

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	02/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC008484
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Emma Ward
Inspector	Rebecca Quested

Inspection date	02/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
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 Outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness.	
Staff work effectively in partnership with schools. They support children to sustain excellent school attendance and to thrive educationally. This includes staff supporting children with completing their homework. Children really appreciate this support, one child said: 'Staff help me with my homework.' Those children who are not in full time education are supported to make the necessary progress to re-engage with mainstream education. This includes securing home tutoring whilst final arrangements are made. Children's progress is supported by staff developing positive relationships with professional stakeholders and families. Staff work in partnership with the children and adolescent mental health service, specialist health services and virtual school heads to ensure that children receive consistent care that meets their needs. Staff support children's contact with their families where this is in their best interests. This helps to promote their sense of identity. Children enjoy access to a range of activities in the community. Children benefit from many opportunities to participate in organised activities such as cubs, sea cadets and horse riding as well as outings to parks, the cinema and wall climbing. Children develop new friendships and gain self-confidence as a result. One child described living in the home as 'lots of fun'. Children are at the centre of staff's practice. They involve children in decision-making regarding day to day activities as well as bigger decisions through their daily conversations with them but also through regular 'residents' meetings'. Staff develop detailed knowledge about children. Staff support them to identify and agree specific targets for them to achieve. This promotes positive outcomes for children who invest and achieve their goals. Staff develop positive relationships with children who describe feeling safe and being able to trust staff. Children understand how to complain and can identify who they would talk to if they had a concern. There have been no complaints made since the last inspection. Children rarely go missing. Staff are aware of how	

to respond if they are and work with the police to safeguard them when they are away from the home.

Staff's positive relationships with children help them to de-escalate many situations. Where physical intervention is necessary this is recorded and the registered manager ensures children receive debriefs. This assists children in reflecting on their behaviour and, with staff support, developing alternative strategies of self-regulation. For example, children learn to remove themselves from situations in order to calm down.

The registered manager monitors and reviews the quality of care provided. This does lead to improvements, particularly through the robust challenge to placing authorities ensuring that all documentation is in place. She is quick at identifying weaknesses which require further development including improving the quality of recording. However, the progress made has not yet included health records and records of children's unauthorised absence from the home.

The home provides a welcoming and friendly environment. However this is undermined by the continual use of electronic bedroom door monitors. This is not proportionate to safeguard the welfare of children during the daytime and creates an institutionalised feel.

Since the last inspection there has been one discharge and one admission to the home. Staff ensure transitions are planned and support children as they move on to new placements, remaining in contact to provide a continued sense of security for them. The registered manager ensures that new admissions to the home are carefully considered. She ensures that the stability of group living is not undermined and that staff are adequately prepared to meet the new child's needs. This includes sourcing specific training in order to meet identified health needs. As a consequence, children's arrival at the home is a positive experience for everyone.

Information about this children's home

This is an individual private children's home. The home provides care for up to six young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/10/2015	CH - Full	Outstanding
02/02/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/08/2014	CH - Full	Outstanding
11/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good 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
The registered person may only use devices for the monitoring or surveillance of children if it is for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the child concerned, or other children and it is no more intrusive than necessary, having regard to the child's need for privacy. In particular, not using electronic monitoring of children's bedroom doors during the day unless there is a specific safeguarding concern that requires this highly intrusive form of surveillance. (Regulation 24(1)(a) and (d))	01/04/2016

Recommendations

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

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. Staff should record information that will be helpful for the child. This relates to maintaining accurate records of children's health appointments and of attempts to contact children who are absent from the home. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations, April 2015, page 62, para 14.4)

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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