

SC456149

Registered provider: Bright Futures Care Limited T/A Cornerstones

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, learning disabilities and sensory impairments.

The home is part of a private organisation that also offers specialist education provision and care and accommodation for adults who have learning disabilities.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 October 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: 8 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None.

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Young people receive well-planned care from a consistent staff team, which results in them making good progress from their individual starting points.
- There is a stable staff team that supports young people in school as well as in the home, which provides consistency for young people.
- Staff excel at planning transitions, which means that young people are well prepared to move into the home and as a result settle well.
- Parents, professionals and the young people are complimentary about the home and level of care provided.
- Young people are safe living in the home, due to a high level of staffing and good risk management.
- The home is managed by a committed and enthusiastic manager who ensures that young people's well-being is central to his and the staff's practice.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Shortfalls were identified during this inspection regarding staff supervision, training, recording of direct work and restraint practice. The manager fully accepted these during the inspection, and has plans in place to address these issues. The shortfalls have not had any identified impact on the welfare of the young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/03/2017	Full	Outstanding
18/11/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/12/2015	Full	Outstanding

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
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33(4)(b))	24/11/2017
The registered person must ensure that within five days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(c))	24/11/2017

Recommendations

- Records of restraint must be kept and should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- Staff should be familiar with the home’s policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. With particular reference to ensuring that any direct work undertaken with a young person is recorded in their case file. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 62, paragraph 14.4)
- It is good practice for a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions to be kept and to ensure that both the person giving supervision and the staff member have a copy of the record. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 61, paragraph 13.4)
- The (workforce) plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home and used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional needs of staff (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 53, paragraph 10.8). This is with particular reference to ensuring the manager has a system in

place to monitor whether staff are up to date with mandatory training, and that staff have personal development plans in place, which record their continuing professional development needs.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in an exceptionally warm and homely environment where staff know them well. Young people like living in the home. One young person graded living there as '100 out of 100', and another young person described it as 'brilliant'. Young people have their own staff team around them to ensure consistency of care. Some young people have had the same staff members looking after them for many years, which means that young people develop strong and trusting relationships with the staff members who are caring for them.

Young people make good progress from their individual starting points, due to well-planned, individualised care. Care planning is robust. Young people have individual plans and routines in place, which staff follow. Staff utilise the support from a multi-disciplinary consultancy service that completes a thorough assessment of young people and produces a sensory diet for young people, which provides staff with individualised sensory strategies to use with young people, such as using pressure or calming strategies. This ensures that young people receive individualised care, which contributes to their progress. An independent reviewing officer (IRO) reported that, '[Name] has made steady progress. I think his progress is a reflection of the skills, expertise and support staff provide.'

Young people all attend school full time, with good attendance. Some young people who did not attend school before moving to this home now attend full time. Staff use creative strategies to encourage young people to attend school. For example, one young person has pet therapy and walks the dog to school once a week to encourage the young person to go to school. Staff from the home support young people at school during the day to offer consistency across the home and the school. This approach means that young people are engaged in education, and have the opportunity to meet their educational potential.

Staff ensure that young people have a weekly activity planner in place and, as a result, young people are engaged in a wide range of activities that are specific to their individual interests, such as drumming or Lego club. Young people access a range of community activities, such as youth clubs, the local sensory and play hub and local football clubs. This gives young people the opportunity to develop social relationships, which increases their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff place high priority on young people's health. Each young person has a health passport which details their individual health needs and staff encourage a healthy lifestyle through a healthy diet and exercise. Staff are quick to access health services for

young people if necessary, and are proactive about obtaining support from specialist services, such as the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS), if necessary. Most staff are trained in administering medication and while there have been two medication errors since the last inspection, the manager has put strategies in place to reduce the risk of any further errors.

Staff support young people to develop skills that they will need for adulthood by ensuring that young people are set achievable targets each month around areas of individual needs. For example, for one young person this was preparing a meal. There is clear evidence that this work is successful and is resulting in young people learning new skills in all areas, from personal care to independent living.

Staff excel at supporting young people to communicate their wishes and feelings. They use a wide range of communication systems to ensure that young people have the opportunity to have their say on all aspects of their care. Some young people have made excellent progress in communication due to the support of staff. For example, one young person who was non-verbal is now able to communicate with a lamp acquisition through motor planning device, which has had a significant impact on the quality of his life and his behaviour. Staff consult young people through weekly consultation forms and quarterly young people's meetings. As a result, young people are listened to and their views are central to the running of the home. Young people know how to complain and staff complete mock complaints forms with them to ensure that they understand how to complain. This ensures that young people not only know how to complain, but understand that it is okay for them to complain if they are not happy about something.

Transitions for young people are managed exceptionally well by staff in this home. There are some excellent examples of meticulous planning for young people joining and moving on from the home. Staff get to know young people who are joining the home before they move in by doing home visits, taking the young people out on activities and visiting them at home. One parent commented, '[The] team were brilliant, I can't praise them enough; they got to know [name], they introduced her to school and the house, she got to choose for her room and tried to get it like her bedroom at home.' This child-centred and careful approach to transition ensures that young people settle well into the home. Young people already living in the home are consulted when new young people are moving in. One young person reported, '[The manager] tells me that there might be another Young Person my age coming in.'

Staff are proactive about promoting young people's contact with family members, in line with young people's care plans. Some young people's families live long distances away from the home. Staff transport young people for contact, and supervise this to ensure that young people can maintain relationships with people who are important to them in a safe way. One social worker reported, 'The staff go above and beyond in relation to this [contact]; [name] makes the long journey down to [name of place] to see his mother. [Name's] dad has been supported to take [name] out in the community also.'

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

Young people are safe in this home due to a high level of staffing and effective risk management strategies. Staff know young people well and understand their individual risk and vulnerabilities; these are set out in individual risk assessments with clear actions for staff to take to reduce any known risks. Young people do not go missing from the home, but staff are aware of actions to take should a young person go missing from their care.

There have been no safeguarding allegations made since the last inspection, but staff know what procedures to follow should a safeguarding concern arise. The organisation has a safeguarding officer who staff can contact should they need any advice. Young people are kept safe as a result of safe recruitment practices. These ensure that new staff are subject to the necessary checks, to make certain that they are safe to work with young people.

Staff are committed to helping young people overcome challenging behaviour. Each young person has a thorough and individualised behaviour management plan, which staff understand. All staff receive training in Team-Teach, which is the physical restraint model that staff are expected to use to manage challenging behaviour. There is a high level of restraint used in the home and staff's recording of incidents of restraint do not always include enough detail to establish whether the restraint carried out was necessary or proportionate. The recording is also not sufficient to establish whether staff are using strategies identified in young people's behaviour management plans prior to the restraints being carried out. This was a recommendation made at the last inspection. This makes it difficult for the manager to monitor staff practice and does not contribute to keeping young people safe.

Furthermore, staff do not always record that they speak to the young person about the restraint, or observe the young person afterwards as an alternative, following a restraint being carried out. This does not ensure that young people are given the opportunity to give their views and feelings when they have been subject to a restraint, which reduces the opportunity for understanding the causes of young people's behaviour.

There is a lack of evidence of staff undertaking work with young people on how to keep themselves safe in areas such as stranger danger or internet safety. Staff have resources available to them to use with young people, such as books, and staff say that they undertake this work. However, there is a lack of recording of this work, which makes it difficult to establish the quality of work completed and the benefit of the work to young people. The management team acknowledged this during the inspection and is taking steps to ensure that keep-safe work undertaken with young people is recorded.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed effectively by a suitably qualified, enthusiastic and child-centred manager, who has been registered to manage the home since 2015. He is well supported by the registered individual. They both take a proactive approach to the management of the home and as a result have an excellent understanding of the needs

of the young people they are caring for, and the progress that young people make. The manager has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas for development and has good systems in place for monitoring practice and the progress that young people are making. He has a development plan in place that identifies areas to develop and he completes a six-monthly review of the service into which he incorporates feedback from young people, parents and professionals. He makes good use of external monitoring systems to ensure the continuous improvement of the service.

Staff like working in the home and say that they feel well supported. There is a core stable team of staff, most of whom have their level 3 in childcare qualification, or are working towards this. Staff present as enthusiastic about their roles and the young people that they are looking after. One staff member reported, 'It has a homely feel, everyone is well looked after and we work together well.' Another staff member reported, 'I love it; it's great, everyone works together as a team, [name] is a good manager to work for, and he has a lot of time for the staff and kids.' The manager does not ensure that staff receive regular formal supervision. Some staff have not had formal supervision since February this year. Staff receive informal supervision while they are on shift, but the manager does not keep a detailed record of these discussions. This means that staff are not given the opportunity to have time to reflect on their own practice or consider their own professional development.

The organisation is committed to identifying and developing staff who wish to progress within the organisation. Most staff are up to date with their mandatory training. However, the system in place does not allow the manager to have sufficient oversight of staff training, and of whether staff are up to date with their mandatory training or have any additional training needs. Not all staff have a personal development plan in place and team meetings do not always take place. This limits the opportunity for the professional development of staff. The management team acknowledged this during the inspection and has a plan in place to address this.

The manager routinely consults with young people to obtain their views of their care and when young people complain he takes robust action to address this. Young people feel that they can approach managers if they are not happy. One young person said, 'I would talk to [manager] or [assistant manager] if worried about anything on a day-to-day basis.' This empowers young people and ensures that their views remain central to the running of the home.

Staff work collaboratively with parents and professionals to ensure that young people's needs are met. Parents and professionals were complimentary about the home. One parent said that the home was 'pretty amazing'. An IRO commented, 'There is evidence from looked after reviews that they have taken time to share and gather information from his social worker which has clearly benefitted the Care Planning process. There is also evidence that they have also got to know members of his family, especially [name] and [name] who are encouraged to be as involved in appropriate aspects of his care including contact, education days, awards events and also when meeting [name's] religious needs.'

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: SC456149

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bright Futures Care Limited T/A Cornerstones

Registered provider address: Regency House, 45–51 Chorley New Road, Bolton, Lancashire BL1 4QR

Responsible individual: Paul O'Leary

Registered manager: Lee Richards

Inspector

Sarah Billett: social care inspector

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