

# SC413992

Registered provider: Mayne Enterprises Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

This service is registered with Ofsted to provide education and care to a maximum of 11 young people. It is a small, privately owned independent residential school and children's home for young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties, often combined with moderate learning difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 20 to 21 September 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected requires improvement to be 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:** 18 January 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Improved effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection:**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- The majority of young people settle well and the staff provide them with a stable, nurturing environment where they make good progress.
- Collaborative working between care and teaching staff ensures that there is a flexible and creative approach to engaging young people in education. Many young people make good progress in school.
- There is a strong and innovative approach to supporting young people to gain life skills and progress towards independence.
- Young people have access to specialist therapeutic support and many young people improve their sense of emotional well-being.
- Good partnership working has ensured that young people have access to specialist health and relationship advice.
- Managers take a proactive approach to meeting young people's needs and reducing their levels of anxiety.
- Many young people have become safer as a result of them no longer going missing.
- Staff take a sensitive approach to supporting young people who disclose historic abuse and neglect.
- Managers are keen to develop new ways of working to support young people and introduce systems for monitoring their progress.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Practice relating to the assessment and management of risk is still not sufficiently robust.
- The admissions process does not help managers to demonstrate that they take a child-centred approach to those young people who come to live at the home.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/01/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/04/2016	Full	Outstanding
26/11/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/05/2015	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
<p>12: The protection of children standard</p> <p>In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure:</p> <p>(2)(a)(i) that staff 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.</p> <p>This is with specific reference to the assessment and management of risk.</p>	20/11/2017
<p>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard the registered person must enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that:</p> <p>(1)(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and (b) promotes their welfare;</p> <p>(2)(a) lead and manage the home in a way that is consistent with the approach and ethos, and delivers the outcomes, set out in the home's statement of purpose.</p> <p>This is with specific reference to undertaking assessments of the likely impact new admissions to the home will have and having a clear policy and guidelines on managing potential conflict of interest.</p>	20/11/2017
<p>Restraint in relation to a child must be necessary and proportionate. (Regulation 20(2))</p>	20/11/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees:</p> <p>(4)(a) undertake appropriate continuing professional development.</p> <p>Specifically, ensure staff undertake refresher training in order to maintain the knowledge and skills required to meet the specific needs of the children.</p>	20/11/2017

## Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

Specifically, ensure children are given the opportunity to set the agenda for their house meetings.

- The registered person must make suitable arrangements to manage, administer and dispose of any medication. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)

Specifically, consider implementing a recording system that identifies stock levels of medication held in the home.

- The registered person should ensure that staff engage proactively with the placing authority to contribute fully to the relevant plans for the child's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.3)

Specifically, ensure that the targets set for children in their care plans are relevant to the home's, and the placing authority's, long-term plan for the child.

- Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third party information. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

Specifically, ensure records are kept of individual key-work sessions that staff undertake with children.

## Inspection judgements

### Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The majority of young people settle well and experience increased levels of stability and well-being, although there are exceptions. Most young people develop positive, trusting relationships with staff, particularly those who remain at the home for long periods. Young people who have remained at the home for a number of years have made exceptional progress in terms of their emotional well-being, educational attainment and independent living skills. One young person, when reflecting on his relationship with senior staff, said, 'They have helped me become the person I am today.'

All young people have a place at the organisation's on-site school. Effective communication takes place between care and teaching staff, and this ensures that young people receive consistent guidance and support to engage positively with their educational provision. A flexible and individualised approach is taken when integrating

young people into education and this has resulted in the majority of young people improving their attendance and engagement. Some have made exceptional progress in their academic achievement and development of practical skills. Most young people take pride in their achievements and this has a positive impact on their self-esteem.

There is a strong commitment to supporting young people to develop life skills and prepare for greater independence. The home has recently been adapted to include a semi-independence flat on the top floor of the building, suitable for three young people. Careful consideration and planning is undertaken before a young person is given a room in the flat. Staff continue to support the young people in the flat while providing reduced levels of supervision. The young people occupying the flat spoke enthusiastically about the opportunity that they are being given to become more independent while remaining in a highly supportive environment. These young people are also undertaking an accredited course in independent living skills. Individual risk assessments are completed for each young person residing in the flat, although there is no over-arching risk assessment for the provision.

There is a key-work system in place with identified staff taking on responsibility for ensuring that a particular young person's needs are met. Key-work sessions are undertaken with young people, but these are not always recorded. Therefore, there is no record of the support being given to young people, and how they are responding. Consequently, information obtained during key-work sessions does not always inform the care planning process.

Young people are encouraged to engage in therapeutic work with the organisation's head of therapy. She is based on-site, which means she is accessible to young people when they are in need of additional support. The head of therapy has engaged some young people and their family members in life-story work, and this has been highly beneficial in some cases. The stability of one young person's respite foster placement was greatly increased as a result of work initiated by the head of therapy.

A healthy lifestyle is promoted. Young people have many opportunities to take physical exercise and they are provided with a healthy balanced diet. The managers have worked in partnership with external agencies to ensure that young people have access to specialist advice on developing positive relationships and maintaining good sexual health. The system for administering prescribed medication is safe, although the medication recording system could be improved by keeping a running record of medication stock levels held at the home.

Staff respect the individuality of each young person, and managers acknowledge the importance of young people being given the opportunity to develop a positive cultural identity. Young people are able to express their views on the quality of the care that they are given, although many of the agenda items at young people's house meetings are set by staff. All young people spoken to during this inspection knew how to make a complaint, and the process is used effectively to resolve young people's concerns.

Detailed planning ensures that young people are welcomed sensitively to the home. Where possible, young people's families are engaged in the process, and this includes family members accompanying young people on visits prior to admission. Young people's particular vulnerabilities and fears are known to staff, and positive action is taken to

reassure the young people and help them settle quickly. For example, waking night staff have been introduced to the home since the last inspection, as some young people were becoming anxious at bedtime. One young person said that knowing there are waking night staff available makes him feel safer during the night.

An excellent range of activities are provided, ensuring that young people have fun, learn new skills and build their self-esteem. One young person has taken great pride in building a skate ramp under the guidance of staff and teachers, in the large garden surrounding the home. There are also regular organised trips to local leisure facilities, and during school holidays young people enjoy holidays away or days out to tourist attractions.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: requires improvement to be good**

The assessment and management of risk is not currently minimising the potential for young people to come to harm. Some young people's individual risk assessments do not reflect the severity of their behaviours, or the negative impact that these behaviours could have on other young people. Consequently, some of the strategies for keeping young people safe are weak. In one case, the strategy for preventing young people harming one another while visiting each other's bedrooms was for staff to keep the bedroom door open and make regular checks. This approach is inappropriate given the information available regarding the known behaviours of the young people concerned.

The management of risk relies too heavily on strategies such as staffing levels and staff being vigilant. Insufficient consideration has been given to securing specialist assessments and therapeutic interventions to address unsafe behaviours. Low-level emerging concerns regarding young people's behaviour, such as alcohol or substance misuse, are not consistently risk assessed. In one case, no evidence could be found that the strategy for monitoring a young person's internet use was being implemented, despite the young person being at high risk of unsafe behaviours online.

Insufficient priority has been given to ensuring that staff are able to help and protect young people to the best of their ability. No recent training has been provided on meeting the needs of young people on the autistic spectrum, or those who demonstrate sexually harmful behaviours. In addition, there has been no recent training on working with young people regarding alcohol and substance misuse. These issues are relevant to some young people at the home, and their needs are likely to be more effectively met by staff who regularly update their knowledge and skills in these areas.

These shortfalls have not resulted in any young people coming to harm, but the potential for harm will remain high unless these shortfalls are addressed. Other aspects of safeguarding practice are stronger. Young people do not go missing from the home. This is a significant achievement considering that many of the young people have a history of being absent from home or care. Staff are familiar with the procedures to follow if a young person should go missing, and an effective working relationship has been established with the local police.

There are clear behaviour management strategies in place, and these incentivise positive behaviour. Many young people, although not all, respond positively to this approach and

meet their behavioural targets at school and in the home. Documents examined during the inspection show that, overall, practice relating to physical restraint to manage challenging behaviour is appropriate. However, in one case, a young person was restrained as a result of non-compliance with staff requests. In addition, records pertaining to physical restraints are not always sufficiently detailed.

Staff take a proactive approach to the prevention of bullying. This has included anti-bullying workshops and discussion in young people's meetings. During the inspection, some young people said that relationships between the older and younger group are sometimes difficult, and some behaviours could be seen as bullying. However, all the young people spoken to expressed confidence in the ability of staff to manage the situation before it becomes serious.

Any child protection concerns are reported promptly to the relevant authorities, and managers ensure that they are kept informed of the actions taken in response to the referral. There has been some excellent practice in relation to the support given to young people who have disclosed historic abuse. One young person indicated that the support he received left him feeling that he could trust staff and tell them anything. This view was echoed by other young people, who could all identify a member of staff they would speak to if they were worried about anything. All of the young people said that they feel safe in the home.

The designated officer is notified of any allegations or concerns about the conduct of staff. The registered manager communicates effectively with the designated officer and acts on any advice or instruction that is given. Internal investigations regarding allegations made against staff are thorough, and disciplinary procedures are implemented if necessary. Strong professional development plans for staff are implemented if the conduct of a member of staff has had a negative impact on a young person.

Staff recruitment practice is good. There are procedures in place which minimise the likelihood of unsuitable staff being employed. Records examined during this inspection clearly evidence how decisions are made regarding a candidate's suitability for working with vulnerable young people.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good**

The home is effectively managed by an experienced and committed registered manager. He holds the NVQ level 4 in leadership and management for care service and health and social care. He is well supported by the registered individual, who plays an active role in the day-to-day running of the home. Staff retention is good and all staff have either obtained the level 3 diploma in residential childcare, or are studying for this qualification.

Leaders and managers have faced a number of challenges in recent months. These have resulted from highly challenging behaviour demonstrated by a minority of young people, and personal issues, including sickness, faced by key members of staff. Despite these challenges, managers and staff have worked collaboratively to identify weaknesses in the service and formulate a detailed development plan. Managers are arranging for the introduction of a new therapeutic care model, and a tool for monitoring the progress

made by young people. These new initiatives are yet to become embedded in practice.

The registered individual was able to give a clear verbal description of the procedures that leaders and managers follow when considering the suitability of a potential new admission. These procedures included analysing the likely impact of a new admission on young people already living in the home. However, no written record of the process is kept. Therefore, leaders and managers cannot fully demonstrate how thorough the admissions process is, and whether child-centred decisions are consistently made.

Established systems are in place to monitor the quality of care being delivered. These include seeking feedback from young people and external stakeholders. The commitment to monitor standards is reflected in a self-assessment document produced by the management team. Despite this good practice, monitoring systems did not identify the shortfalls in safeguarding practice referred to in this report. Throughout the inspection, leaders and managers acknowledged where practice could be improved and demonstrated a determination to address areas of weakness.

Managers and staff build effective working relationships with placing authority social workers and other relevant professionals. A social worker said, 'Staff make it clear that they want us to be involved in planning the young person's day-to-day care.' An independent reviewing officer also commented positively on how staff work in partnership, saying, 'Good communication meant the admission process was excellent for the young person.' Managers and staff have the skills to work effectively with parents and family members. They take prompt action to resolve any concerns identified by young people's family members.

All young people have individualised care plans. These clearly identify the young person's needs and vulnerabilities and provide staff with guidance on how to deliver individualised care. In some cases, care plans do not make a direct link with the placing authority's long-term goal for the young person, and the targets set for young people do not always reflect the young people's changing circumstances. This has not had a negative impact on the quality of care provided.

Managers have not developed a policy or guidance for staff who could experience a conflict of interest as a result of their differing professional responsibilities at the home. However, this is not indicative of a wider failure to support staff. Staff feel valued and they benefit from receiving good-quality practice-based supervision. Regular team meetings provide additional opportunities for staff to reflect on their practice and to consider how they can best meet young people's needs.

The management team has engendered a culture of high aspiration for young people across the home. Consequently, staff remain committed to supporting young people to settle at the home and make progress, despite the many challenges faced.

## **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:** SC413992

**Provision sub-type:** Residential special school

**Registered provider:** Mayne Enterprises Limited

**Registered provider address:** Buckingham House, Myrtle Lane, Billingshurst, West Sussex RH14 9SG

**Responsible individual:** Sarah Hawke

**Registered manager:** Leon Creenan

## Inspector

Stephen Collett, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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