

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	17 March 2016
Unique reference number	SC003792
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Lifeworks Charity Limited
Registered person address	Blacklers Park Road, Dartington Hall Estate, Totnes, Devon, TQ9 6EQ

Responsible individual	Tina Tozer
Manager	Andrew Edwards
Inspector	Guy Mammatt

Inspection date	17 March 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
This home was judged requires improvement at the full inspection in September 2015. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.	
The manager has dealt effectively with the majority of the requirements made at the previous inspection. The feedback from families and local authority representatives is positive. They say that young people enjoy visiting the home and there has been noticeable improvement in the quality of the care provided to them. In response to the actions raised at the previous inspection, staff now provide separate living accommodation for young people who reside permanently at the home. In addition, the decoration throughout the home has been modernised and made more appealing to the young people. They especially enjoy the new facilities in the games room. The homeliness of the service can be further improved by the removal of unnecessary signage and by individually assessing which young people require visual night-time checks by staff. Staff now record all incidents of restraint appropriately. They understand that holding a door closed is a restrictive practice and as a result, must be recorded as a restraint. Staffs' recordings now include a description of why a restraint was necessary. In addition, a record is kept of the follow up discussion that took place with the young person involved in the incident. The manager monitors the frequency of restraint and takes effective action to reduce its use. The implementation of a core team around one young person has decreased the use of physical intervention with that child. The manager has implemented a thorough admission process to ensure an improved transition for young people beginning to attend the home. He has also updated the home's statement of purpose and submitted this to Ofsted. The manager ensures that staff now have good access to regular supervision and references are in place for new staff before they commence work. A requirement remains in place to ensure that all agency staff that are used, provide a full employment chronology, with a satisfactory written explanation of any gaps in their employment.	

Staff have good relationships with the young people and effectively respond to their needs. They demonstrate a clear knowledge of the young people's behaviour support plans and effectively help them to manage their own actions. Staff use good communication skills and distraction techniques to re-enforce positive behaviour. All staff are now trained in Makaton.

Young people have good access to social opportunities and friendships as a result of their experiences in this home. Staff take young people into the community for clubs, fun activities and to develop their life skills. Families report that their child receives safe care and has a good time when they visit.

The communication with families is excellent. Parents are well-informed about their child's care and some are involved the parents' forum. They feel listened to and their ideas help the young people feel settled and happy. Parents are also involved in the recruitment of new staff.

There is good quality communication between the leadership team and effective support for the manager. They meet regularly and review the effectiveness of the home. The appointment of a deputy manager and quality assurance and compliance officer, has had a positive impact on the efficiency of the management team. The comprehensive development plan is ambitious and draws together all of the monitoring processes undertaken by the team. As a result, young people attend a home where leaders and staff are continually striving to improve the quality of care provided.

The responsible individual and the manager's collaboration with placing authorities is good. An arrangement has been made for the young peoples' key workers and social workers to write the home's care plans together. This approach will ensure joined up working. The care plans are also shared with families for their approval and input. A local authority's manager stated that 'Robins is very helpful for young people in transition, in and out of the home' and that it has 'a good understanding of its capabilities.'

The manager has submitted his application to Ofsted to become the registered manager of the home.

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a charitable trust, providing care and accommodation for children and young people on both a long term basis and for short breaks. The home provides six short break and four residential placements for children and young people who may have learning disabilities, physical disabilities or a sensory impairment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/09/2015	CH - Full	Requires improvement
12/03/2015	CH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/11/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
06/11/2013	CH - Interim	Satisfactory progress

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
32: Fitness of workers The registered person may only— (a) employ an individual to work at the children's home; or (b) if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). (3) The requirements are that— (d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32 (a) (b) (3(d)))	30/04/2016

Recommendations

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

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than 'institutional' impression. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations including the quality standards. 3.9)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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