

1273485

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is a short-break service for seven children who have learning disabilities.

This home has operated for over 40 years. It is one of four homes operated by a local authority trust since March 2018. The registered manager has extensive experience and knowledge.

Due to COVID 19 (coronavirus), at the request of the Secretary of State, we suspended all routine inspections of social care providers on 17 March 2020.

We last visited this setting on 23 February 2021 to carry out a monitoring visit. The report is published on the Ofsted website.

Inspection dates: 7 to 8 September 2021

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 27 January 2020

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2020	Full	Good
14/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/09/2018	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children enjoy their short-break experiences because they are cared for by staff who are well established and have been working at the home for several years. Staff show patience, respect and dignity when managing children's needs. This approach by staff helps children to thrive and develop.

Relationships flourish because staff consider each child when matching them into individual groups for the duration of their stay. This ensures that children get the best out of their stay. One child was happy to see his friend arriving and began to speak his friend's name while smiling. This demonstrates positive relationships between children.

Children take part in regular participation meetings. Staff encourage children to use their preferred communication system to express their wishes and feelings. Where possible, staff act on children's wishes. For example, recent consultation with children has meant a themed bedroom has now been changed to reflect their choice and preference.

Staff promote children's health and well-being. Children receive home-cooked meals that are nutritional and reflect the children's dietary requirements. Signs and symbols are available for children with limited speech to help them choose their meal. As a result, mealtimes are an enjoyable experience.

Children are provided with a range of activities both on and off site. A staff member shared photographs of children making t-shirts at their local children's club. Despite restrictions during the pandemic, staff have remained determined to ensure that children enjoy their time by making good use of the resources in the home. This has enabled children to develop their personal skills and independence.

A parent spoke about how staff are helping her child to return to the service following a period of closure. To help the child reintegrate into the service, staff have provided dinner-time visits that allow a gentle reintroduction at a pace that is suitable for the child. This sensitive approach by staff ensures that children do not miss out on their short-break experience.

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

Staff know children's strengths and vulnerabilities well. They have clear safeguarding policies and procedures that enable them to safely care for children. Risks identified in children's healthcare plans are cross-referenced to individual risk assessments. Staff manage these risks and vulnerabilities appropriately. This promotes children's welfare.

Staff recognise children's progress from their starting points and celebrate this with them. Praise and positive reinforcement help children to understand what acceptable behaviour is. This approach raises children's self-esteem and helps them to feel valued.

Staff provide children with consistent routines and boundaries, which help them to feel safe and secure. Clear behaviour management plans provide staff with guidance on how to manage children's behaviour effectively. Staff understand the triggers for behaviour and know how best to support children. They do this well.

Children do not go missing from care. Managers maintain staffing levels to ensure that supervision is good enough to keep children safe.

Physical intervention is rarely used. This is because staff are successful at promoting positive behaviours and de-escalating any challenging behaviours. There has only been one restraint recorded since December 2018.

On the one occasion that a physical intervention was used, the registered manager did not complete a debrief with staff in the required timescales. Furthermore, the two staff involved in this incident had not completed their annual refresher training in positive behaviour management. Although this did not compromise the child's safety, in this incident the registered manager has not ensured that the staff have had the required training.

Complaints and allegations of harm or abuse are managed well. The registered manager responds to and investigates any concerns raised. Staff have thorough knowledge of the safeguarding procedures.

The registered manager ensures that the home is maintained to a high standard. Routine health and safety monitoring keeps the home free from hazards. Parents and professionals feel that children are safe and cared for when accessing their short break.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is managed by a suitably qualified and experienced registered manager. She is proud of her staff who are long-standing in their service. The registered manager said, 'The staff are great. I am proud of them.'

The staff team is experienced and knowledgeable. This means that it has the skills and knowledge to support and help children. Overall, staff are provided with an appropriate range of training to meet the needs of the children in their care. Staff know children well and work hard to promote their positive outcomes.

Staff feel well supported by the registered manager. This has contributed to the high retention rate of staff. As a result, children are cared for by familiar and well-known staff who they have good relationships with.

The registered manager uses a range of monitoring and review systems to evaluate the quality of care provided to children. She has a good understanding of the home's strengths and areas of development. When required improvements are identified, she acts on these quickly.

The registered manager and staff keep parents and professional up to date with children's progress. This ensures that there is a co-ordinated approach to meeting children's needs. When parents have concerns or questions, they feel able to discuss these with staff and the registered manager. This helps parents to feel listened to and involved in children's care and support.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications, and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(c)) This specifically relates to the registered person ensuring that all staff are adequately trained in the principles of restraint and any techniques appropriate to the needs of the children.	16 October 2021

Recommendation

- The registered person should ensure that a record of supervision sessions is kept for staff, including non-permanent staff. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations, including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1273485

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: Third Floor Zone 16, 1 Lancaster Circus,
Birmingham B4 7DJ

Responsible individual: Melanie Page

Registered manager: Nicola Larkin

Inspector

Michelle Spruce, Social Care Inspector

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