

## Children's home inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>02/11/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC065071</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Residential special school</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Hopscotch Solutions Limited</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>1 Merchant Place River Street Bolton BL2 1BX</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Charles Tosan</b>
<b>Registered managers</b>	<b>Kirsty Truesdale</b>
	<b>Emma Nicholson</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Phillip Morris</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>02/11/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Improved effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

## SC065071

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is outstanding because:**

- The committed and nurturing staff team provides excellent care to young people. This enables young people to make progress in all areas of their lives.
- Staff actively promote healthy lifestyles for young people, supporting them to eat healthily and exercise.
- Young people have very good school attendance and are making good progress with their education. This is achieved through excellent communication between school and care staff, with both being committed to well-coordinated learning targets.
- Young people make successful, carefully considered transitions from the home into adult life. These moves are carefully and meticulously planned.
- Young people's safeguarding needs are of paramount importance to the managers and staff, leading to young people being effectively and safely cared for.
- Care planning is carried out with considerable insight into the young people's needs. This keeps them safe and meets their welfare needs.
- Inspiring and creative work by the care and education staff has taken place to raise young people's awareness of using social networking sites and the internet safely. This will equip young people with the skills and knowledge required to keep them safe online.
- The service benefits from an exceptionally strong leadership team that ensures that staff receive very good levels of supervision, training opportunities and personal development. This results in young people receiving excellent care from a well-trained and dedicated staff team.

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for 12 young people who may have autism, learning difficulties, challenging behaviour, ADHD, epilepsy, and dyspraxia. The home also incorporates a registered full-time school. The home is privately owned and managed.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/11/2015	Full	Outstanding
24/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/12/2014	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding</b></p>
<p>Young people receive excellent care provided by a committed and nurturing staff team. Young people make excellent progress in all areas of their lives and personal development. They present as happy, settled and content. Young people enjoy their lives, and their self-esteem and confidence has increased since living in the home. One parent stated of the care received by her son: '[It's] brilliant. I am extremely happy; he's nurtured and cared for.'</p> <p>Young people benefit from exceptional care and support to help them live and enjoy healthy lifestyles. Young people are encouraged and supported to eat healthily through reducing their sugar and fat intake. Staff promote healthy eating for young people with stories and technology, through the use of computer applications. Because staff are consistent in their approach to promoting healthy eating, young people now routinely make healthy choices regarding food and drink. One young person said: 'I love fruit. It is always out and available, so I help myself.' This approach to being healthy is supported by young people taking part in regular exercise, such as cycling and using exercise equipment. Advice and guidance is also provided by the occupational therapist to young people to promote the leading of active lifestyles.</p> <p>Staff demonstrate a good and in-depth understanding of young people. Young people have designated key carers who take the lead in ensuring that their needs are met. Staff develop good interpersonal relationships with young people and their families. One young person said, 'It is good here, staff support and help us.' Key carers take the lead on updating care and placement plans, as well as communicating with professionals who also work with the young people, such as teaching staff and social workers. Key carers complete monthly reports that keep professionals and families fully updated on the progress and development of the young person.</p> <p>Young people receive well-structured support to attend education, where they all make continued progress. All young people attend the integrated school and this ensures that they maintain excellent attendance. The care staff meet daily with education staff and support young people in class if this is required. Teaching and care staff benefit from joint training and personal development. They set each young person agreed achievement targets and these are shared across the school and care setting. Staff will focus upon how they can support young people to achieve these targets. For example, one young person's target was to create a shopping list, go shopping, and then prepare a meal. Another example was of a young person receiving help and support with tying their shoelaces. Young people's</p>	

successes with achieving their targets are praised by both care and education staff. This helps develop young people's confidence and self-esteem.

Young people's views matter to the managers and staff. They are consulted about the care they receive and decisions about the home. Young people benefit from the services of an independent advocate who visits the home regularly and seeks their views. Young people have the opportunity to meet regularly with staff to provide their views and opinions over the care they receive. The registered managers have utilised, to good effect, questionnaires that provide the opportunity for young people to express their views. This is a service that values, encourages and supports the views of young people, which can be seen in the care that they receive.

Staff members understand the crucial importance of young people and their families seeing each other on a regular basis. Staff facilitate regular home visits for young people, with some going for extended stays. The managers ensure that there are sufficient staffing and resources available to provide support to young people on these visits, and that they are an enjoyable and rewarding experience for all.

Young people's transitions from the home are carried out in a detailed and careful manner. Staff and managers ensure that when the time comes for young people to move from the home they are provided with all the help and support that they need. A great deal of pre-planning takes place with all agencies involved in the move, so that the individual needs of the young person are met. For example, staff complete social stories with young people about practical independent living skills, such as help with furnishing accommodation. This has led to a number of young people very successfully moving into semi-independent accommodation.

Young people benefit and enjoy a comfortable and homely environment. They have their own rooms, which they decorate to their liking, and they enjoy a wide range of activities in the home. There are large gardens and grounds attached to the service that contain play and exercise equipment, including swings, trampolines, and go-carts. There are large communal areas, which enable young people to spend time together and socialise.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>Young people are safe living in this home, and good staff practice helps them to stay safe. One young person stated, 'I feel safe here and I am helped by staff.' This help begins with detailed care planning that identifies what the risks to young</p>	

people are. These plans are completed through multi-agency collaboration which allows for a wide range of information to be gathered about the young person. Young people's care plans receive regular reviews, and are amended in line with the changing needs of the young person. Care plans are understood and implemented well by staff, and this helps keep young people safe and meet their needs. A parent stated, 'I can sleep well at night knowing he is well cared for, staff anticipate his needs well and this helps keep him safe and protected.'

Staff members receive comprehensive training in how to keep young people safe. Examples of the training they have received include:

- undertaking physical intervention with young people
- safeguarding young people with autism and learning disabilities
- understanding the impact of forced marriage
- understanding female genital mutilation
- understanding child sexual exploitation.

The registered managers have completed specific supervisions with staff to embed in practice the learning from this training.

The recruitment of staff is done in a safe way, ensuring that the likelihood of young people being harmed by those caring for them is minimised. All new staff are appropriately vetted before they work with young people.

Care and education staff actively support young people to keep safe when using the internet. The risks to young people when using social media and the internet are recognised by managers and staff. As a result, exceptional and extensive work is completed with all young people on e-safety. Education and care staff have worked collaboratively to develop an e-safety computer programme that each young person works through, both individually and as part of a group. This programme covers crucial areas such as:

- opening attachments and using passwords safely
- communicating online, the dangers of sending photos or information about themselves or others to people who they do not know
- what is legal and illegal online activity
- what constitutes online bullying and what can be done about this
- where to find help, speaking to the police online, and controls to keep safe
- the dangers of mobile communication, especially 'sexting'.

This programme further supports work completed with young people on developing their awareness and knowledge of the dangers of drug use, safe and healthy sexual relationships and keeping safe. This crucial work with young people will help to develop their awareness and ability to keep safe into the future.

Staff and young people benefit from trusting, strong relationships. Staff successfully model and promote positive behaviour with young people. Staff are

skilled at recognising escalating situations and use techniques to diffuse such situations. The staff implement clear boundaries and help young people to understand the consequences for themselves and others of negative or destructive behaviour. There have been occasions when staff have had to resort to physical intervention to keep young people or themselves safe. These interventions have been proportionate to the situation, and have been carried out using the minimum level of intervention necessary. Following these interventions managers ensure that thorough debriefs take place with those involved, including imaginative work with the young person. This helps the staff and young person to understand what feelings led to the behaviour. Managers methodically analyse all physical interventions to identify patterns and trends, so as to hopefully reduce their future reoccurrence.

The registered managers have completed a robust location assessment. This assessment has taken into account the views of the local police, key partner agencies, local crime statistics and any relevant local information that may impact on the safety of young people. Additionally, the manager attends local community meetings to ensure that the service is integrated into the local community.

The managers and staff have dealt with significant incidents concerning young people effectively. There has been one incident of a young person going missing from care and several incidents of disruptive behaviour. The managers and staff have ensured that the appropriate procedures have been followed and that these incidents were managed well. The appropriate agencies involved with young people were also informed, and any actions required were taken immediately. The managers update Ofsted with timely and detailed notifications of the incidents and what actions they have taken. Following such incidents the managers complete thorough investigations and analyse what they find, to see if they can prevent reoccurrence. An example of the learning from the analysis of these incidents is that managers and staff have adapted their responses to some young people who have displayed aggressive and damaging behaviour. This has been effective in managing, and positively changing, behaviour. A social worker stated of one young person, 'I am most impressed about their responses that keep him safe. They have gone at his pace, responded appropriately to incidents and adapted their approach to him.'

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
Two registered managers lead this service. They were both registered in March 2016, and although new to the post of registered manager, they have both been managers at the service for a number of years. Both have successfully completed	

the diploma level 5 in leadership and management. The managers are enthusiastic and passionate about driving the service forward to meet the needs of young people. The managers receive support and supervision from the responsible individual and they benefit from a close and supportive management group.

The registered managers have an in-depth knowledge of each young person and their respective care plans. They understand the particular risks and needs associated with each young person, and drive forward their plans so that they are able to make very good progress.

New young people coming to live at the home are supported by detailed plans, which are overseen by the registered managers. These plans are developed from good information sharing between local authorities, other agencies and previous placements. The plans consist of the actions required by services to support the young person to thrive physically, emotionally and educationally.

The young people benefit from high levels of staffing. All young people receive individual one-to-one care and support from staff. Some young people require greater numbers of staff to provide them with the care and support that they need. Higher levels of staffing enable staff to spend quality time with young people, take them out or help them with key learning objectives. Additionally, all young people benefit from being able to enjoy group activities, such as going to the park or taking part in music and dance shows at the home. This leads to a relaxed and fun atmosphere in the home. A parent stated, 'When I visit, there always appears a good staff-to-young-person ratio and I have the impression that the staff are well supported, as they are positive and upbeat.'

Managers support staff through thorough supervision and oversight of their work, which is done on a regular basis. Supervision focuses upon the young people's needs and the professional development of staff and their work performance. When staff performance falls below expectations this is addressed clearly and rigorously. Conversely, good practice receives the praise and recognition it deserves. This results in young people being looked after by staff who are accountable and receive good oversight of their work and performance.

A significant strength in this service is the multi-agency working that ensures that the welfare and protection needs of young people are met. The registered managers and staff work cohesively with other agencies and professionals, such as social workers and health and education professionals, to achieve good outcomes for young people. Key meetings, such as children looked after reviews, personal education planning meetings and health reviews, are prioritised, as are the actions from these meetings. The managers and staff seek professional advice and direction from appropriate agencies regarding young people with more specialised support and care needs, and any agreed actions are completed diligently by staff.

The registered managers have a good grasp of the strengths of the service and

areas for development. Quality assurance monitoring occurs through monthly visits by an independent visitor. Both managers value this and use the findings from these visits to improve the service. Additionally, they utilise information derived from feedback questionnaires provided to parents/carers and professionals. The managers produce a six-monthly report focusing upon the overall performance of the service, highlighting areas that are working well, and those that require further improvement. This demonstrates that the service wants to constantly improve its performance, driven by dedicated managers and committed staff.

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **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 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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