

1244000

Registered provider: CareTech Community Services Limited

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The service offers short-break care for young people who have learning disabilities. It is registered to accommodate up to five young people at any one time. The home aims to provide a comfortable, nurturing environment where every young person is supported to learn, grow and discover everyday life.

The manager is experienced, suitably qualified and has been registered since September 2016.

Inspection dates: 26 to 27 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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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: 6 December 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/12/2017	Full	Outstanding
06/03/2017	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Young people come to stay in an exceptionally well-maintained, comfortable and fully accessible home. The staff make sure that the house provides a wonderful atmosphere that is warm and welcoming. Young people can access an extensive range of activities that meet their diverse needs. Enthusiastic staff encourage young people to take part in these varied activities regardless of their complex needs. As a result, young people experience lots of fun during their short breaks.

Young people receive individualised packages of care. Managers and staff work closely with professionals, and the young person's family or carers, to ensure that their specific needs are met. One parent told the inspector, 'The impact the provision has had on the family is significant. As a family we are more positive, more relaxed and more hopeful.'

Staff have a remarkable understanding of young people's individual needs. This means that they can quickly spot any changes in a young person's physical, emotional or psychological health. This close monitoring of young people's health means that any changes are investigated and quickly referred.

Staff manage young people's short-break stays well. These are managed at a pace that suits the young person and their family. Staff build trusting relationships with family members as well as young people. One parent told the inspector, 'Staff take time to support and comfort me as well as providing an excellent service to my daughter.'

Parents and professionals described young people as being happy, well cared for and having positive experiences during their short breaks.

Staff celebrate all young people's achievements. These achievements are captured in a memory book that is shared with family.

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

Staff ensure that young people are safeguarded. Staff understand young people's vulnerabilities and the importance of having safeguarding measures in place to reduce the likelihood of incidents happening. As a result, staff very rarely use any form of physical restraint. One parent told the inspector, 'Staff are experienced, competent, very caring and attentive to my child's complex needs.'

Behaviour management is excellent. This is successful because staff are well informed about potential triggers and how to manage them. Staff support young people to stay calm, feel safe and communicate their needs with creative approaches. The manager carefully considers the combination of young people who attend the home at any one time. As a result, young people are well matched and enjoy their short breaks with familiar friends.

Staff training and research-based practice has helped staff understand the potential risks that young people face due to their vulnerabilities. Staff are trained in safeguarding and understand the risks that young people can face from child sexual exploitation.

The registered manager ensures that all recruitment checks are completed for staff coming to work at the home. This means that young people benefit from having staff working with them who have been safely vetted.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

The registered manager has been in post since September 2016. She is suitably experienced and qualified and provides excellent leadership. Her oversight ensures that staff maintain exceptional standards of care for young people. The manager leads a committed, skilled and knowledgeable workforce.

Staff spoke highly of the manager and are driven by the same enthusiasm that she has. A positive, inspirational ethos exists within the home and this ethos underpins the outstanding quality of care that young people receive.

Staff told the inspector that managers support them very well. They have regular supervision, detailed handovers, and monthly team meetings. As a result, the staff have opportunities to discuss the care of young people as well as their own professional development.

Most staff are qualified and have a level 3 diploma in residential childcare. The remaining staff are working towards the award and are still within the regulatory timescale for finishing the qualification.

Managers continue to ensure that the home achieves its aims as set out in the statement of purpose. The registered manager understands the strengths and areas for development of the home.

Managers and staff work very closely with other professionals and families. This close partnership means that young people continue to make great progress.

Managers and staff maintain young people's records superbly. Everything is organised and to hand. The manager has recently introduced key information sheets on young people, so essential information is accessible to all staff.

The manager drives improvement through her close monitoring and review. She checks young people's progress and is always looking for innovative ways to measure each young person's level of achievement as a result of their short-break experience. Consequently, the manager and staff know when young people are doing well and when young people need more support.

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: 1244000

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: CareTech Community Services Limited

Registered provider address: 5th Floor Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual: Roberta Davies

Registered manager: Amanda Brace

Inspector

Debbie Holder, social care inspector

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