

SC064663

Registered provider: Eastfield Group

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a privately owned home which provides care and accommodation for up to six young people who have emotional difficulties and who may also present with more challenging behavior.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 17 September 2018.

Inspection dates: 9 to 10 April 2019

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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 12 June 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/06/2018	Full	Good
31/08/2017	Full	Good
07/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
29/09/2016	Full	Good

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 maintain records (‘case records’) for each child, which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child, are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36(1)(a)(b)(c))	28/05/2019
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the young person’s home that— uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1) and (2)(h))	28/05/2019
The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if an incident requiring police involvement occurs in relation to a child which the registered person considers to be serious; or there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40(4)(b)(e))	28/05/2019

Recommendations

- Ensure that just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of the home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child’s needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home (Regulation 21 (c)(i)). Any decisions to limit a child’s access to any area of the home and any modifications to the environment of the home, must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child’s welfare. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.10).

In particular, ensure that internal downstairs doors are unlocked to allow young people free access to all communal areas of the home.
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks 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 risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

- The importance of understanding who we are and where we come from is recognised in good social work practice, for example through undertaking life story work or other direct work. Staff in children's homes should play a full role in work of this kind. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.14)

In particular, ensure that key-work sessions are planned in line with the identified needs in young people's care plans.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people live in a safe and nurturing home. They are receiving a good quality of care that is bringing structure, reliability and emotional security to their lives. Young people have strong and positive attachments with the staff and very much feel that this is their home.

The staff know the young people well and work out the best ways to engage with them. The staff's nurturing approach gives young people strong messages that the staff care about them. Young people described the staff as 'sound', 'caring', and 'always there for me'. A staff member commented, 'I love coming to work and spending time with the young people; they are very important to me.' This commitment to young people allows them to develop enduring relationships with a stable, caring staff team.

Young people make significant progress from their starting points while living at this home. All young people are expected to engage with education. As a result, one young person has returned to tuition following a long absence from learning, and other young people either attend school or have a clear educational plan in place. The promotion of education enhances young people's future life chances.

Staff ensure that young people are given every opportunity to experience activities that may not otherwise be available to them. The staff are extremely dedicated to their role and show great commitment to ensuring that vulnerable young people are enabled to live life to the full. For example, some young people have joined local football teams.

Young people are fully supported to maintain contact with people who are important to them. Staff ensure that all contact arrangements reflect the young person's care plan. Arrangements can be complex, and staff are sensitive to this. Appropriate support is in place to ensure that contact is as safe and positive an experience as possible. Parents are positive about the care provided, with one saying, 'I cannot praise them enough in the care they provide.'

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

Young people's safety is at the centre of all practice. All young people report that they feel safe and cared for living in this home. Members of staff know each young person's vulnerabilities and plan in detail how they can protect young people while helping them to develop skills, recognise risks and increase their independence.

The staff team responds quickly and proactively in safeguarding young people in times of crisis. The direct work with the police and youth offending teams in gathering intelligence supports safe care in the community and the home.

The registered manager carefully considers each new referral. She assesses any risks and the potential impact on the young people already living in the home. This measured approach helps to ensure placement stability for all the young people in the home.

The staff are proactive in their approach when young people have gone missing from home and this is helping to reduce the number of occurrences. The staff have access to good local policies and procedures about what to do if young people go missing and they are quick to act on these to safeguard young people. A parent commented, 'The risk to my child has reduced to the point that there have been very few times that they have been missing.'

Staff personnel files include the required information, and there are good recruitment and selection processes in place that confirm that young people are cared for by a safe and competent workforce.

The home presents as a lived-in family home. It is warm, welcoming and comfortable. The quality of furniture and decor is very good. However, internal doors in the home should be unlocked to allow young people free access to all areas of their home. Furthermore, notices for staff that are fixed to the kitchen cupboards distract from the homely environment created in the rest of the house.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is experienced and working towards the necessary level 5 qualification.

Records need to be accurate, signed and dated and have a rigorous management overview. Records do not provide an insight into the young people's lives and care experiences, and there is limited information to measure their progress or identify the effectiveness of the support provided. For example, the records of key-worker sessions are very limited in detail. They only reflect informal discussions, rather than offering a more comprehensive account of what the objective of the planned session was and how this links to the wider support to meet each young person's individual needs.

Similarly, care planning is weak and does not promote the continued progress of young people. Internal placement plans, and risk management plans, are not reviewed effectively to identify the changing needs of individual young people. They also fail to adequately address the issues of risk and how these should be managed safely to promote consistency of care.

Significant events involving young people resident in the home have not been reported

to Ofsted. This means that the regulator is unable to carry out its monitoring function to ensure that all appropriate action is taken by the provider to safeguard young people.

Staff receive regular, good-quality supervision that supports and challenges practice to improve the care given to young people. The supervision of staff is further supported by team meetings that provide opportunities for the staff to reflect on their practice and ensure that young people are at the centre of discussions. Staff comments include, 'It's a good opportunity to discuss my work with young people' and 'I think we are a very good team as we all want the best for our young people.'

There are good professional relationships between the registered manager, staff, family members and professionals involved in the lives of young people. These positive relationships encourage good information sharing for the benefit of young people. A youth offending professional commented, 'The manager and staff work effectively in sharing important information with us. This helps us all to protect young people.'

The registered manager and responsible individual fully acknowledge all shortfalls raised at this inspection. They recognise how the shortfalls affect the day-to-day running of the home and the outcomes for young people. The registered manager and responsible individual show the capacity and enthusiasm to make the required improvements, including introducing systems that are more robust, to ensure that young people's care planning, safety and well-being are prioritised.

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: SC064663

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Eastfield Group, 6d Reyground House, 6b Ryeground Lane, Formby, Merseyside L37 7EQ

Responsible individual: Ivy Thompson

Registered manager: Christina Wood

Inspector

Elaine Allison, social care inspector

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