

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	18/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC447645
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Unity Residential Care Services Ltd
Registered person address	98 Lancaster Road, NEWCASTLE, Staffordshire, ST5 1DS

Responsible individual	Israel Amponsah
Registered manager	Laura Wilcox
Inspector	Sandra King

Inspection date	18/08/2015
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

SC447645

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people make significant progress from their starting points in relation to their education, social interaction, physical and emotional well-being.
- Staff work well with family and friends promoting contact.
- Young people enjoy the nurturing environment.
- Safeguarding practice is of high priority and as a result young people are safe and feel safe.
- Staff have an excellent knowledge of young people and their needs, they celebrate young people's individuality whilst providing a nurturing parenting style.
- The staff team are well trained and supported to ensure they meet the needs of young people.
- Partnership working is effective. Managers and staff work well with professionals and families to support young people and keep them safe.
- Feedback from young people and professionals is positive.
- There are some shortfalls in practice relating to advocating for further educational assessments, ensuring risk assessments are robust and that young people are supported to engage in their placement plans.

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
6. The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care quality care standard the registered person must ensure that children receive care from staff who - (2) (b) (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	07/10/15
8. The education standard In order to meet the education standard ensure that children make measurable progress towards achieving their educational potential and are helped to do so, in particular, that staff – (2)(a)(vii) raise any need for further assessment or specialist provision in relation to a child with the child's education or training provider and the child's placing authority.	07/10/15

Recommendations

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

- Ensure children are encouraged by staff to see the home's records as 'living documents' supporting them to view and contribute to the record in a way that reflects their voice on a regular basis (The guide to the quality standards, page 58 paragraph 11.19)
- Ensure staff continually and actively assess the risk to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risk on a day to day basis (The guide to the quality standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5)

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
18/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
25/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/09/2013	CH - Interim	Good progress
20/06/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Young people like living here. One young person states she, 'Does not want to move from the home as she is settled'. The quality of relationships with staff and young people is good. Staff are attentive to the individual needs of the young people. Young people's relationships with each other at times can be strained, however the manager has responded appropriately and has applied different styles of communication between them in an attempt to improve their relationships. Young people are supported to attend routine health appointments. For example, staff fully support young people to access and engage in therapy with child and mental health services to help them address any current or past difficulties. The strength of relationships between young people and the staff group provides and encourages a platform to discuss any problems and worries. As a result, young people feel emotionally secure. Young people have good school attendance. On occasions, when young people have difficulties with attending school or within school, these are well managed by staff in conjunction with teachers and head teachers. This shared approach ensures young people are aware professionals are working together in their best interests. The manager actively challenges education professionals in the event of young people having difficult relationships with their peers at school. However, the home has missed an opportunity to further improve young people's education by raising a need for further assessments. Young people are encouraged to enjoy good levels of contact with family and friends. This helps them maintain important relationships in order to sustain their identity. A mother comments, 'Everyone at the home is lovely and when staff visit the family home they are part of the furniture which I like, they are always interested in how the family is which is really positive'. Young people are actively encouraged to make a positive contribution to the home and wider community and enjoy activities of their personal choice. For example, young people engage with their local horse-riding stables, other young people enjoy spending time with staff and having pamper days, going to Alton towers and	

enjoying time with friends. This ensures young people are building their self-esteem and confidence.

Young people's photographs, keepsakes and memories of their time living at the home are collected. This includes, their achievements and birthdays. This ensures young people have mementoes of their time living at the home, coupled with a sense of belonging and identity.

Young people are effectively prepared for independence in accordance with their age and care plan. Young people will participate in age-appropriate chores around the home, developing basic skills that will help them in the future. For example, young people enjoy cooking. This helps, young people to be better prepared for their transition to adulthood.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people are safe and feel safe. Managers and staff clearly know the individual needs of each young person. They celebrate their difference whilst at the same time ensuring their safety, minimising risks and increasing personal safety. However, risk assessments do not clearly and robustly identify young people's triggers and any action to be taken in the event of an incident. Staff receive regular safeguarding training and are fully aware of what action to take should a disclosure be made by a young person. Staff understand the complaint and whistle blowing procedures. This ensures young people are fully protected. Staff work well with other agencies to reduce risk of young people going missing and child sexual exploitation. There are few occasions when young people go missing, all young people receive a return home interview. As a result, young people benefit from a comprehensive and consistent approach to managing their risk taking behaviours. A professional positively comments that the home, 'have reduced risks of young people placing themselves in risky situations and have undertaken interventions around managing relationships and conflictual situations.' Staff apply appropriate boundaries and are aware of the potential risks of young people accessing the internet and social media. Room searches are undertaken with the knowledge and where available, the agreement of the young person.	

Positive behaviour is encouraged through effective reward and praise systems. Young people are supported to understand how their behaviour impacts on others and are developing effective skills to regulate their emotions. The need to restrain young people has reduced due to positive behaviour management strategies.

Young people are aware of the complaints procedure. There have been complaints made by young people that have been resolved satisfactorily. This means young people's views are taken into account and that they are listened to.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The registered manager has been in post since October 2014. She is experienced and suitably qualified and has the support of a skilled and motivated staff group. The manager promotes a positive culture of improvement within the home, coupled with high aspirations and individual nurturing parenting styles for young people that ensures progress is made from their starting points. The manager is aware of the strengths and development areas of the service and is equally aware of how to continually improve the experiences and progress for young people. Consistent internal and external monitoring enables the manager to understand the home's strengths and recognise areas for further development. A comprehensive statement of purpose details the ethos of the home and is readily available for professionals and family members. The home has a staff rota that provides consistency to young people. Staff are suitably qualified and trained to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to meet the individual needs of young people. This endorses stability and consistency in young people's lives. Staff receive regular supervision, annual appraisal and attend team meetings. Staff undertake training that meets the needs of young people and the ethos of the home. As a result young people receive good quality care from competent staff who have the skills and experience to meet their needs. There is a clear learning culture in place which is further supported by therapists attending team meetings to ensure effective partnership working coupled with a bespoke care package for each young person. Managers and staff have effective and productive professional working	

relationships with key stakeholders. Professionals and parents are positive about the home acknowledging the progress young people make.

There are a number of shortfalls identified in respect of written robust risk assessments, and ensuring young people are involved in their placement plan. In its current format young people are not fully involved in their placement plan and as a result may not know what they can expect from the home and what the expectation is of them.

One previous requirement has been met. This has resulted in young people having enhanced bathroom facilities.

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 looked after children 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 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 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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