

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC000673
Inspector	Colin Imrie
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Action for Children
Registered person address	Action for Children 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road WATFORD WD18 8AG
Responsible individual	Julie Longworth
Registered manager	Roseanne Montague
Date of last inspection	14/01/2015

Inspection date	03/03/2015
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Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The manager and staff have continued to provide a satisfactory service to the children and young people. The manager has addressed most of the requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection. A location risk assessment has been completed; the Statement of Purpose has been revised; an appropriate system for internal monitoring has been established; and a register of all children admitted is now maintained. The manager has ensured that consent has been obtained from parents and carers for the administration of first aid and non-prescribed medication. The manager has ensured that the use of agency staff is maintained at appropriate levels and the use is reducing. Placement plans are improving and staff are identifying clear goals and outcomes, however this needs further work, and not all of the supervision notes are signed by the supervisor and members of staff.

The planning and focus around setting goals and achieving outcomes still requires improvement. This lack of focus and clarity means that children and young people are not achieving as good outcomes as possible. One child had a number of goals identified around self-care and eating but records of progress were partial and inconsistent and so progress was not clear.

When out in the community on supervised trips, some young people display some challenging behaviour and have put themselves at risk. Staff keep these young people as safe as possible and do what they can to control these risks, but sometimes have to ask the police for assistance. Staff review these risk well and feel it is important to encourage young people to go out into the community in order to build up independence skills. Some young people have aggressive behaviour when in the home and at times this does have an adverse impact on the other young people. This aggressive behaviour sometimes requires staff to restrain the young people. These restraints are appropriate but are currently not decreasing in number. Staff have called the police on two occasions when they have been unable to control

young people's behaviour in the home. The staff have not notified Ofsted on three occasions when the police have been called to assist with controlling the young people. Staff actively assess behaviour and do get some support from other health and medical professionals to understand how to manage this better. During one recorded episode of challenging behaviour involving two young people, one of them made a comment about the other hurting her the previous evening. While this was recorded, it was not recorded as a complaint and not investigated formally.

Although care planning does still require improvement, there is some evidence that young people are making progress with their goals and targets. Young people in the home continue to have very good school attendance and are making progress with their education. They also make good progress with gaining independence skills and are helped to do this by staff encouraging a wide range of activities. They are also able to maintain good contact with their families.

Children and young people attending for short breaks are kept safe and are making progress towards achieving their goals. They are engaged in appropriate activities and enjoy their time in the home. The children and young people observed during this inspection were relaxed and happy, playing appropriately with staff.

Staff are caring and have a good understanding of young people's needs. They work hard to meet these needs and their care is generally good. They also work well with other professionals to ensure the needs of the young people are met. They provide good supervision to the young people and were observed, during this inspection, taking part in a range of activities with them. The staff are appropriately trained but there are gaps in their safeguarding training.

The manager provides the staff with good support and supervision is carried out regularly. The manager monitors the home well and the external monitoring is good. The manager employs agency staff but this is reducing and the staff team is almost complete. This ensures there is continuity of care for children and young people.

The home is very well maintained and has plenty of good quality resources and equipment, including sensory equipment. The home is nicely presented with photographs and pictures decorating the walls. The rooms are all child-friendly and have plenty of appropriate toys and games. The home is appropriately located and young people are able to make good use of local resources. Young people also access a broad range of activities and resources from the wider area.

There are three requirements and two recommendations from this inspection. The manager and staff have started to improve care planning but this process requires further work in order to ensure the best outcomes. The manager needs to ensure that all notifications are made to Ofsted and needs to ensure all staff have up to date safeguarding training. One young person has been recorded as making a complaint against another young person and this requires formal investigation.

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for children who have learning disabilities. There are five permanent places and five places for children who receive short breaks. The home is operated by a national voluntary organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2015	Full	adequate
05/02/2014	Interim	good progress
03/07/2013	Full	good
07/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
11 (2001)	promote and make proper provision for the welfare of children, specifically, that each child has a detailed placement plan which is kept updated and is focused on clear measurable goals and outcomes. (Regulation 11(1))	03/06/2015
30 (2001)	ensure that if any event listed in column 1 of schedule 5 takes place, that the registered person shall without delay inform the persons indicated in column 2 of the table. Specifically, when police are called to the home to deal with a serious incident. (Regulation 30(1))	03/04/2015
24 (2001)	ensure that a written record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of the investigation. (Regulation 24(5))	03/04/2015

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that the records of staff supervision are signed by the supervisor and the member of staff at the end of the supervision. (NMS 19.5)
- ensure that staff receive high quality training. Specifically, safeguarding training is up to date for all staff. (NMS 18)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.