

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>23/11/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC488081</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</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 manager</b>	<b>Peter Watt</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Phillip Morris</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>23/11/2016</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>Good</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>

## SC488081

### Summary of findings

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

- The young people make excellent progress in all areas of their development while living in this home.
- The staff and manager are committed to helping young people achieve strongly in education, supported by excellent school attendance and consistent implementation of shared achievement and developmental targets.
- Young people benefit from excellent health care services. Their needs are carefully assessed and the support they need provided. This includes specialist services that improve their health outcomes now and in the future.
- Staff place high importance on enabling young people to develop the skills and abilities that they will need to live more independently. As a result, young people become more self-reliant. They grow in confidence and self-esteem.
- Staff, with whom young people have trusting relationships, effectively protect and keep young people safe.
- Young people's behaviour has improved. There has been a significant reduction in incidents of concern, including those that necessitate physical intervention.
- The manager and staff take effective and proactive action to improve the relationships between young people. This prevents any bullying.
- The registered manager is determined to achieve continuous improvement in the service for the benefit of young people.
- The staff members are sufficiently resourced to be able to spend quality time with young people. This has led to young people developing nurturing relationships and provides the foundation from which young people make excellent progress.
- There is one recommendation from this inspection. The young people's guide is not child friendly.

## What does the children’s home need to do to improve?

### Recommendation

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

- An effective introduction to a home will take into account the child’s abilities and capacity to understand and retain information. Such an introduction may take place over a period of time and may be delivered in different formats according to the child’s communication and cognitive abilities. The registered person should ensure that staff establish the child’s understanding of key information about living in the home and the expectations of their care in order to establish whether there are gaps in the child’s understanding. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 57, paragraph 11.8)

### Full report

#### Information about this children’s home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people of the same gender and aged between 10 and 17 years. It is registered to accommodate young people who have learning difficulties, ADHD, epilepsy and challenging behaviour. The home is privately owned and managed.

#### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
25/11/2015	Full	Requires improvement

## 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 make excellent progress in all areas of their development but particularly in their educational attainment, their independence skills and their emotional well-being. They have become more confident and happy. One young person said, 'it's great'. A key strength is the way young people are helped to improve their behaviour. Young people are increasingly settled.</p> <p>The young people attend a local school which is part of the same organisation. Their attendance at school is excellent. Staff transport the young people to school and, if required, support young people in class. Care staff and education staff communicate well on a daily basis. The manager and staff attend monthly professionals' meetings at school with a clear focus upon the progression of young people. Young people's development improves more broadly. For example, a teacher commented in a school report that a young person shows empathy towards his peers, anticipating their needs in class and demonstrates a willingness to help. Young people's key learning and developmental targets, set by the school, are incorporated into placement plans. Staff support young people with the attainment of these targets. This demonstrates that young people and staff are equally committed to achieving well in education.</p> <p>The young people are encouraged and supported by staff to participate in activities. They enjoy trips out for meals, the cinema, swimming, cycling and visiting places of interest in the local community. Recently, a guitar has been purchased for young people and they are learning some chords with the help of staff. The confidence and self-esteem of young people improves through developing skills and experiencing stimulating recreational activities.</p> <p>Young people are encouraged and supported to lead healthy lifestyles. They have access to primary health care professionals who monitor all aspects of their health. Additionally, they receive specialist services from occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and the child and adolescent mental health service. Young people use a local hydrotherapy pool to improve muscle tone and posture. They also receive both play and music therapy. Healthy eating is encouraged by staff ensuring that young people continue to eat fruit and vegetables. The manager and staff recognise the crucial importance of promoting good health for young people, both now and for their futures.</p> <p>The manager and staff work well in partnership with families. Young people go home and stay with their families for extended periods. The manager and staff communicate with parents, often on a daily basis, and young people phone their</p>	

parents regularly. The manager and staff encourage and facilitate family visits. A social worker stated that, 'contact arrangements were very strong'. A parent stated: 'The home meets all my son's needs; he is happy here, and that makes me happy.'

Young people are provided with excellent support to develop independent living skills. The staff use social stories to good effect, helping young people understand and practise fundamental skills such as budgeting, using public transport, completing basic household tasks, personal hygiene, decision making and personal safety. The manager and staff consult with parents who offer good advice about the developmental needs of young people. This means that staff, parents and professionals work collaboratively to help young people develop crucial skills that promote independence.

The young people's views and opinions matter to the members of staff and managers. Young people meet together with staff members to provide their views on the care that they receive and to contribute to planning in the home. Additionally young people have an independent advocate at their disposal and know how to complain if they are unhappy. The views of young people are also sought through consultations. Their views are acted upon when possible. However, the young person's guide is not yet an effective document. It is not child friendly because it is excessively long and unwieldy.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>Young people are safe and kept safe through effective staff practice. The members of staff have developed strong and trusted relationships with young people, which help young people to feel safe, secure and confident. This has led to a reduction in significant incidents and reduced the use of physical intervention. Since the last inspection, there have been no physical interventions, and the registered manager considered only one incident as significant. He responded appropriately, notifying all responsible organisations including Ofsted. This incident was dealt with well. The manager and staff analyse information from incidents and try to understand what the precursors were in an effort to learn from them.</p> <p>Young people are well supported to behave well. The manager and staff utilise effective behaviour support plans, setting young people positive behaviour targets. Young people receive rewards for meeting these targets and behaving well. Their positive behaviour is praised and achievements are celebrated. Consequently, young people know what constitutes good behaviour. This will support them in the future.</p>	

Young people enjoy living in a safe environment that is comfortable and relaxed. The home is clean and maintained to a high standard. Young people have taken the lead in decorating their rooms and choosing play equipment. The manager has completed a comprehensive location risk assessment and taken into account the views of the police on any concerns in the community. This assessment provides an effective means of ensuring that risks in the community are managed by staff. The home participates in the local neighbourhood watch scheme. This further promotes community integration.

The relationships between young people are valued and the manager and staff work pro-actively to ensure that bullying or intimidation does not happen. The manager and staff complete several strands of work with young people including bullying questionnaires, awareness raising over what constitutes bullying and intimidation, and individual sessions with young people to help them develop empathy for others. This ensures that young people have good relationships and live together happily.

Young people are safer because of robust processes when recruiting new staff members. Potential new staff undergo criminal record checks, a full work history is taken and any gaps in employment are accounted for. Identification checks are completed and references taken and verified. All new staff undergo a detailed and in-depth induction and receive support from experienced colleagues. These steps deter unsuitable adults from working with young people.

All staff members undertake a broad range of training in keeping young people safe. This includes training on safeguarding, managing behaviour, missing from care, sexual exploitation and self-harmful behaviour and physical intervention training. This ensures that staff are well equipped to provide safe care.

The registered manager has robust systems in place to prevent mistakes when dispensing medication. Two staff members oversee the administration of medication and the manager completes regular audits to minimise the possibility of mistakes. Some of the young people have regular medication when visiting family. The manager ensures that clear arrangements are in place to guard against any problems arising when medication is transferred between locations.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
A committed and dedicated registered manager, who has been in the position since July 2015 when the home opened, provides very strong leadership. He is suitably	

qualified. Two team managers support him and they work very effectively together as a management team. The registered manager receives regular supervision and oversight from a senior manager within the organisation. He finds this support beneficial.

The home has remained very settled and stable since the last inspection, with no young people leaving or coming to live at the home. The staff maintain a welcoming and friendly atmosphere that is calm and relaxed. Young people and staff enjoy excellent relationships and the young people present as happy and content. The manager has developed a stable staff team that enables high ratios of staff to young people. The young people have benefited from spending time with members of staff with whom they have established relationships and this supports their overall progress.

The staff team receive very good supervision and oversight from their manager. The manager understands that the supervision and development of staff is the cornerstone to providing ever-improving care to young people. Consequently, staff receive at least monthly supervision that is of high quality and places the needs of young people centrally. Staff members have specifically focused developmental sessions. For example, staff members have recently discussed the home's statement of purpose, safeguarding policy, behaviour management policy and whistle blowing procedures. The manager has strengthened the appraisal and development process, through completing analytical training needs audits. These processes ensure that each staff member is receiving an accurate evaluation of their training and development needs.

Effective team meetings support communication across the staff team. Staff meet regularly. Meetings are reflective, focusing on each young person and the care provided to them. Staff share their ideas and knowledge. This demonstrates a well-functioning team.

The registered manager has an excellent grasp of the strengths of the service and areas for continued improvement. He takes a systematic approach to monitoring the quality of care provided and utilises the following to provide him with information:

- robust and detailed reports following monthly visits by the independent person.
- his own bi-annual assessment and action plan
- weekly incident analysis reports
- monthly key performance indicators that receive scrutiny from higher management

- information from senior managers' reviews of the home.

This information enables the manager to identify any problems or concerning patterns in the care provided to young people.

The manager and staff complete detailed care and placement plans for young people. These plans provide good and in-depth information about each young person. Staff understand and implement plans consistently. Additionally the manager and staff have completed child-friendly versions of these plans. Young people provide their views during the formulation and review of these plans. This means that they are fully involved in any decisions that affect them.

Young people benefit from strong multi-agency working arrangements that help them make excellent progress. One social worker stated, 'I have been extremely impressed by the commitment of staff towards the young person in their care. They have gone above and beyond in their approach to ensure that the young person has what he needs.' Effective communication and coordination of agencies takes place through regular meetings. Good lines of communication are well established. The manager and staff advocate on behalf of young people when required and secure the services and expertise necessary to achieve good outcomes.

## 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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Piccadilly Gate  
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Manchester  
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
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