

SC044562

Registered provider: Kisimul Group Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately owned service is registered as a children's home but is also a residential special school. The setting cares for 39 children who have learning disabilities. Children are educated on-site.

Inspection dates: 24 to 25 October 2017

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected **outstanding**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **outstanding**

The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 16 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- Young people make excellent progress in all aspects of their lives.
- Many young people come to the home in crisis. They soon learn how to self-regulate their stress and anxiety. As a result, they feel happier and very settled.
- Extremely high-quality behaviour support plans ensure that staff know how to reduce young people's anxiety. Behaviour support strategies help young people immensely.
- Staff are highly skilled in working with young people who have Autistic Spectrum Disorders (ASD).
- Young people's improved behaviour means that they are significantly safer. Improved behaviour also enables young people to participate fully in social and educational activities, and to access a range of specialist services.
- Young people have some fantastic experiences. They go sailing, on seaside trips and on theme park trips. They also have access to a wide range of excellent activities in the home.
- Young people who have struggled to attend school in the past now attend every day and achieve excellent results.
- The highly effective manager is very knowledgeable. She has made a very positive difference to all aspects of the home, and to young people's care.
- Staff are exceptionally well led. They feel supported in their roles and are highly motivated.
- The head of care, deputy and head of school work extremely effectively together, providing a wide range of expertise. They never lose focus on young people's progress.
- The manager carries out her own research and this brings about innovation. Research is often based on current theory and practice, both in relation to management and in relation to how to support young people with ASD. Research and development is so effective that it is worthy of sharing with others.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Care plans could be improved further by ensuring that young people's religious and cultural needs are always clearly stated.
- Records should be improved so that they always provide a detailed account of the events leading up to a restraint and the staff involved.
- Medicines should not be overstocked.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
12/10/2016	Full	Good
01/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/10/2015	Full	Outstanding

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

- Ensure that care meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background, sexual identity, mental health, any disability, their assessed needs, previous experiences and any relevant plans. This is in particular reference to one child's care plan which did not incorporate information about their cultural background, religion and identity. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)
- Ensure that records of restraints are kept, which should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint, to identify practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. This is in particular relation to recording how a child is monitored during restraints. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.49)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people's experiences are exceptional. They often come to the home in crisis, but they settle very quickly into a routine. Their lives are 'turned around', and the potential for excellent progress quickly develops.

Although many young people have been unable to sustain their school placement before coming to the home, they all have excellent school attendance now. Young people's educational needs are carefully assessed. As a result, they have learning targets that stretch them to their full potential. There are many examples of young people exceeding everyone's expectations. The leadership team thinks about skills and qualifications in the broader context. For example, young people often participate in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award scheme. This helps them to develop their social skills and confidence.

Young people's needs are very carefully considered. The large majority of care planning is extremely strong. However, there is room for improvement in relation to equality and diversity issues. One plan did not contain relevant information about a young person's heritage or their cultural needs.

Staff relationships with young people are tremendously positive. One staff member said: 'We have great bonds between us and the kids.' Staff create a happy, stable and nurturing environment, where young people can flourish.

Young people's mental health needs are fully addressed. Work with other professionals is exceptional in this area. There is always a highly skilled team of experts, including consultant psychiatrists, available to young people.

Young people's physical health is very well considered. Young people's improved confidence and reduced anxiety allows for some excellent progress. They feel more able to eat healthier foods and enjoy regular exercise. The extensive and pleasant grounds allow young people to 'let off steam' and to do regular activities such as swimming, cycling and walking. Young people become fitter and healthier.

Medication is well organised and young people receive the medicines that they are prescribed. Medicines are stored properly, but one controlled drug was found to be overstocked. This is not good practice, but the manager already has a plan to put this right.

A variety of activities are available. They open up new opportunities and areas of interest to young people. Young people learn that they can, and should, have access to activities, whatever their disability. Young people go on holidays and access higher risk activities, such as sailing. Other professionals, such as dog therapists, musicians and sportspeople, are commissioned to provide additional activities.

Young people have improved opportunities to go into their local community. They develop social skills that they can use in the future. Given their starting points, some young people make incredible progress. They learn to shop and manage money. They also learn how they should behave in social situations such as eating out. Work experience in the community is also used well to further young people's experiences. For example, one young person has been helping cleaners at a local church.

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

Work on behaviour management is so strong that it is life changing for some young people. New opportunities and life experiences are opened up because young people are so much more able to cope with their anxiety.

Behaviour management plans are excellent. Proactive and reactive strategies are clearly set out and work extremely well. There are scenarios for staff to consider, so that they can be 'one step ahead' in their responses. This is especially helpful if behaviours escalate quickly.

Some young people's behaviour can be enormously challenging for staff to manage. However, staff remain positive even when they know they might be at risk themselves. Staff are very professional and resilient. They always have young people's best interests at heart. Young people make excellent progress because of this approach.

High levels of physical intervention reflect the complex and challenging needs of young people. Physical intervention is used appropriately to ensure the safety of young people

and staff. These interventions reduce over time, as young people learn other strategies to manage their anxiety.

There is continuous and extensive scrutiny of all physical interventions. The management team actively seeks to reduce these practices, wherever possible. The manager is at the forefront of collaborative working in this area. She is the first to point out if a young person is not making progress and always does something about it. Young people's safety is always her highest priority.

The very high level of support that young people receive while they are in some restraints is not always fully documented. This has the potential to hinder management monitoring if not put right.

The manager's knowledge base is very strong around protecting young people. She has recently completed her own research on the Mental Capacity Act. She is conducting an internal review and is making sure that, wherever possible, young people can have control over their own lives. The manager has also developed a training package that she is rolling out to staff. Her aim is to further everyone's understanding of the balance between young people's safety, choice and dignity.

The building and grounds are extremely safe. The environment is managed so that young people can move around their environment freely, with staff support. Institutionalised features, such as televisions being locked in protective boxes, are rare and only used if every other strategy has failed to keep young people safe. Staff are not risk averse. This helps young people to learn how to stay safe, now and in the future.

Staff training assists staff in their work to protect children. All staff are very knowledgeable about the vulnerabilities of young people in residential care. They use this awareness effectively, creating a very strong safeguarding culture. Staff clearly understand what they must do if they come across a safeguarding concern.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager is highly effective in her role. She is focused, creative and knowledgeable. In the 10 months that she has been registered, she has brought about very positive change. She has worked hard with staff to make sure that they can adapt their practice in line with the changes she has made. Staff feel extremely well supported and well led. They also feel that the manager is open to their suggestions and ideas. One staff member said: 'She thinks outside the box. Staff can go to her with crazy ideas, such as an outdoor cinema, and she really likes it.' Staff feel able to create and innovate. They are highly motivated by this approach. Another member of staff said: 'I love my job.'

Training is a high priority. Staff have the skills that they need to look after this very vulnerable group of young people because there is a culture of constant learning. New training is regularly completed to make sure that young people's needs are well considered. For example, some recent bespoke training supported staff to manage a

particularly challenging behaviour displayed by one young person. Staff are also taking part in training about the impact that residential care has on young people. This training programme is based on current and emerging research data. The manager makes sure that she and her staff are at the forefront of developments in relation to ASD.

There are a range of experts in the team to help and guide staff. Psychologists, occupational therapists, teaching staff and care staff work well together to share their knowledge and expertise. This ensures that the needs of each young person are fully understood and addressed.

The manager completes her own research, from a strong evidence base. She conducts studies and research of her own. She looks for better ways to analyse data, ensuring that patterns and trends are easily identified.

Generous resources ensure an exceptionally high quality of care. If young people require a service, they get it. The building is exceptionally well furnished and provides a safe and very pleasant environment for young people to live in.

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: SC044562

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: Kisimul Group Limited

Registered provider address: The Old Vicarage, 61 High Street, Swinderby, Lincoln, Lincolnshire LN6 9LU

Responsible individual: Donna Varley-Turner

Registered manager: Amanda Collins

Inspector(s)

Caroline Brailsford: social care inspector

Joanne Vyas: social care inspector

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