

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	09/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC449155
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Amicus Community Arundel Limited
Registered provider address	The Amicus Community, P O Box 79, Arundel BN18 9XA

Responsible individual	Rebecca Newton
Registered manager	Stewart Thomson
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

Inspection date	09/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
<p>This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>Young people continue to make good progress. Staff support them to focus on their emotional needs and to develop strategies which assist them to manage and express their feelings in a safe way.</p> <p>Staff support each young person to engage and attend education. A young person is making very good progress at college, developing his passion for the arts. Staff attend all events and celebrations of young people's progress and work. Staff work closely with education providers to reintroduce young people to education following a period of absence. Staff encourage and support young people to explore education opportunities and visit new settings.</p> <p>Young people have been supported to address their basic healthcare needs; they have attended regular check-ups and reviews of health needs. A young person was supported to attend a specialist health appointment. Records did not demonstrate if a young person had attended a six-weekly review as requested. Care plans detail how to support young people to manage their ongoing health and well-being needs; however, they are overdue a review and do not reflect current approaches and interventions. Staff have good knowledge and understating of approaches to be used.</p> <p>Staff have improved and developed placement plans, which contain practical information and guidance to staff about how to meet young people's needs. Plans were previously very lengthy and detailed, focussing on the therapeutic approaches to be used. They have been streamlined and there are now two versions: one which provides quick insight and detail about a young person, and a longer, more detailed supplementary version. Plans detail the approaches to be used to support young people, but not all details have routinely been updated or amended following changes. A plan detailed the contact arrangements for a young person, but these were not the current plans being followed. Staff develop target areas young people wish to develop and focus on. There is no current system in place to assess and monitor a young person's progress and achievements in these areas.</p> <p>Staff offer regular opportunities for young people to voice their opinions throughout each day in the home. They collect together as a group every day to talk about their feelings, worries, and anxieties, and to discuss and explore plans and</p>	

activities for the day. Staff spend time talking and listening to young people, assisting and supporting them through the challenges they face each day. Staff have good relationships with young people, and they are very well attuned to their feelings and anxieties.

Young people are supported to develop their life, social and personal care skills. They each plan, shop and prepare basic meals, as well as complete other household chores. A young person was proud to have learned how to do his own laundry. Staff have focussed on enabling and supporting young people to take age-appropriate risks, such as unsupervised time away from the home. Staff educate young people about strategies to use in the community and how to keep themselves safe when away from the home. A young person has learned to travel independently to college and another is encouraged to independently attend an activity in the community. Staff have not updated plans to reflect these changes or the current areas young people are developing. Changes have been made to the access levels which young people have for the internet. This, too, has not been reflected in the plan.

The recording of incidents and significant events is detailed; records evidence what happened before, during and after the incident. Staff may use physical intervention, and the records of this state what method was used and for how long. Staff are trained in the home's preferred approach. Managers review and monitor all records and provide an evaluation to the management of each event. Managers identified an incident in which staff did not utilise de-escalation strategies during an incident and so the event may have been avoided. They identified that additional training was required and that a higher staff ratio is required for an interim period while staff develop these skills.

Staff are robust in their approach to managing safeguarding concerns, including reporting and referring issues to other agencies as required. They work effectively and collaboratively with others to manage and minimise risk. Managers have identified that staff had gaps in their knowledge and understanding about the safeguarding process and procedures. They have supplemented and refreshed knowledge through focussed sessions which explored the areas of weakness identified. Staff have formulated detailed plans and protocols following significant concerns or young people engaging in risk-taking behaviours. They have not consistently ensured all documentation and risk assessments have been updated to collectively reflect the consistent approach to be followed.

Staff record complaints made and provide brief and basic details of the response provided to the complainant. Staff have identified the need to maintain positive relationships with those in their local community.

Episodes of missing have been well managed with a coordinated approach to locating young people. Missing plans and assessments do not clearly state the required actions if an event should occur, nor is it evident if plans have been reviewed and updated following an incident and change in behaviour. Staff have not completed or requested child sexual exploitation risk assessments for young

people.

Surveillance is used in the home to monitor access to bedrooms. Evidence of consent being sought from placing authorities is not in place.

The registered manager of the home is also a director of the company. The registered manager oversees the home with regular updates and communication with the day-to-day staff. There have been gaps in the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of care provided in the home. The registered manager should consider delegating this responsibility (and registration) to a more hands-on manager.

Managers have acted on requirements and recommendations set at the previous inspection. They have implemented new systems, but these are not yet embedded into practice.

There continue to be staff vacancies in the home. Managers have used bank staff to fill gaps in rotas. Managers have continued to recruit new staff in order to reduce vacancy levels. New staff recruited have gaps in knowledge and skills which, on occasion, have impacted on their ability to provide consistency of care and clear enough boundaries for young people to adhere to.

Managers have improved systems ensuring medication is stored securely in the home.

Work to improve the presentation of the home has been completed, with more planned in the home's development plan.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for four young people who have emotional and/or 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
18/07/2016	Full	Good
01/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/10/2015	Full	Outstanding
17/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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>The protection of children standard 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(2)(a)(i))</p>	01/04/2017
<p>The leadership and management standard In particular requires the registered person to—</p> <p>use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(2)(h))</p>	01/04/2017
<p>Monitoring and surveillance</p> <p>The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if: the child's placing authority consents in writing to the monitoring or surveillance. (Regulation 24 (1)(b))</p>	0/04/2017

Recommendations

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

of the following recommendation(s):

- Where there is a possibility that a child will run away or go missing from a children's home placement, their placement plan should include a strategy to minimise this risk. If the child is looked after, their care plan should include such a strategy. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 9.24, page 45)
- The registered person should ensure that, in line with their individual health plans and the ethos of the home, children are offered advice, support and guidance on health and well-being to enhance and supplement that provided by their school through Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE). Staff should have the relevant skills and knowledge to be able to help children understand and, where necessary, work to change negative behaviours in key areas of health and well-being such as, but not limited to, nutrition and healthy exercise, mental health, sexual relationships, sexual health, contraception and use of legal highs, drugs, alcohol and tobacco. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', paragraph 7.18, page 35)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection, we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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