

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	14/10/2015
Unique reference number	SC005041
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Daisybrook Limited
Registered person address	5th Floor, Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, POTTERS BAR, Hertfordshire, EN6 1AG

Responsible individual	Mark O'Donnell
Registered manager	Ann Pritchard
Inspector	Julia Wright

Inspection date	14/10/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC005041

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children and young people make progress across all areas of their development.
- They have good quality and highly individualised care from a committed and supportive staff team.
- Staff know children and young people very well. They take time to understand their complex needs whilst also understanding their general needs as children and young people.
- Multi-agency care is effective.
- Children and young people are treated with dignity and respect.
- Staff are well trained in meeting the complex needs of the children and young people in their care.
- Staff work well together to manage children and young people's behaviour.
- The staff team is stable and new staff are supported in their role.
- Staff ratios ensures the safety of children and young people.
- Careful preparation is undertaken when considering new admissions.
- The home is well managed by an experienced registered manager, supported by a knowledgeable deputy manager.
- There are a few shortfalls in practice. These include staff understanding of procedures for dealing with allegations, minor shortfalls in the furnishing of the home and a gender imbalance within the staff team.

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure the policy for the protection of children from abuse or neglect should be available and explained to children and their families as well as to all staff, whatever their role. The registered person must make sure that all staff are familiar with this policy and act in accordance with it, in particular how to use it to report a concern. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 44 paragraph 9.21)
- Ensure young people live in an environment which meets their basic day to day needs. In particular ensure floor coverings are secure. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- Ensure staff in day to day contact with children include staff from the different gender groups. (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 54, paragraph 10.22)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a private organisation. It is registered to accommodate up to 10 children and young people with a range of disabilities and complex needs. The provision may be for either settled care or short breaks.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/01/2015	CH - Full	Good
29/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good progress
12/12/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Children and young people enjoy good, supportive and nurturing relationships with staff. Staff spend time with them, talk to them and encourage children and young people to enjoy their lives at the home. All children and young people who live at or spend time at the home have complex needs and staff value and respect each individual. The home has a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Decoration reflects the achievements and contributions of children and young people. Bedrooms are decorated to reflect individual choice and interests. Where specialist equipment is needed to meet children and young people's needs, this does not detract from their enjoyment of their personal space. A relative said, 'I cannot rate the care highly enough'. Children and young people make progress across all areas of their development. Health professionals comment that children and young people's health has improved since living at the home. Where children and young people were underweight, they have now reached a healthy weight. Children and young people's care plans are highly individualised and give staff clear guidance on how each child or young person is cared for over a 24 hour period. These plans ensure that a consistent and good level of care is given to each individual. All children and young people attend school full time. School and home communication books means that staff are aware of positive events at school and are able to talk to children and young people about them. Equally, if there are areas of difficulty, staff are vigilant and supportive and ensure that the care they give meets each child and young person's needs. Children and young people enjoy a variety of activities in the home and community reflecting individual choice and interest. The home has a sensory room which is well used, and a variety of games, IT and craft activities. The garden is spacious and there is a variety of adapted play equipment available. Children and young people have fun, develop confidence and friendships with peers. Staff maintain excellent communication with families. One parent said, 'I can rest assured that staff will contact me if there is a problem'.	

Children and young people are encouraged to develop appropriate life skills. Where appropriate, they help prepare and clear away meals, help keep their rooms clean and tidy and develop self-care skills. Children and young people develop self-respect as their self-confidence increases.

Where possible, children and young people maintain contact with their families and friends. A relative said, 'I am always made to feel welcome, staff are kind and attentive'. Children and young people retain contact and connections with important people in their lives reinforcing their sense of security and belonging.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Children and young people are well protected through the formulation of clear and well assessed placement plans. These incorporate behaviour plans and risk assessments. All staff read and understand these documents. They understand children and young people's vulnerabilities and ensure that they are cared for in a safe and consistent way. Some children and young people have significant complex needs. These necessitate staff understanding and completion of care procedures such as gastrostomy feeding and the use of suction machines. Children and young people's safety is further enhanced by staff training and confidence in meeting their global needs. A parent commented, 'I know my child is in safe hands. I can rest assured knowing that if there is a problem they will contact me, otherwise, I know that everything is fine'. There are no instances of children and young people going missing from care due to the one to one supervision they receive from staff. Staff know the children and young people well and are alert to any changes in their presentation or behaviour which may signify health difficulties. Good relationships with health professionals means that medical support is promptly sought. Some children and young people have short breaks at the home. They are protected by a clear and accountable process of managing medication. Due to the complexity of their needs, a significant amount of medication is stored at various times. Managers have good systems in place to avoid medication errors. Staff training means that those staff administering medication are confident and competent. Some children and young people present with challenging behaviour. Staff supervision, support and consistency means that children and young people learn that staff are there for them. Staff know that children and young people's	

challenging behaviour is sometimes due to frustration. Staff respond calmly and take time to understand their needs. Positive behaviour is rewarded and children and young people learn that staff listen to them and behavioural outbursts decrease.

Not all staff are familiar with the organisation's policy of reporting allegations made against staff. This sketchy knowledge limits their abilities to ensure children and young people stay fully protected.

The registered manager ensures that regular health and safety checks are undertaken. Children and young people participate in fire evacuations to enhance their safety. The physical environment in the home is generally safe, although a small area where flooring is uneven creates a potential tripping hazard to children, young people and staff.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The registered manager is a qualified social worker and has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management in social care. She is an experienced manager who has high standards and aspirations for children and young people at the home. The registered manager is supported by an experienced deputy manager and they work well together and have a good level of communication regarding all areas of the service. This means that children and young people receive a consistently good service whilst living at this home. The registered manager has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development for the home. She has robust quality assurance processes in place to improve the quality of care for young people in her care. The registered manager works closely with the monthly independent visitor and this feedback promotes the wellbeing of children and young people. The registered manager places a high priority on staff training. Most staff hold a National Vocational Qualification or diploma level 3 in residential childcare. Additional specialist training relating to children and young people's needs, such as the use of suction machines, or gastrostomy feeding is provided to staff undertaking these procedures. Consequently, children and young people's safety is protected as staff are knowledgeable and confident in their role. Processes for the recruitment of staff are robust. This minimises the possibility of children and young people being harmed by those on a position of trust. The management team focus on continuously improving the care offered to children and young people. This includes ensuring staff receive annual appraisals and	

regular supervision to evaluate their performance and identify development needs.

The majority of the staff working at the home are female. The registered manager is aware that children and young people will benefit from a mixed gender staff team, allowing children and young people to form relationships with men and women caring for them, and this forms part of her development plan for the home.

Staff have very good collaborative relationships with other professionals ensuring seamless care for children and young people. A Social Worker commented, 'I am very impressed by the manager who is a 'can do' person'. A medical professional said, 'The staff are proactive in meeting young people's needs'.

The managers and staff have a clear understanding of the purpose of the home as set out in the statement of purpose. In particular, the home states that it has a 'home from home' ethos. Children and young people's relatives remark, 'The home is a real home from home'. Another said, 'My child goes for short breaks, and it is his second home'.

Admissions to the home are carefully planned and managers ensure that they have all available information relevant to children and young people's needs prior to their admission. Given the complexity of children and young people's needs, this means that staff have received relevant training and are fully prepared to undertake their role in safely caring for all children and young people.

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 looked after children 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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