

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	06/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC040175
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Drive Care Homes Limited
Registered provider address	18 Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 4BG

Responsible individual	Emmanuel Akpan
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Suzy Lemmy

Inspection date	06/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home	Requires improvement
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement

SC040175

Summary of findings

The children's home provision requires improvement because:

- Staff failed to report a young person's allegation, contrary to the home's safeguarding policy and procedures.
- A risk assessment was not adhered to, which resulted in a young person being restrained for their own safety.
- Some staff have not had supervision in line with the home's supervision policy and statement of purpose. The quality of supervision has not been consistent.
- Managers have not ensured sufficient oversight or monitoring of: daily records, young people's comments on records of restraints and correspondence with external professionals.
- Confidential records are not always suitably protected.
- Complaint investigations have not always been conducted in accordance with the home's own procedures.

The children's home strengths

- Staff interact well with the young people. One young person who previously was reluctant to engage is now much more confident.
- All young people attend school and are achieving. Staff support one young person at school by attending lessons with him. As a result, his behaviour has improved. He has been able to remain at the school and has made excellent progress.
- Staff promote positive contact with parents. They work closely with families to provide consistent care and clear boundaries.
- The new manager recognises some of the areas of weakness and improvements are underway.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that staff—</p> <p>(2)(a)(vii) are familiar with, and act in accordance with, the home's child protection policies, particularly in relation to allegations against staff.</p>	31/10/2016
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure—</p> <p>(2)(d) 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, particularly in relation to following risk assessments relating to when maintenance work is being carried out.</p>	31/10/2016
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must—</p> <p>enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>(2)(a) 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, particularly in relation to frequency of staff supervision.</p>	31/10/2016

<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home, particularly in relation to auditing daily records, information shared with social workers and recording of children’s comments following restraints. (Regulation 13(2)(h))</p>	<p>31/10/2016</p>
<p>Case records must be kept—</p> <p>securely in the children’s home during the period when the child to whom the case records relate is accommodated there. (Regulation 36(2)(c))</p>	<p>31/10/2016</p>
<p>The registered person must ensure that:</p> <p>a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation (Regulation 39(3))</p>	<p>31/10/2016</p>

Recommendations

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

- Expectations of standards of behaviour should be high for all staff and children in the home. This is in relation to staff acting as positive role models. (‘Guide to children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 39, paragraph 8.11)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This private children's home can accommodate eight young people with physical and learning disabilities. There is a garden with wheelchair access to the ground floor of the building.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Requires improvement
18/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/07/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home</p>	<p>Requires improvement</p>
<p>All young people are attending school and making progress. Staff support one young person within school to ensure that the school placement is successful. He is described proudly by staff as, 'The top of the school'. Another young person's personal education plan review evidences improvement in their grades, and more positive behaviours towards teachers and students.</p> <p>Staff promote a sense of community by encouraging the young people to participate in a range of activities, including bowling, going to the cinema, having barbeques and going on a holiday to Blackpool. Young people are able to enjoy activities in the home: an outside space is being used as a craft room and there are plenty of games and activities available.</p> <p>Staff competently support young people's routine health needs. They register young people with professionals who oversee their healthcare. Where necessary, the young people profit from the input of therapeutic services. The manager liaises closely with external health professionals to ensure that young people's emotional health needs are met.</p> <p>The detail of health management has not always been accurate enough. For example, the manager requested that a young person's daily intake of food was recorded. The daily logs show that staff are recording the types of food the young person eats rather than accurately recording the amount. Consequently, the information available to share with the dietician was limited.</p> <p>Assisting young people to have a voice is not always rigorously pursued or achieved. With regards to meeting young people's personal and intimate care needs, the home's policies and procedures have been updated. In one example, a young person's care plan has been reviewed to specifically include guidance on this sensitive topic. However, no consideration has been given to seek the young person's own views on how such care should be delivered, for example by providing advocacy services to assist them to say what they want.</p> <p>In other ways and examples, the young people benefit from opportunities to give their views and opinions about the day-to-day operation of the home. Staff facilitate regular house meetings where young people influence decisions around food and the activities they would like to do.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged to learn new skills and to develop their independence. One young person's progress and development plan highlights her</p>	

achievements; for example, cooking the food of her culture. Another young person, who previously would not communicate with the inspector, was able to interact well at this visit. He said that he was making progress in, 'Mopping the floor, taking the bins out and washing up.' He liked, 'The holiday in Blackpool and to select his staff.' The manager has worked with him to increase his choice of preferred staff, thus increasing his ability to tolerate a wider range of people.

Staff promote positive contact between young people and their families. Parents are encouraged to visit the home. One young person was not able to manage overnight care, staff and his parent worked together to provide consistent care and he is now able to stay overnight.

An example of poor role modelling was observed during the inspection. Staff returned to the home with a shopping trolley taken from the local supermarket. This will have been returned later, but it neither prepares young people well for shopping in supermarkets where they may not be known, nor does it promote the home's reputation positively to its neighbours.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Requires improvement
<p>Inconsistent safeguarding practice compromises the safety and welfare of the young people. In one example, staff members failed to report a young person's allegation against a staff member. This omission prevented the necessary safeguarding action being taken by managers, thus placing the young person and the staff member at continuing risk. Once aware, managers took action to safeguard the young person. An internal investigation found that staff viewed the young person's allegation as a behavioural issue. The designated officer for the local authority was consulted and refresher safeguarding training has been arranged for all staff.</p> <p>More usually, swift referrals and consultations with the designated officer have been undertaken by managers when other safeguarding allegations have been reported. Ofsted has also been informed of other allegations and kept updated regarding the actions taken.</p> <p>Individual risk assessments and care plans ensure that information is shared and staff are aware of the strategies they should use to reduce safety risks. Reviews of risk assessments clearly record the related incidents. This ensures the staff are</p>	

familiar with the reasoning behind any changes. It aids their understanding. However, some staff failed to adhere to one particular risk assessment relating to the maintenance of the property. This risk assessment stated that maintenance should cease if a particular young person was in the home at the time. Staff did not follow this guidance, which resulted in the young person being physically restrained for their own protection.

Overall, physical interventions have reduced as a result of staff's increased knowledge regarding triggers and strategies to prevent challenging behaviour. Young people are being assisted to find improved ways of coping with their feelings. However, the recording of young people's comments is inconsistent. It is not clear whether the young people were spoken to following each use of physical restraint. Consequently, the manager is unable to fully evaluate the impact that these incidents have on young people.

Staff are aware of the risks regarding internet use and they work with the young people to minimise these. They supervise the young people's internet use and educate them on how to keep themselves safe.

Recruitment arrangements are thorough. The vetting procedures ensure that only people who are thought to be safe to work with young people are appointed. Newly recruited staff undertake training and shadow opportunities prior to working with the young people. One member of staff said, 'Mandatory training is very good.' All staff have either obtained the level 3 diploma for residential childcare or are enrolled on the course.

Staff work closely with a psychologist and with child and adolescent mental health services to develop their understanding of young people's emotional needs. Their input has been effective. For example, one young person is very well supported when they are in crisis. The manager promotes staff's understanding of how difficult emotions present through challenging behaviour.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
<p>Two changes of manager since the last inspection have disrupted continuity for the young people and the staff team. However, a new manager is now in post and she has made an application for registration with Ofsted. With transferable knowledge and relevant qualifications, including a level 4 diploma in leadership and management for adult services, she also has experience of crisis management work. To demonstrate her commitment to her ongoing professional development,</p>	

she is enrolled on the level 5 diploma in leadership for health and social care.

The manager has engaged well with staff, who respect her and value her knowledge. One staff member said, 'The manager has an open door policy. She has brought in positive changes.' Another staff member said, 'If we have any problems, we can go straight to her.' She has forged good relationships with a team that has undergone a lot of management changes.

The manager recognises the importance of sharing knowledge during supervisions, staff handovers, debriefs and team meetings. However, prior to her appointment, staff did not have supervision in line with the home's supervision policy. The requirement from the previous inspection has not been met. Supervision records are not consistent. Some supervision notes refer only to previous staff minutes and do not have a record of areas discussed during supervision. Other supervision records show good evidence of reflection, discussion about young people's care plans and safeguarding issues.

A recent parent complaint, relating to staff conduct concerns, is currently being investigated by the provider. This is yet to be concluded. One previous example of a complaint investigation fails to record the outcome of a complaint about a member of staff's conduct while at school. There is no evidence of this being resolved, nor the outcome being shared with the complainant or the staff member. Those involved are without resolution and the home cannot demonstrate its learning or practice improvement from this example.

In general, positive professional relationships exist between the home and external agencies. One social worker reported that, 'They have the young person's best interests at heart', and another said, 'Staff are around to give information during visits. I get incident reports.' However, one example demonstrates poorer practice in this regard, where communication was not clear. Inaccurate record-keeping by staff minimised the severity of a young person's accidental injury and there was further delay in providing the social worker with the necessary updates about this incident. Other examples demonstrate a lack of precision when staff complete the young people's daily logs. Events and staff actions are not always clearly written; therefore, difficult to understand. The manager recognises the significance of these shortfalls and staff training is planned. Such training should also include the protection of confidential information. Daily records and the staff communication book were left visible in a communal area while maintenance workers were at the home.

Positive relationships with parents and carers enhance the young people's experience when they are at the home. One parent said, 'The manager is a good manager.' Another sent a card to the deputy manager thanking him for, 'His consistent support and for all you are doing for our child during his visits.' Another parent said, 'Some staff are friendly. I do not have any issues with the home.'

The manager is committed to developing the service by learning from recent events but she is new in post. She is still getting to know all of the nuances about the home, the staff and the young people. Regular quality assurance reports are received from the external visitor. These are well-received and used by the manager to seek to improve the quality of the service. Her own monitoring processes are yet to become fully embedded.

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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2016