

SC040175

Registered provider: The Drive Care Homes Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

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.

Inspection dates: 22 to 23 August 2017

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

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

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 29 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people enjoy positive relationships with staff who, in turn, nurture and engage them in life-skills and wider activities.

- The staff are focused on meeting the individual needs of the young people. They implement effective strategies which support the young people to manage their behaviour and develop improved social skills.
- Young people are safe. A believing approach to all allegations ensures that young people's voices are heard. Staff will contact the designated officer with any safeguarding concerns; they know what to report, when and to whom.
- Education is a priority of the home. The staff support young people at their education provisions to ensure that their behavioural needs are not a barrier to learning.
- Life-skills are acquired through the dedicated support and guidance of staff. Young people are encouraged to engage in life-skills work and all successes are celebrated, no matter how small.
- The new registered manager has brought about positive change. The staff team feels supported, and is enthusiastic in the approach to its work.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The records of immunisations and medical histories for each young person are not well maintained.
- Information about the family histories of each child is not well known or recorded and this inhibits supporting young people to understand their identity.
- There has not been any significant training to raise staff's awareness of the 'Prevent' duty.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement
10/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must—</p> <p>(1)(a) maintain records ("case records") for each child which— include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child. (Regulation 36 (1)(a))</p> <p>This is with specific reference to immunisation records.</p>	29/09/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that they—</p> <p>(iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans, taking account of the child's background. (Regulation 6 (2)(b)(iv))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that chronologies are in place for each young person to support their identity needs.</p>	29/09/2017
<p>The registered person must—</p> <p>(2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (2)(c))</p> <p>In particular, ensure that 'Prevent' duty training is undertaken by all staff.</p>	31/12/2017

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people benefit from care delivered by motivated staff. Staff invest time and energy in learning young people's individual needs and interests. This interested approach provides the young people with positive experiences and lays the foundation

from which trusting relationships are built. The staff actively encourage young people to participate in activities. For example, regular karaoke nights take place where the lively staff encourage the young people to dance and sing. For some young people, this has increased their confidence and use of spoken language. This sense of inclusion demonstrates the participative ethos of the home's registered manager.

Enthusiastic staff seek ways to engage the young people using a range of communication methods, such as the picture exchange communication system, physical cues and social stories. Staff are keen to expand the young people's potential. For one young person, this has resulted in a greater use of words and sentences. For others, utilising communication through pictures and the use of social stories have supported them to learn and explore particular issues.

Complaints are swiftly responded to and resolved. A worker from the local child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) said, 'The registered manager is keen to ensure that he knows what young people want. One young person did not like the way staff were speaking to him. The registered manager was able to ascertain that the young person wanted to be spoken to like an adult and quickly resolved the issue for him.' The young people's opinions guide the home's menu and activity planning and its development plan. The young people's bedrooms reflect their individual tastes. One young person said, 'Whatever we want, he [the registered manager] gets it for us.' An example of this is the purchase of a larger trampoline for the home's garden. Consequently, the young people feel valued and engage in their care, with their voices heard by staff.

The dedicated staff are prepared to go the extra mile to ensure that the young people are engaged in education. The staff work closely with the schools and colleges that the young people attend. Examples of this are the staff attending school with the young people to ensure that they are supported to engage in their lessons. This results in young people who have good school attendance and who are making progress in education.

The staff take a creative approach to supporting all of the young people to learn independent skills. They break down tasks, such as preparing breakfast, to include the young people. One young person can put the bread in the toaster, another can bring his tea and toast to the table. Consequently, the young people are experiencing success in learning life-skills that are tailored to their individual needs. A parent commented, 'My child is now doing things for themselves easily that were a battle at home.'

The young people regularly access the local community. The staff support their social skills by encouraging them to participate in activities linked to social learning. Some of the young people enjoy trips to the local supermarket and will purchase items for the home as part of the development of their life-skills. One young person spoke of enjoying day trips out, in and around the local area. Others enjoyed a holiday to the coast.

Admissions to the home are carefully assessed and the impact of them upon the existing residents is well thought through. A young person leaving the home celebrated his time

there with a barbecue and cake. His parents commented: '[Name] has made so much progress here and the staff have been great. We feel a bit nervous of the move but we know it's the right time.' Celebrations are an intrinsic part of the home's ethos, and family members of the young people are welcomed. A parent commented, 'I was amazed how far my child had come when I visited the home for his birthday. He is more independent and has learned many great things since being here. The staff always make us feel welcome as a family.'

The staff encourage the young people to become independent in their self-care wherever possible. Personal care is delivered sensitively and privacy is guarded to ensure that the young people retain their dignity. The managers and staff have taken a proactive approach to seeking additional medical and health support for young people when required and they have a good working relationship with the local CAMHS. A professor from the service commented, 'The staff work collaboratively and expertly, rising to the challenge of caring for complex young people resiliently and valiantly.'

All young people are working towards individual goals that develop their life-skills and prepare them for their independence. A social worker said, 'The staff have helped [the young person] to recognise his own triggers; he can now calm much quicker: this is real progress.' The young people's goals are consistently reviewed and updated, providing a clear account of their development to support their continued learning.

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

Young people feel safe and all have trusted adults that they can talk to. The home takes a believing approach to allegations, which further supports the young people to feel safe. Allegations made by the young people are managed and reported transparently. The staff know what to report, to whom and when. However, the management and staff lack an understanding of the 'Prevent' duty agenda and have yet to have training in this area. This risks inadequate reporting of any such concern.

The staff have face-to-face training in safeguarding. They understand risks and concerns. They know how to record them and pass on any concerns in line with the organisation's policies and procedures.

Risk assessments for the young people are thorough and are very much 'live' records, with regular updates made in response to new events. The dedicated staff support reduces the risks. For example, there has been only one incident of a young person going missing since the last inspection. The missing from home policy is clear, and provides staff with guidance on urgent action to take. Consequently, knowledgeable staff deliver care that reduces risk to the young people.

The staff have received behaviour management training from CAMHS and work in partnership with them to develop behaviour management plans that are effective in reducing incidents of potential harm to young people. The staff focus on engaging young people; they are aware of their triggers and confident in defusing potential conflict using distraction and de-escalation techniques. The use of physical restraint is rare. When all

else fails, restraint may be used, in accordance with the relevant regulation. Records are clear and demonstrate reflection with the young person and management oversight.

The young people access the internet with staff support, which is in line with their risk assessments. The home utilises internet security and staff are aware of the risks regarding online safety. The registered manager is researching suitable training for the young people to further prepare them for using the internet safely and independently.

Safer recruitment ensures that staff have the right skills and attributes to enhance the team's performance. The mandatory checks are thorough and clearly recorded.

Medication and first-aid training are comprehensive. They include the administering of emergency medication. Medication is stored and administered systematically. The well-monitored systems ensure that the young people are safe.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is currently undertaking his level 5 diploma in leadership and management. The staff speak positively about his ability to manage and the changes that he has implemented. He takes a supportive and nurturing approach to the staff. He has utilised supervision to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the team. He is clear about his expectations from the staff and they are clear on their roles and responsibilities.

A social worker from CAMHS describes the staff as, 'A developing team that are keen to learn and implement creative strategies that support the young people's continued development.' Aspirations for the young people are high. Goals are set that stretch them to reach their potential. One young person's social worker commented, 'great gains have been made'. Consequently, morale within the staff team is high and the team is developing cohesively.

Care plans and risk assessments are comprehensive. Monthly key-work sessions review previous goals and set new more challenging goals to enable the young people to continue to develop skills. The effective tracking and monitoring of the young people's needs ensures that plans reflect any changes and demonstrate progress.

The induction programme for new staff is thorough, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the home's policies and procedures, including the whistleblowing policy. Staff spoke highly of the mentoring provided to them during induction: 'I feel happy that we meet regularly; I can ask them anything and feel that they care for me when they ask me how I am feeling.'

The young person's guide gives information about the home's routines, accommodation and activities. The statement of purpose gives stakeholders information about the services provided by the staff within the home. Both reliably provide the reader with a good overview of the home's services and routines.

The registered manager considers referrals for the home carefully. He makes decisions regarding new placements autonomously and makes good use of a matching tool to ensure that the full needs of the young people are considered. Consequently, the placements at the home have been effective and the young people have settled well into the group. One young person said, 'The staff here are wonderful; I can talk to them and they have helped me to manage my anger. Now I know that I can talk to them or go to my room to calm down, I am managing it much better.'

There is good inter-agency working. Regular network meetings review behaviour plans and mean that parents, schools and the home provide consistent behaviour management. The staff ensure that photos are available for review meetings to add value to the achievements of the young people. An independent reviewing officer commented, 'It was lovely to see as well as hear the progress [the young person] has made.'

Visitors to the home are signed in and fire evacuation plans made clear in the event of an alarm. The premises are well maintained, providing a safe physical environment. The children's bedrooms reflect their individual tastes and are decorated to the high standard which can be seen throughout the home.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

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: SC040175

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: The Drive Care Homes Ltd

Registered provider address: The Drive Care Homes Ltd, 18 Hatherley Road, Sidcup, Kent DA14 4BG

Responsible individual: Emmanuel Akpan

Registered manager: Ram Poudyal

Inspector

Sarah Olliver, social care inspector

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