

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC447645
Inspector	Michelle Spruce
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Unity Residential Care Services Ltd
Registered person address	Cartwright House Broad Street STOKE-ON-TRENT ST1 4EU
Responsible individual	Israel Kofi Amponsah
Registered manager	Christopher Richard Whitworth
Date of last inspection	18/09/2013

Inspection date	25/06/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a private children's care organisation and is registered to accommodate three young people with emotional and/ or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/09/2013	Interim	good progress
20/06/2013	Full	adequate

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
5 (2001)	ensure the registered person shall keep under review and, where appropriate, revise the statement of purpose and the children's guide (Reg 5(a)(b))	31/07/2014
33 (2001)	ensure the independent person shall produce a written report about a visit and provide a copy of the report to HMCI. (Reg 33(9)(a))	31/07/2014
34 (2001)	ensure the registered person shall supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted by him (Regulation 34(2))	31/07/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure staff are equipped with skills required to meet the needs of the children and purpose of the setting (NMS 18.1)
- ensure the registered person has a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in accordance with Regulation 30. The system includes what to do where a notifiable event arises at weekends (NMS 24.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people live in a home that provides a nurturing and caring environment where they develop good relationships and sustain attachments. Young people know and understand the reasons why they are there and work hard towards their individual plans in achieving their personal goals. A young person said, 'I get on with everyone; it is nice being in the countryside; you can have animals; I am getting a guinea pig'.

Young people understand how important their education is. All young people attend school and have overcome significant barriers to learning from their start point. Some young people express that they are now feeling more able to cope in a school that challenges them more. Young people continue to enjoy education and improve their attainment. A young person said, "I love school".

Young people take responsibility for their own health where possible. They choose appropriate food that contributes to the weekly menu and take regular exercise to keep fit. Routine health appointments are attended and medication is taken appropriately as and when required. A young person said, 'I have medication for hay fever; I eat well; there is plenty of food'. This keeps young people fit and well.

Young people make informed choices about who they have contact with. Contact arrangements ensure that young people have access to those who do not present a risk to them. Young people enjoy spending time with their friends both at the home and in the community. This develops good peer relationships, confidence and social skills.

Quality of care **good**

The relationships between staff and young people are trusting and respectful. They get on well together and strong bonds have formed with the young people that have lived at the home for some time. A young person said, 'I like all the staff here'.

Young people are supported to air their views and opinions freely during daily chats or in formal house meetings. This gives young people the opportunity to have their say about how they would like the home to run. A young person said, 'I have link work sessions with my keyworker; I attend meetings'. The décor of the home has changed and young people now have pets that they take care of and look after. This gives young people a sense of belonging and responsibility that improves their self-esteem and confidence.

Staff are consistent in their approach and work in partnership with education

professionals to ensure young people are provided with the right support that meets their individual needs. Education is an important part of young people's lives and young people make good progress from their start point to engage and attend education. As a result, attendance and attainment levels have improved.

Young people know how to complain and do so with the support of staff. Staff provide literature that signposts young people to advocacy services that can help them when they are unhappy about the care they are receiving. Complaints are handled fairly and young people are represented appropriately.

The health needs of young people are met through regular support from staff to ensure that routine appointments are attended. Medication arrangements are safe and staff assist in the administration of medication to young people where necessary. The staff encourage healthy eating and good physical exercise to keep young people fit and well. As a result, young people thrive and take part in activities that stimulate them socially, emotionally and physically.

The home is appropriately located and designed. The soft furnishings reflect the choices of young people living in the home and offer a warm and inviting atmosphere where young people can relax and feel safe.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people report that they feel happy and safe living at the home. The home provides a nurturing environment where identified risks are managed well. The staff strive to keep the young people safe and have their best interest at heart.

Young people that go missing from home are supported to return safely. The manager and staff team have robust protocols in place with the police to ensure effective joint working assists a safe return. This protects young people who are at risk of harm. Risk assessments are reviewed and updated to reflect the improvement young people make in regards to keeping themselves safe. Staff talk openly and honestly with young people about the dangers they potentially place themselves in. For example, a young person that used to frequently leave the home unauthorised was able to agree arrangements un-supervised activity time arrangements with staff. This helped him to stay safe while still having time with peers in the community.

Not all staff have received training in Child Sexual Exploitation. This means they may not be equipped to provide the right support in the event of young people being at risk of CSE.

Bullying in the home is monitored well and currently young people do not feel bullying is a problem. Young people have access to a range of people they can access in the event they feel unhappy about the staff or the service. Complaints forms are freely accessible and used by young people to raise their concern or

complaint. This ensures young people have their voice heard and are appropriately supported.

Staff encourage positive behaviour through reward, praise and reparation. This gives young people the opportunity to reflect on their actions and to put things right. For example, young people write letters of apology following inappropriate behaviour. The use of physical restraint has significantly reduced and is only used as a last resort. A young person confirmed that the use of physical intervention had reduced and he had not been restrained for some time. The behaviour strategies staff uses are effective and keeps young people safe.

The manager promotes good health and safety practice through robust monitoring that ensures the home is safe and free from hazards. Fire safety arrangements are in place and staff and young people take part in fire drills. This keeps people living, working and visiting the home safe.

Staff recruited to the home go through strict procedures to ensure they are fully vetted before employment begins. Visitors to the home are also vetted to ensure they are legitimate and asked to provide identification before they are signed into the visitor's book.

Leadership and management

adequate

There have been some significant changes to the management of the home since the last interim inspection in September 2013. The previous manager left in February and a new manager was appointed in March 2014. The manager became Registered in May and holds a NVQ Level 4 in Residential child care.

Since the manager has been in post he has taken action to work hard with the staff team to continue to provide good quality of care to young people. Staff are supervised well and receive annual appraisal to assist their continued personal development. This helps staff to improve their skills and knowledge and improves the care young people receive. A staff member said, 'I do feel supported; I do love my job and the staff team are brilliant'.

There is a good level of core training provided for staff. A staff member said, 'All my training is up to date; I feel my training needs are met and training is well organised'.

The manager promptly addresses complaints and concerns received to the home. Young people that raise concerns about the home are supported well to have their complaint heard. A full investigation is undertaken and an outcome response is provided to the young person. However, the manager has not notified Ofsted about a complaint as required in a timely manner.

The monthly monitoring is undertaken by an independent visitor. Reports are

provided to the manager and a copy is held on file. Young people's views about the home along with the view of others assist with assessing the quality of care the home provides. Although reports are held in the home and the manager confirms they have been sent, they have not yet been received by Ofsted since January 2014. Furthermore, the review of care report completed by the Registered Manager has not been sent to Ofsted as required. This delays information required to be shared with the inspector.

A development plan is in place that reflects how the service will continue to operate. The manager said, 'There is a home development plan that is a working plan broken down in monthly tasks'. The manager and staff team have a good vision that is incorporated into the plan. A staff member confirmed their awareness of the plan and said, 'We had talks about turning the extra land into a therapeutic farm land'. This shows staff contribute and understand how the home will improve the quality of care for young people.

The Statement of Purpose is in place but is currently not up to date because it does not reflect recent staff changes. Although changes have taken place, Ofsted has not received a revised copy to reflect the changes in line with regulation. Staff know and understand the aims and objectives outlined in the statement of purpose and work hard to deliver the objectives.

Confidential information about young people is stored safely in a locked office in locked cabinets. Only authorised personnel have access to them. This protects sensitive and confidential data.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.