

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	22/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC447645
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Unity Residential Care Services
Registered provider address	Unity Residential Care Services Ltd, 98 Lancaster Road, Newcastle-under-Lyme ST5 1DS

Responsible individual	Hilary Jones
Registered manager	Adam Mills
Inspector	Sandra King

Inspection date	22/03/2017
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 This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has declined in effectiveness. Young people are not safe in this home. Young people do not enjoy positive relationships with each other. This is partly attributable to the impact of new admissions to the home and an unsettled period for some young people. Poor dynamics between young people mean that young people have to spend time apart, and have staff present with them at all times. As a result, young people do not reach their full potential and do not feel comfortable in their own home. Bullying is an issue that has not been addressed by staff. Staff place the onus on young people to actually say that they feel bullied before any action is taken. When young people have made allegations of feeling bullied, the registered manager has failed to investigate the concern. A young person who was being bullied by the other young people in the home was subjected to a physical assault, threats, and young people trying to kick in her bedroom door after she had locked herself in due to feeling afraid. After a particular unpleasant incident, the young person refused to stay in the home, and was moved to an alternative home after a night's stay in a hotel. This illustrates that staff do not protect young people from harm, and as a result young people's self-esteem and self-confidence are compromised. Behaviour management of young people is ineffective. Young people who have been involved in bullying have not received any consequences in respect of their behaviour. Young people have completed a one-to-one session on bullying. However, this did not address the intimidation and threatening behaviour towards a young person. Consequently, young people are not learning essential life skills on how to reconcile conflict, and do not understand the impact bullying has on others. Risk assessments do not detail strategies for how staff should respond to bullying incidents. As a result, staff do not prioritise and provide effective and robust protection in the area of bullying and conflict management. Because of this, young people do not have a sense of well-being and security, and have to make the decision themselves to refuse to stay in the home. Young people who present with concerning behaviours and who are at risk of harm do not benefit from structured key-work sessions. Although key-work sessions do take place, they do not have a clear emphasis on young people's behaviour and the	

consequence of their actions. As a result, staff do not improve young people's safety in the home.

The requirement from the last inspection has been met. This means that young people's health needs are now being met. However, recommendations made at the last inspection have not been met and mean that young people's welfare remains unmet.

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 who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2016	Full	Good
05/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/08/2015	Full	Good
18/03/2015	Interim	Sustained 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
11. The positive relationships standard (1) The positive relationships standard is that children are helped to develop, and to benefit from, relationships based on— (a) mutual respect and trust; (b) an understanding about acceptable behaviour; and (c) positive responses to other children and adults. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (iii) encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding; (v) communicate to each child expectations about the child's behaviour and ensure that the child understands those expectations in accordance with the child's age and understanding; (xi) de-escalate confrontations with or between children, or potentially violent behaviour by children; (xii) understand and communicate to children that bullying is unacceptable; and (xiii) have the skills to recognise incidents or indications of bullying and how to deal with them.	03/05/2017
12. The protection of children standard (1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe. (2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure— (a) that staff— (i) 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; (iii) have the skills to identify and act upon signs that a child is at risk of harm;	03/05/2017

(iv) manage relationships between children to prevent them from harming each other; (vi) take effective action whenever there is a serious concern about a child's welfare.	
13. The leadership and management standard (1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— (b) promotes their welfare.	03/05/2017

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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