

SC013144

Barnardo's

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This residential short-break home caters for up to six children. The service is provided by a national charity in partnership with the local authority.

The home's statement of purpose states that most of the children using the service have complex needs or an autism spectrum disorder and may have associated challenging behaviour.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 30 May 2018.

The home is also registered with the Care Quality Commission (CQC) to provide nursing care. For information about their views of the children's home please refer to the CQC website.

Inspection date: 2 February 2021

This monitoring visit

This monitoring visit was conducted because Ofsted's inspectors have not inspected the home for 20 months. Normally, each children's home is inspected at least once in a year. The monitoring visit was undertaken remotely and focused on understanding how the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic has affected children's welfare and safety. Previous requirements and recommendations were also reviewed. Management arrangements, medication management, staff training and staff sufficiency were also a focus of this visit.

This monitoring visit has raised some concerns about the management arrangements of the home. However, despite these concerns, the staff are caring for the children well.

Children look forward to and enjoy their visits to the home. One parent said that her child helps to pack his bags when it is time to visit the home. His actions show her how much he enjoys coming here, and when he returns home he is

always happy. Another parent said that the staff had supported her child for several years and had adapted their care well to meet his changing age, needs and interests.

The arrangements in place during the COVID-19 pandemic have been adapted well to meet the changing government guidance. One social worker said that the managers and staff are flexible and accommodating and that this had helped to support the families in most need during the pandemic. One parent said: 'Honestly, I do not know what I would do if this home was not there, with such friendly people to support my child.'

The recommendation made at the last inspection, to improve how well children's bedrooms are personalised and maintained, is met. There is a rolling programme of redecoration in place. For one child, the changes have enabled him to settle to sleep more easily when he comes to stay.

The requirement that staff keep night-time surveillance systems under regular review is met. The arrangements are agreed with parents and, where appropriate, children. The arrangements reflect children's individual needs. A formal review of the arrangements with a child's professional network does not occur. This omission prevents professionals from contributing their views about the suitability of night-time monitoring arrangements.

The staff talk knowledgeably about the procedures for notifying safeguarding concerns. Social workers speak positively about how staff let them know about safety concerns. A parent said that she liked how the staff always contacted her to ask about any bruises that they found. She felt that this attention to detail gave her confidence in the staff's safeguarding practice.

Medication management and administration is well understood by the staff and implemented effectively. The staff confidently talk about the medication procedures that they follow. There has been one recent medication error which was fully investigated and resulted in appropriate changes to practice to prevent any reoccurrence.

The staff are curious about what children's behaviour is telling them and act on concerns appropriately. Their curiosity helps them to know the children well and thereby reduce the likelihood that incidents will occur. There has been one incident of a child going missing in 2020. The staff quickly found the child. The reasons he went missing were explored well by managers. The child's care plans and risk assessment were updated quickly and appropriately.

The registered manager has not worked at the home since August 2020. She is supporting another of the organisation's homes in the region during the pandemic. Leaders are working to resolve the management issues at the home. It is, however, of concern that the registered manager has not been present and in day-to-day charge of the home for five months. The lack of clear management

arrangements confuses lines of responsibility and reduces the capacity of the home's management to provide consistent leadership at a difficult time.

For a period of time last year, the staff from this home regularly filled staff vacancies at another of the organisation's homes. Staff expressed their concerns about how this issue had a negative impact on their morale. However, this situation has improved and since January 2021 they no longer support the other home. Despite the challenges relating to the registered manager not being present in the home, staff felt that they were able to access management support. Staff are resilient and resourceful and have maintained high standards of care throughout the COVID-19 pandemic.

Monitoring arrangements by leaders and managers vary in quality. For example, managers keep careful good oversight of any gaps in staff training. They use this to inform decisions about which staff work together on a shift. However, the previous requirement that incident records should be reviewed within 48 hours of an incident is not met. This is a repeat requirement. In addition, managers are not monitoring the quality of records appropriately. Incident forms did not all include good levels of detail of a manager's debrief with the staff after the incident and some records were not updated appropriately.

Face-to-face staff training continues to be affected by restrictions regarding social distancing. This change has resulted in training generally being provided online. One member of staff stated that he 'hated' online training. He misses the interaction gained during face-to-face training, which better supports his learning style. Managers are not using other means, such as discussions at team meetings or supervision sessions, to create learning opportunities that have been missed due to the lack of face-to-face training.

Social workers are very positive about how staff work with them and a child's wider professional network. One social worker said that staff reports on children's progress are 'excellent', identifying both positive progress and areas of concern. Social workers also said that the staff identify children's and families' needs well and follow any new plans. They feel that staff have a positive and consistent approach to a child's care.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/05/2019	Full	Good
13/06/2018	Full	Good
19/06/2017	Full	Good
09/01/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 registered provider must appoint a person to manage the children's home if— the registered provider— is an organisation or a partnership; does not satisfy regulation 28; or is not, or does not intend to be, in day-to-day charge of the home. (Regulation 27 (b)(ii))	2 March 2021
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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) (2)(h))	2 March 2021
The registered person must ensure that within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person has signed the record to confirm it is accurate. (Regulation 35 (2)(b)) This refers to the requirement for the registered person to review behaviour incidents.	2 March 2021

Recommendations

- Leaders and managers should ensure that regular discussions about the use of surveillance or restrictive measures are undertaken. The professionals' views should inform the staff's decisions about the appropriateness of the measures used. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.16)
- Leaders and managers should review their training plans to consider how best to provide staff with opportunities to discuss issues that would normally be raised during face-to-face training sessions. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC013144

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnardo's

Registered provider address: Barnardo's, Tanners Lane, Barkingside, Ilford, Essex IG6 1QG

Responsible individual: Clement Deniran

Registered manager: Julie Gibbard

Inspectors

Ruth Coler, Social Care Inspector
Alphie Khumalo, Social Care Inspector

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