

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>28/09/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC401364</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Residential special school</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Cruckton Hall Limited</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>The Old Vicarage, 61 High Street, Swinderby, LINCOLN, LN6 9LU</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Tjerk De Haan</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Robert Finney</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Michelle Moss</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>28/09/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Inadequate</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>A compliance notice was issued in June 2015. This was fully met.</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<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>Good</b>

## SC401364

### Summary of findings

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

- Children and young people, their families and social workers now feel care is of a high standard.
- Necessary changes through a challenging period have effectively motivated staff and fostered a culture where collaborative working takes place. Staff are more confident and adopt a positive focus where children and young people come first.
- Children and young people now receive education tailored to their individual needs.
- Children and young people now have an environment that promotes their emotional well-being, including having a positive and caring relationship with a stable and consistent staff team.
- Children and young people benefit from a clean, stimulating and comfortable physical environment that promotes their health and enhances their well-being.
- Care and teaching staff, families and professionals feel children and young people are now safe and that behaviour is well managed.
- Children and young people now have members of staff supporting them who have a range of qualifications, skills and training to meet their individual needs.
- Increased staffing provides greater flexibility to meet children and young people's diverse needs.
- A more consistent approach to behaviour management across school and care is helping to secure more effective anti-bullying strategies.
- There is one shortfall, which is isolated to the quality of recording for physical restraint.

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

### Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person must ensure that:</p> <p>(a) within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes -</p> <p>(v) details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(a)(v))</p>	<p>31/10/2015</p>

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This privately-owned home offers an integrated residential education and care package to boys with learning disabilities, specifically, autistic spectrum disorders. Young people are generally in the higher performing range, with associated emotional and behavioural difficulties. The school can accommodate up to 92 residential students, mainly in small house groups located on the main campus, or at one of two off-campus facilities.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/06/2015	CH - Full	Inadequate
17/09/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
22/07/2014	CH - Full	Inadequate
20/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good progress

## 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>good</b></p>
<p>Since the home's inadequate judgement in June 2015, a comprehensive improvement plan has brought about positive change in children and young people's overall experience and progress. Staff embrace these new ways of working with energy and commitment. For parents, there is a feeling things are definitely appearing to be on the 'up'. Communication has seen the most marked improvement with families reporting getting weekly calls – both to review the past week and to discuss any other concerns. A parent commented, 'we are now (finally) getting the feeling that we are actually being listened to! It certainly appears to be going in the right direction'.</p> <p>Parents comment positively about the impact of having a new range of age appropriate toys and learning materials which are enhancing their child's experience. One parent describes their child as absolutely loving this increased opportunity to enter into imaginative and creative play.</p> <p>Another parent reflects positively on changes saying they feel their child is safe. Their child has continued to develop well and is making good progress in all aspects of his life. This is put down to the great work undertaken by all staff. Parents also report positively about academic achievements and remarkable improvements in behaviour. Children and young people are equally proud of their achievements and recognise the difference in communication which means the smallest of achievements are now celebrated by both teaching and care staff.</p> <p>Greater focus on securing a nurturing and stable environment for children and young people is enabling them to thrive. Newly appointed house managers are leading on ensuring children and young people are respectfully listened to. This is resulting in staff having a better understanding of their views and wishes.</p> <p>The introduction of more tailored individualised learning is enabling children and young people to re-engage in their education. This is resulting in significant improvements in overall attendance and attitudes to learning. This support enables children and young people to achieve qualifications appropriate to their abilities including GCSEs and A levels. Newly accredited programmes are also increasing children and young people's opportunities to achieve even more qualifications. This includes care staff beginning to lead on AQA awards for developing children and young people's independence and life skills.</p>	

Children and young people have a diverse range of opportunities to participate in activities that reflect their individual needs. This is made possible through increased integration of personalised care planning that blends together care and education. This includes recognising individual needs, abilities and aspirations. This new collaborative working means children and young people have greater opportunities to succeed. For example, the school is enhancing lunch time and after school clubs. There is greater partnership working in securing community based clubs which better reflect children and young people's aspirational goals, such as joining the cadets.

Young people report that things feel very different this term. The atmosphere is much calmer which they put down to the departure of the previous year 11 young people and the arrival of the new headteacher, who is already establishing clear behavioural expectations which they particularly welcome. One young person said about school, 'I have been helped to fit in. I previously struggled to stay in a class and now I know there is always someone around to support me.'

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>Children and young people, staff, parents and social workers all report seeing a significant difference in care and protection. Survey results in June 2015 indicated significant concerns, especially around behaviour, safety and bullying. Over 90% of staff now feel behaviour is well managed, children and young people are safe and their diverse needs met. Previous concerns over bullying are addressed. Staff now manage any potential bullying by using the anti-bullying strategy. This results in children and young people feeling incidents of bullying are dealt with effectively and staff being increasingly alert to their responsibilities to protect them.</p> <p>Children and young people have a considerable range of emotional and behavioural needs. A systematic approach to behaviour management in school and care settings means there is a significant improvement in presenting behaviour. Children and young people are better equipped with the skills to safely regulate their own emotions. The restructuring of a reward system means a consistent approach to behaviour management is now being achieved. Young people, speak positively about these changes recognising them as both fair and achievable.</p> <p>A variety accommodation and facilities enable children and young people to experience a safe, pleasant and stimulating environment, which meet their social and emotional needs. The additional facilities of the country side location gives</p>	

everyone access to leisure activities opportunities that promote physical well-being. Young people say, 'it feels like home and we are now encouraged to take responsibility for doing our own washing and cooking, but only if they want to'.

Missing from care and child sexual exploitation procedures are used effectively to protect children and young people.

Newly implemented detailed auditing of medication is ensuring it is administrated safely. This more robust system is ensuring errors are minimised and children and young people receive their prescribed medication in accordance with their doctor's instructions.

Physical restraint is seen more of as a last resort after staff have attempted de-escalation techniques. Although direct practice shows de-escalation steps are taken, the actual recording misses out these steps. This leaves written communication on how de-escalation is used to avoid a restraint compromised.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>A registered manager has been in post since 2014 and leads on the provision of care. He is a qualified social worker and has suitable management qualifications.</p> <p>Over recent months the leadership team starting at directorship level have invested significant time and resources to improve the provision of care.</p> <p>The leaders have successfully managed to restructure and rebuild the quality of care for children and young people. This means modelling professional standards and bring together a caring and cohesive provision.</p> <p>The increased level of monitoring by the senior leadership team is helping to sustain improvement. For example, daily oversight of care practice takes place. This includes the assessment of records, practice and emerging concerns. This triggers action planning and follow-ups with the school's multi-professional resources, including the involvement of the psychologist team.</p> <p>Collaborative working between the headteacher and care is creating new opportunities for sharing best practice throughout the whole provision.</p> <p>Better communication with parents is meaning they feel their views are taken into account and addressed. This is creating a greater partnership with key stakeholders.</p>	

The depth of rigour given to recruitment ensures only suitable adults get to work with children. The success of the recruitment procedures means successful appointments are made up of skilled, knowledgeable and experienced staff.

There is now a good balance of experience among staff. Individual members of staff are well qualified and together offer a range of qualifications, skills and training relevant to their roles and responsibilities. Staff, highly rate the quality of their inductions and ongoing training, especially the training completed over this summer. This has enabled them to be more knowledgeable about the management of behaviour, countering bullying and understanding child development.

The deployment of staff is being carefully planned and regularly reviewed. This is ensuring the right staff with the right qualities, experience and expertise are matching the needs of children and young people. Staff interviewed indicated a positive change in staffing levels and feel children and young people are now safer.

Staff morale is on the rise. Staff comment that school and care is now well led and managed and staff are seeing practice becoming increasingly embedded. Previous shortfalls have been taken seriously and brought about a more dedicated staff team that are more determined to succeed. One staff said, 'in the past four months I feel that everything has come together, we have a leadership team who work hard and all work together and I am proud of our progress'. Another staff commented, 'I really rate the new headteacher and will support her fully'. Another staff added, 'over the last few months staff have been working really hard to move forward and achieve a standard of good rating. This I feel is evident when you move around the site as a whole. Young people are happy and staff are confident and fully supported'.

All previous requirements and recommendations have been met. This has seen significant improvements in areas of child protection, staffing and care practice. This has included meeting a compliance notice on the protection of children.

## 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 looked after children 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 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 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  
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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