

# SC466786

Registered provider: The Beeches UK Ltd

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

A private company operates this home. It is registered to accommodate up to three children aged from 10 to 18 years who have learning difficulties and/or emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

**Inspection dates:** 11 to 12 May 2017

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

How well children and young people are helped and protected                      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:** 10 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 good because

- Children make good progress because they live in this home.

- Staff use impact risk assessments effectively to evaluate the needs of the children before making decisions about admissions. This supports the children when they are newly placed in the home and helps them to settle well.
- Children are supported to engage with their education. There is joint work between the staff in the home and in the provider’s school. Staff from the home go to support the children in school, which helps to maintain consistent care.
- Children’s views are listened to. Staff are creative in using opportunities to complete direct work, such as time spent travelling to talk about plans and activities.
- Staff receive training and support to focus their practice on listening to children and understanding their needs.
- Staff work proactively with multi-agency partners to achieve positive outcomes for the children.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
08/11/2016	Full	Good
09/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/08/2015	Full	Requires improvement

## Inspection judgements

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

Children make good progress because they live in this home. Staff engage effectively with the children. This helps the children to settle into the home well.

The manager prepares impact risk assessments to evaluate the needs of the children currently living in the home, alongside the needs of the child being considered for admission. The manager establishes if the skill mix of the staff is suitable to work with the children. These evaluations are shared at team meetings and shift handovers to inform staff of vulnerabilities that may exist ahead of proposed placements.

Consequently, the children's needs are well-known by the staff. This ensures that the children's unique needs can be met safely.

The children have good relationships with the staff. A child commented, 'This is my first experience of living in a children's home. At first I was very nervous, but the staff helped me to settle in and kept me calm. I get on with all of the staff.' All children can name a member of staff with whom they have positive interactions.

Children are supported to maintain contact with their families and friends. Staff help the children by arranging contact sessions and overseeing these arrangements to ensure that they are safe. This contact ensures that important relationships are maintained and helps the children to understand their backgrounds.

Children access the medical and health services that they need. Staff make, and help the children to keep, important appointments. Sporting activities, such as regular football training or cycling, along with a varied home-cooked diet, help the children to stay fit and well.

Children are encouraged to develop age and ability-appropriate independence skills. Some children have started to practise making simple snacks, while others are learning to manage their laundry. Others have been supported to gain skills such as budgeting. As a result, children are prepared well for moving on to independent living or returning to their family. Staff take time to help the children to celebrate their time in the home. The staff remain in appropriate contact with those children who have moved out, offering support and guidance to the children and remaining available to promote the children's welfare. The staff recently arranged a leaving party for a child who was returning to their parent's care. This event involved a number of former residents and staff who came together to mark the significance of the time spent in the home. Photographs of the event show the children and staff enjoying the party food and exchanging gifts.

Children continue to do well in education. There is good communication between the home and the school. This helps to promote consistency of care and a good understanding of the children's needs. The staff work together with the school to help the children to achieve their educational potential. This helps to prepare the children for their next stage of learning. Staff support the children's learning needs by engaging the children in activities which are stimulating and interesting. A placing social worker

commented, 'The education provided so far has been good. The school has been able to target and focus on areas for this child. This has highlighted areas that the child needed extra support with. The school has been able provide this.'

Staff liaise with the children to consider new activities. This takes place in key work meetings. These meetings take place in planned sessions with named key staff. One child was interested in attending a go-karting centre. This event was arranged for him and a friend to go together. Photographs of this event have been shared and show the children having a great deal of fun.

Children have an external advocate who visits the home to discuss issues or concerns. Children have the opportunity to complain through one-to-one direct work with staff. There have been no complaints raised with regard to the service provided in this home since the previous inspection.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Effective care plans include information from the risk assessments, completed ahead of children's placement in the home. Staff use these plans to work with the children safely and to monitor the children's progress against their targets. Staff have suitable contact with placing authorities who speak positively about the care provided. A placing social worker commented, 'The home provides comprehensive weekly reports. I have no issues or concerns regarding safeguarding.'

Staff are aware of the need to raise safeguarding concerns in line with the organisation's policy. They talk confidently about the organisation's whistleblowing policy. There have been no issues requiring the involvement of the designated officer from the local authority since the previous interim inspection.

There has been one occasion when physical intervention techniques were used to prevent a child from harming themselves or others. The records of this incident identify that appropriately trained staff attempted alternative approaches prior to using physical intervention. The manager has reviewed the incident records to assure herself that the physical intervention and the documentation is in line with the regulations.

Children respond well to positive behaviour plans that reward good conduct. One child received a 'fidget spinner' as a reward for working well at school. These rewards have seen children's negative behaviour reduce. This has led to a calmer period in the home.

The children need a high level of supervision from the staff, who continuously monitor them. This ensures that the children are safe and that they do not go missing from the home. Staff are aware of the dangers in the community for these children. The manager has increased the physical monitoring of the children during the early stages of a new placement. She reviews the use of these additional methods, such as alarms on external doors, to establish whether they are still required. Families and placing authorities are aware of, and have given their consent to, these methods, which help to promote safe care. One child commented, 'This home is good. I am alright in the home and I feel safe.'

Staff in the home have worked hard to promote the safety of the children. They have worked with placing social workers to ensure that children at risk of forced marriage have received appropriate advice and support. This has included direct work with children to obtain a forced marriage protection order, which minimises this specific risk. Other children have received support to promote their gender fluid identity. This has included direct work to support and prevent homophobic bullying in the community.

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

The manager has a level 4 diploma in leadership and management for care services and a degree in health and social care. She has been the manager at this home for 18 months. She has the experience and qualifications required to hold the post.

The manager has ensured that all of the staff have completed the relevant diploma-level qualification. This means that the staff group has a suitable level of knowledge and skills to work with the children. The manager is keen to further improve the skill set of the staff group. She helps the staff to identify their training needs through supervision and appraisal, which supports their professional development.

The manager supervises the staff effectively. Supervision meetings focus on developing the safe-care plans and helping the staff to build suitable relationships with the children. The provider has a training pathway for the staff, which develops their knowledge from their induction to more specific skills as they progress. The manager emphasises the importance of staff understanding the children's needs. There is a focus for each care plan on meeting those individual needs to the highest standard.

The manager has a robust monitoring system in place. She regularly reviews case records to ensure that children's views are considered and that the children have time to talk to their key workers through regular one-to-one sessions. This maintains suitably appropriate relationships. The manager motivates the staff to understand the children's needs and to listen to their views. Children have opportunities to voice their opinions in group meetings and formal one-to-one direct work sessions with staff. The staff shrewdly use ad-hoc opportunities, such as during car journeys or walks in the park, to listen to children's views and discuss important issues.

The manager reviews the care plans to confirm that they identify individual needs and she spends time working directly with the staff. This observation of the staff enables her to reflect on the standard of care provided. It also helps her to identify the progress that has been made by the children.

The manager has been able to measure one child's progress in managing their self-care programme. She has used positive rewards to focus the care plan and this has seen an improvement in the child's engagement and skills. This information has been shared with the placing authority.

The staff work in partnership with multi-agency professionals and placing authorities to ensure that children receive the best all-round support to meet their needs. The manager has followed up with social workers to ensure that correct, up-to-date placement plans and review documentation are in place. This means that the staff have

the most up-to-date information to work with the children. Placing social workers speak highly of the positive outcomes for the children placed in this home.

There are positive working relationships with the independent visitor. The manager welcomes the challenge that this external scrutiny brings. The manager reviews the information from the visitor to ensure that any shortfalls are rectified quickly. This audit ensures that children are cared for in accordance with the services described in the statement of purpose. The manager is determined that children in the home receive the individual support that they need to achieve the best outcomes possible.

## **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 difference 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 who 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:** SC466786

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** The Beeches UK Ltd

**Registered provider address:** 19-20, Bourne Court, Unity Trading Estate, Southend Road, Woodford Green, Essex IG8 8HD

**Responsible individual:** Quinton Lovis

**Registered manager:** Lyana Sinclair Russell

## Inspector

Michael Mulvaney, social care inspector

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