own personal developmental needs. This, as well as regular, reflective team meetings, and staff debriefs following all significant incidents, provides scope for continual improvements in the delivery of care.

The home fulfils its commitment to children and young people as outlined in its recently updated statement of purpose. The document provides clear information to parents and placing authorities about how children and young people will be helped and supported while living in the home.

Quality assurance monitoring is effective. Internal and external systems identify strengths and shortfalls. Any action points that derive from shortfalls are promptly addressed. Both systems take into account the views of children and young people, staff, family members and professionals in order to drive further improvements.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm, or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service 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'.

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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