

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	26/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC436826
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	CASC (Barrow) Limited
Registered provider address	125 Ramsden Square, Barrow in Furness, Cumbria, LA14 1XA

Responsible individual	Hilary Southward
Registered manager	Rachel Arts
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	26/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
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	
<p>This home required improvement at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>Since the last full inspection, managers and staff have worked hard to make improvements and provide care of a high standard to young people. The recruitment of additional permanent staff has greatly assisted in this process and the home is currently fully staffed. This is reflected in staff morale being improved and a better sense of team working. Young people are beginning to develop positive and trusting relationships with staff, who they know will be caring for them for a significant period. The previous reliance on relief staff is much reduced and the young people are clearly benefiting from this, as are the staff team.</p> <p>Young people have made pleasing progress in some areas, notably one young person's child sexual exploitation (CSE) risk seems to have reduced recently and another young person has gradually increased contact with his family in line with a planned return home. Staff show a good level of understanding of young people's needs, and can identify when young people's progress falters and correlate this with other issues affecting their lives.</p> <p>Incidents of bullying behaviour and poor peer relationships were a significant feature at the previous inspection. Changes to the resident group have alleviated this issue somewhat, but staff have also received additional training in bullying awareness and have developed skills in managing young people's conflicts. When incidents of negative behaviour have occurred, staff have responded confidently to manage situations actively and prevent them from escalating. On the occasions when aggression or violence is an issue, the home is not currently evidencing that follow-up work is always completed with young people to help them to understand what constitutes acceptable behaviour, and a recommendation is made that this should occur and be recorded.</p> <p>There have been no self-harm incidents recorded since the previous inspection, which shows good progress. The change in group dynamics has contributed to this.</p> <p>Some young people are not settled in their education provision. The home works effectively and actively with other agencies in the young people's lives to ensure that suitable alternative education is put in place as soon as possible following</p>	

disruption to young people's education. For other young people who are struggling at school, the home maintains frequent and high-quality contact with teaching staff to try to maintain the school placement successfully.

Two young people have moved out of the home since the last inspection, one due to approaching 18 years of age and one due to a request to move to alternative provision. Both transitions were managed and planned appropriately.

Going missing from home has been problematic for one young person and contributed to the ending of their placement. In the main, going missing incidents are managed well and protocols are followed. The previous requirement in respect of maintaining individual going missing records for each young person has been met. Some issues were noted both with the recording and with the practice regarding one young person's episodes of going missing. This had correctly been identified by the manager at the time of the inspection and plans are in place to make protocols more explicit, to ensure consistency in response to missing from care incidents. A requirement is made to reflect this deficit and to ensure that good practice is developed and embedded.

There have been no incidents requiring restrictive physical intervention; however, staff are fully trained in therapeutic crisis intervention (TCI) in the event that the need did arise. The absence of physical interventions suggests that staff are de-escalating incidents effectively.

The home responds positively to the risk of child sexual exploitation (CSE) and works in partnership with other agencies to ensure that young people are safe. One young person has a multi-agency safeguarding plan in place and all staff have been trained in CSE. Young people do not have access to wi-fi in the home and key worker sessions are used as a forum to discuss risk and keeping safe. Additionally, the home has sourced material from the NSPCC to work directly with a young person about CSE risk.

Transitions into the home have been positive, with a young person settling well after some very challenging behaviour initially. Staff showed resilience and persistence, which enabled the young person to develop trust in them and begin to show good progress. Placement matching is of a good standard.

Record keeping is improved, with all young people now having health assessments on file and robust systems are now in place to ensure that medication records are accurate. The home has responded effectively to the requirements made at the last full inspection as detailed above, and managers are focused on continuous development and improvement. Monitoring activity is thorough and managers value the independent visitor's reports and advice, feeling that they make a significant contribution towards raising standards. Managers show a willingness to continue to learn and commitment to driving improvement.

Information about this children's home

This privately owned children's home is registered to accommodate and care for up to four young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The home accepts emergency placements and can offer care to young people on a short-, medium- or long-term basis.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement
02/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
04/11/2015	Full	Good
25/11/2014	Interim	Improved 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
<p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that staff understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person. Specifically that staff take effective and timely action when a young person does not respond to welfare calls when on free time, that missing from home procedures are implemented in a timely manner and that records detailing the time a child goes missing are accurately recorded. (Regulation 12 (2)(a)(v))</p>	<p>26/02/2017</p>

Recommendations

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

- Expectations of standards of behaviour should be high for all staff and children in the home. These standards should be clear and unambiguous. Children should be supported to develop understanding and empathy towards each other. Positive behaviour and relationships should be reinforced, praised and encouraged; poor behaviour should be challenged and discussed. Specifically this relates to ensuring that follow-up work is completed with young people when they engage in unacceptable behaviours towards one another. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 39, paragraph 8.11)

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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