

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	18/07/2016
Unique reference number	SC449155
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Amicus Community Arundel Limited
Registered provider address	The Amicus Community, PO Box 79, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 9XA

Responsible individual	Rebecca Newton
Registered manager	Stewart Thomson
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

Inspection date	18/07/2016
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

SC449155

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people have made good progress from their initial starting points since arriving at the home.
- Staff are positive and proactive in their approach with young people, seeking to find solutions and work through the challenges that they face.
- Young people are developing strategies which assist them to self-regulate and moderate their behaviour and emotions.
- Staff support young people to develop their life and social skills by offering a wide variety of activities and opportunities, with each being supported to follow a key interest or hobby.
- Young people report that they feel safe and have a key adult whom they trust and confide in.
- Staff and young people have good relationships, which promotes the progress that young people make.
- Staff support young people to address their health needs, with referral to others when required to meet specific needs.
- The therapeutic approach is a strength of the home, with all staff adhering to this approach across care and education. The home is accredited by the Community of Communities.
- All young people are in full-time education and are making progress within their own capabilities.
- Young people are involved in the key decisions made in the home, especially being prepared for imminent admissions to the home.
- Safeguarding concerns have been well reported, referred and recorded, with clarity of investigation and outcome.
- Staff receive regular effective supervision and training which is good-quality, varied and is specific to their role.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The protection of children standard</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;</p> <p>help each child to understand how to keep safe;</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.</p> <p>(Regulation 12(2)(a)(i)(ii)(d))</p>	20/10/2016
<p>The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In particular requires the registered person to—</p> <p>understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home;</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home.</p> <p>(Regulation 13(2)(f)(h))</p>	20/10/2016
Medicines	20/10/2016

<p>The registered person must make arrangements for the handling, recording, safekeeping, safe administration and disposal of medicines received into the children’s home. (Regulation 23(1))</p>	
<p>Fire precautions</p> <p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must—</p> <p>take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children’s home.</p> <p>(Regulation 25(1)(a))</p>	<p>20 October 2016</p>

Recommendations

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

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home’s care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided; specifically, they should complete regular link worker sessions. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 22, paragraph 4.11)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for four young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Young people are admitted from the other children's home within the organisation. The home is recognised by a national organisation as a provider of therapeutic care. Young people living at the home attend the organisation's own school.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/10/2015	Full	Outstanding
17/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/11/2014	Full	Outstanding

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Children and young people have made good progress since arriving at the home. They are learning and developing strategies, which are assisting them to self-regulate their behaviours and emotions.</p> <p>The home is a homely one, with bedrooms and communal areas having a pleasant feel to them. There is currently minor improvement work being completed to develop areas in the home.</p> <p>Staff follow detailed placement plans which provide clarity and insight about young people’s needs. The plans focus on therapeutic needs and how staff support young people to address them. Plans are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect changes in needs.</p> <p>Young people are provided with clear boundaries, structure and routines. The consistency and clarity about expectations appear to assist the young people to feel safe and secure. Relationships between young people and staff are good. Young people have resided there for a period and so have open, honest relationships of trust with staff.</p> <p>A strength of the home is the support that staff provide to young people, assisting them to explore their feelings and emotions. The therapeutic approach provided creates supported transitions between education and care settings. It provides a seamless approach, with all staff working within the home’s therapeutic framework. Staff tell young people why they think they are behaving the way they are, exploring possible reasons and triggers for their behaviour. Young people are beginning to share and explore their feelings and emotions with staff and others. This is also allowing them to explore strategies and other ways to express themselves in safe and more appropriate ways. Young people are able to cope with new situations and experiences, and previously they would have struggled with this.</p> <p>Staff have provided good-quality care and support to young people. They have focused on providing stability and emotional support to young people. This follows a significant incident which occurred earlier in the year, affecting all young people and staff. The impact of this has been different for each young person, which staff</p>	

have understood and responded to.

Placement plans are detailed, focusing on therapeutic needs and how staff support young people to address need. Plans are reviewed and amended as required with regular updates.

Staff support young people to address their basic health needs, with referral for specialist assessment and intervention when required. Staff work closely with specialist medics to support young people to meet their emotional well-being needs. Young people access all of the local services in the community to address their basic needs.

Education and home have regular communication, with effective working relationships between both settings. Handovers and transitions between home and school are positive, with each young person attending school full-time. Staff share essential information and detail, promoting consistency of approach between the settings, which is having a positive impact on young people.

Staff follow contact plans and closely review the impact of these contacts, raising concerns with others and requesting review if needed.

Young people are supported to work through situations of conflict with 'hurt meetings' – a positive way to explore how people feel and how things can improve or change. Staff apply a restorative approach to conflict in the home using a rebuild and restore approach to affected relationships.

Staff facilitate regular 'link sessions', providing an opportunity to explore and reflect on worries, concerns, aspirations and goals for the future. These sessions provide essential education and learning about the impact of risky behaviours and ways to manage and regulate emotions and behaviours. Through these, staff and young people have developed robust relationships in which young people confide in and explore anxieties with staff. There have been gaps in the frequency of these. Young people attend daily house meetings, which provide an essential opportunity to reflect on the positives and negatives of the day. Staff gain young people's views and choices about key aspects of the home.

Staff have carefully assessed and planned for all transitions within the home. They have focused on need and the dynamics of the group within the home. Staff are preparing young people for an imminent admission to the home. Young people are consulted on which bedroom they feel will be best for the young person and how to welcome them to the home.

Staff are supporting young people to develop their self-care, social and

independence skills. This aspect prepares them well for when they are ready to leave the home. However, staff have been over-protective and have limited young people's opportunities to take age-appropriate risks. Young people have not been routinely re-assessed regarding their ability to take part in age-appropriate activities on- and off-site alone.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Staff have good knowledge and insight regarding how to support young people to keep safe. Each young person reports having a key adult they trust and can confide in. They report having several adults from whom they gain support.</p> <p>Following a significant incident earlier in the year, staff appear to be over-protective. These restrictions appear to be affecting young people's ability to take age-appropriate risks. Young people are not routinely having free time away from the home. Risk assessments have not been routinely reviewed to explore positive, age-appropriate risk-taking.</p> <p>Risk assessments detail how to support young people and what is required to minimise risk. Staff have not routinely updated assessments to reflect changes in risk and current need, or to consider fully the possibility of taking more age-appropriate risks.</p> <p>Staff systems within the home for recording and managing safeguarding concerns are robust. They swiftly act on concerns with substantial investigation and exploration and reporting and referral to others, when required. The records detail all actions completed and information shared with others. There have been no allegations or complaints in the home since the last inspection.</p> <p>Staff detail all aspects of concern and incidents in the home. All staff are trained in the home's preferred behaviour management technique, with very low levels of physical intervention used. When it has been used, it has been as a last resort and applied in its lowest form for the shortest period possible. Staff have good systems in place for recording incidents, with detailed post-incident exploration completed with the young person and staff. Debrief has allowed staff to consider triggers and explore strategies to support young people. Staff have not routinely updated risk assessment and plans to reflect information gained or risks identified following an</p>	

incident.

Young people are educated about the risk associated with social media and internet use. A young person used these strategies and informed staff of a recent concern that arose. Staff intervened and supported the young person to keep safe. Records do not evidence how the young person was praised for their positive actions. Plans do not reflect how the young person will be supported to continue to develop their skills and knowledge associated with e-safety. Staff have applied a more restrictive strategy and now supervise all use of the internet. This is not promoting independence skills.

Staff link sanctions and consequences to triggers or causes. They gain young people's views and opinions; records do not show what rationale staff have used in applying sanctions. Sanctions are restorative in nature and provide an opportunity for young people to review and reflect on their behaviours and the impact of their actions on others. Occasionally, several sanctions have been applied for one incident and these have not been evaluated or monitored by leaders and managers.

Staff store medication in an adult area. During the inspection, the medication cupboard was unlocked and the door to the room was not locked. Currently, no young person receives regular medication. Staff do have a supply of homely remedies, although there is clear policy and procedure for their use. The home has a system for administering medication when required. Staff did not follow the home's policy and procedure for storage of medication.

Staff review an in-house risk assessment for fire safety; there has been no oversight from a fire safety officer for a period. Fire doors within the home were propped open during inspection, with no quick-release systems in place if required.

Staff are trained in food hygiene and systems for managing food. During the inspection, evidence to suggest that staff apply and follow these requirements was lacking.

	Judgement grade
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The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home is settled, with a stable staff team and group of young people in residence in the home. They have experienced trauma and challenge over the past year following a significant incident. The established staff team currently lack a house manager to guide and lead them. This has created a challenge for the team, who have worked additional hours to provide consistency in staffing in the home. This has taken its toll on staff.</p> <p>Leaders and managers have applied regular oversight and involvement in the day-to-day running of the home. Staff have taken additional responsibilities and worked well to provide stability and consistency in the home. There has been no effective regular daily monitoring or evaluation of the home and this has had a negative impact. Staff have identified low-level tasks which require intervention, but there has been drift and these have not been addressed. Staff have focused on caring for young people and have not focused on other aspects of the home. Leaders and managers have plans in place to address the house manager vacancy. They have also employed a full-time maintenance person who is completing repairs and improvements in the home.</p> <p>The registered manager oversees the two homes in the organisation. He is experienced and holds qualifications that equip him for the role. Leaders have considered if the qualifications are equivalent to those described in the regulations.</p> <p>Young people are making good progress and have stable, secure and positive relationships with staff, leaders and managers. Skilled, trained, knowledgeable staff care for young people. Staff have aspirations for young people, and they are child-focused and caring in their approach to young people.</p> <p>The 'Community of Communities' accredits the home. Staff all follow the home's therapeutic approach, which is a strength of the home. It is consistently seen in the staff's approach and through their practice with young people. All young people are responding to this and are engaging in a variety of specialist support.</p> <p>Staff also benefit from this approach, with regular opportunities to explore their own feelings and emotions.</p> <p>Staff receive regular effective supervision and appraisal of their practice. Staff access a variety of clinical and operational supervision, with daily handovers supplementing the support available and knowledge. Staff also access independent therapeutic support if required. They access a good variety of training which is specific to their role. Staff attend fortnightly training and review days, which</p>	

provide a regular opportunity to reflect on their practice and promote learning.

Daily handover meetings, which review a 24-hour period, support and equip staff while promoting the home's and the organisation's consistency and stability of approach when working with young people. This process provides support to staff and builds their resilience through working with a whole-team approach.

Leaders and managers have completed aspects of evaluation and monitoring. They utilise a variety of systems and processes to monitor the quality of care in the home. Managers have consulted with young people and others outside of the home. They have not robustly reviewed aspects identified in reviews, and due to this there has been drift, with aspects not being actioned or implemented. Gaps in review, monitoring and evaluation are present. New known risks have not been considered in all plans, and areas in the home are in need of update and improvement.

There are staff vacancies in the home, with a recruitment programme in place to address these. Managers use bank staff that are known to the home, and they access the home's basic training and induction programme. Agency staff are used, and the managers' daily staffing plans take into consideration the impact of unknown staff on young people.

Managers complete robust pre-admission assessments for all considered admissions. They only accept admissions from the organisation's sister home. Transition plans are effective, considered and well planned, supporting those transitioning into the home and those currently residing in the home. Young people who are transitioning on from the home are supported through coordinated prepared plans. Young people are prepared for all admissions to the home, being fully involved in the process of welcoming young people into the home. Staff explore the impact of admission plans to address and minimise risk and to meet needs.

The Statement of Purpose has been reviewed and updated, and it reflects the home's ethos, aims and aspirations.

Recruitment processes are in line with safer recruitment advice and guidance.

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 that 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 who 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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