

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	27/04/16
Unique reference number	1232380
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Birtenshaw
Registered person address	Birtenshaw Birtenshaw, Darwen Road Bolton BL7 9AB

Responsible individual	David Reid
Registered manager	Samantha Brown
Inspector	Sarah Oldham

Inspection date	27 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	N/A
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
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.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

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Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Children and young people have excellent relationships with staff. They communicate that they are happy during their stay. Through ongoing support and encouragement, they make progress in all aspects of their development.
- Support is highly individualised and this ensures that children's needs are central to all levels of care and support.
- Children's safety is promoted. Staff demonstrate comprehensive knowledge of individual risks and provide effective action to minimise these to keep the children safe.
- The manager has excellent understanding of the needs of young people. She provides inspirational leadership to a highly motivated staff team through child-centred and research-led practice.
- Relationships with families are excellent.
- Admission planning is comprehensive. The manager and staff work in partnership with a range of other professionals, including education, health and safeguarding agencies, as well as parents, to provide cohesive and effective services tailored to meet individual needs. The transition for young people on to other services, including adult services, is equally comprehensive. This minimises disruption by ensuring that future care providers are fully conversant with individual needs.
- The manager undertakes robust monitoring of all aspects of the service. This includes the development and progress of the children and young people. These enable achievements to be clearly identified, along with areas for additional support to be provided. Independent monitoring visits further support and underpin the practice within the home to continue to develop outcomes for young people.
- One shortfall has been identified, in relation to the essential information sheet for young people containing relevant updated information.

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 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 must comply with the given timescale.

Requirement	Due date
36: Children's case records The registered person must maintain records for each child which are kept up to date. This relates specifically to the essential information sheet on the daily files for each young person (Regulation 36 (1)(b)).	1 June 2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is part of a charitable organisation. It provides a short-break service and shared care placement for up to six children or young people with physical and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Children and young people benefit from receiving care and support from an experienced, enthusiastic and committed staff team which has high aspirations for them. The ethos of the home, to provide a warm, welcoming environment that supports and promotes positive outcomes, is reflected in the relationships that the children and staff have. Communication through a variety of mediums ensures that all children contribute their views and wishes to their day-to-day experiences at the home. Comprehensive planning and pre-admission assessments include families and other professionals, to make sure that the support and care provided is consistent. Staff visit young people at their home and school, and spend time establishing relationships with them prior to commencement of the short-break placement. One placing social worker said, 'The assessment process, planning and communication has been an exceptional strength of the home. The manager and staff demonstrate great sensitivity and understanding of complex needs, and work in partnership with others to support the smooth transition to a new service for young people.' A parent said, 'My child has settled in really well and the support has been totally focused on her needs and how these can be met. This has given me reassurance and confidence that this will continue to happen.' Staff value education and develop excellent links with schools that young people attend. They ensure that effective communication systems are in place and offer support to promote educational achievements. Children and young people who stay at the short-break service have a number of complex healthcare needs. Individualised care planning includes information on how these are supported. The staff have strong links with specialist nurses and consultants for children with complex needs. They are proactive in accessing appropriate resources through multi-agency working, to promote the holistic health and well-being of young people. The move of the service to a larger, brighter and community-based resource is enabling young people to have additional opportunities and experiences to further enhance and support their individual needs. A range of resources is available and there are activities for each young person to take part in during their stay. There are two sensory rooms, arts and crafts materials and toys within the home. Some young people enjoy baking and cooking, which they are supported to do. There is also a garden area and a separate area where there are small animals which they	

can help to look after. Other activities include swimming and trips out to local shops, parks and events. All activities are risk assessed and undertaken in accordance with the young people's interests and wishes.

The progress and achievements that young people attain are clearly evidenced through regular reviewing and monitoring. The manager uses research-based practice to improve outcomes further, and she shares this with other professionals.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Children and young people's safety and welfare is central to the care and practice of the home. Comprehensive risk assessments underpin intervention strategies and practice. These, along with detailed behaviour management plans, enable staff to address and take action to maintain the safety and well-being of the young people. There have been no incidents of children missing from the home. Staff have an excellent understanding of the procedures to follow if this were to happen, and routinely refresh their knowledge to ensure that their practice adheres to current agreed guidance and protocols. Each young person has a daily file containing all risk assessments. These are reviewed at each visit to ensure that they remain current. An essential front sheet has, however, not been updated on the daily file and could potentially cause some confusion. The manager was addressing this at the time of the inspection. Positive behaviour is encouraged and supported through agreed strategies. These are developed in consultation with a range of professionals to ensure continuity of practice for each young person. The use of physical intervention is rarely used. When it is, detailed records are maintained, with the addition of a robust review by the manager. Where there is agreed use of physical aids, such as splints, as assessed by a healthcare professional, records are maintained to ensure appropriate use in accordance with agreed protocols. This means that any restriction is in the best interests of the young person to safeguard them from harm. Communication methods for each young person are clearly followed and this enables staff to ensure that the views of young people are gathered, including whether they feel safe and well cared for. Parents and social workers comment that the home is excellent at communication and in promoting welfare for children. One social worker said, 'Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of safeguarding and their practice is consistent with this. I have no concerns	

regarding the care and support provided. Staff treat each and every child as an individual, and with dignity and respect and they ensure that their voice is heard.'

Robust recruitment, selection and vetting processes are followed for all staff prior to them commencing employment at the home. These processes provide further safeguarding by ensuring that unsuitable people who may pose a risk of harm to young people are not employed at the home.

The home complies with health and safety legislation, with all equipment suitably maintained and serviced, including hoists, electrical installations and equipment. Fire safety is adhered to, and all young people have a personal emergency evacuation plan in place in the event of a fire occurring.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The manager was registered for this service in March 2016, having been registered at the previous short-break service for this organisation. She has the necessary skills and experience to provide dynamic leadership and management to a motivated and experienced staff team, who all have high aspirations for the children and young people. The manager has recently completed the level 5 diploma in management and, combined with her other qualifications, she ensures that her child-centred practice is underpinned by sound knowledge, based on current research and development. Her enthusiasm is mirrored by staff who say that they feel exceptionally well supported in their roles. They receive regular supervision, which promotes their professional development and their ability to be forward thinking in their practice. This, alongside access to a comprehensive training and development programme, contributes to their knowledge base. Staff meetings also include aspects of training and development and enable staff to reflect on progress and outcomes for young people. The service is held in high regard by families, placing social workers and other professionals. They all report that the care and support provided at the home is child-focused, and that there are excellent levels of communication. The aims and objectives of the home are clearly outlined in the statement of purpose. In addition, all children and young people have personalised children's guides which provide details about their own stay at the home, including pictures of the home, their bedroom, with the soft furnishings and bedding they have chosen, and information about their stay. This helps young people to settle at the home well.	

Care planning is undertaken to a high standard. The manager regularly reviews plans to ensure that progress is effectively captured and reflected clearly, along with any emerging patterns or trends. Regular feedback, from parents, professionals and via observation of practice, enables the manager to continue to develop the service provided to young people. She ensures that multi-disciplinary working is effective in order to promote positive outcomes and progress for all of the children and young people.

The manager is fully aware of her role and accountability as registered manager, and as such ensures that the home complies with current legislation and guidance. Where any shortfalls have been identified through monitoring or inspection, she is proactive in addressing these and implementing robust systems to minimise risk or future occurrence.

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 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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