

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	08/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC013743
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	Shelagh Frankcom
Registered manager	Oyinlola Ogundele
Inspector	Trish Palmer

Inspection date	08/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. The young people have made good progress since the last inspection. The manager has been in post since January 2016 and has the relevant experience and qualifications to run the service. The staff spoken to say they feel supported by the manager and that she has clear visions for the home and aspirations for the young people. There were four requirements and two recommendations arising from the last inspection, these have been completed and implemented. There are robust monitoring systems in place, which support the manager and staff to look at trends and patterns of young people's behaviours and to plot progression. There are clear detailed care plans in place outlining how staff should work to support the young person with their everyday needs. The manager is in the process of developing new care plans, which will also clearly outline the young person's progression from their starting point when coming to the home and will give young people more opportunity to be involved in contributing to their care plans. New daily recording sheets are being introduced which include noting what young people have achieved towards meeting their targets. These will also have input from young people. Staff understand the importance of young people having a voice. The manager has begun to obtain many new forms of communication for young people. The home now has talking pens, which young people can use to communicate. These can also record so that when young people are distressed they can hear a familiar voice. These can also be used for young people to make talking books, which can be printed and used to support them. The manager has also purchased a programme for the computer, which will produce WIDGIT (picture and symbol written communications). A communication	

board will also be used as well as pads that young people can use by using their eyes. Staff have started to undergo training to be able to support young people in using the new technology.

The manager has recently introduced key working sessions for the young people. Staff spoken to feel that these have been proactive in helping them focus on work with the young people.

Young people's meetings are now being undertaken. The manager is confident that once staff have completed their training in the new communication aids and teach the young people to use them they will be able to have more interaction in these meetings.

The majority of staff receive regular supervision, the senior of one house has been on long term sick and staff reported that they had not had supervision for the last few months. The manager has redeployed another senior to the house and has employed a second senior for each house to ensure consistency. The staff spoken to say that there had already been a positive impact and supervision is taking place as well as weekly house meetings.

Staff spoken to commented that the new manager is 'like a breath of fresh air' and she is committed and motivated. Staff commented that the new communication systems will have a very positive impact for the young people and are looking forward to being able to use these effectively.

The young people continue to have positive relationships with a dedicated staff team who know them well and understand their individual needs. Staff were observed having positive interactions with young people on their return from school, they looked happy and relaxed and were engaging with staff.

Staff understand the importance of contact for young people and their families and work with parents to facilitate this. Young people have photos of their families and other important people in their lives in their bedrooms. Each young person's bedroom has been personalised and they have been supported in choosing colours and pictures.

Behaviour management is fair and proportionate. Using the new communication systems young people will be given the opportunity to have their comments recorded.

There have been 61 physical interventions since the last inspection 45 of these pertain to one young person whose behaviour had become very unsafe, he has not attended education for six months and had refused to leave the home. The staff worked hard with him around communication, the British Institute for Learning Disabilities completed an assessment of his behaviours due to the level and duration of restraints. The manager has also completed a new behaviour plan. His physical interventions have dramatically reduced in the past few months. He is now

keen to leave the home and staff are able to take him out to feed the horses or go out into the community. Staff are working with the school regarding reintegration. In the meantime, staff have incorporated education and learning into his daily activities.

Staff understand the importance of education, there are good links with schools and staff spend time with the young people in school looking at communication, targets and goals so that practice is consistent across the waking day.

Staff understand the vulnerability of the young people and the importance of safeguarding. Staff spoken to were clear on how to report any concerns and the action that would be taken in the event of an allegation. There are suggestion boxes in each house for young people and staff. A box has been placed outside for parents or visitors who may want to make a suggestion or inform the manager of any issues without being identified.

There have been two notifications since the last inspection, which have been dealt with appropriately, however a young person had been admitted to hospital with complex health needs, and this was not reported to Ofsted.

The home has undergone extensive work since the last inspection. The doorways in one house have been improved, a bathroom refurbished, decoration of the lounge, a double room being made into two singles and extra storage space provided. Another house has had the lounge redecorated. The sensory room is now finished with new equipment. There are plans to replace further flooring and decorate some more of the young people's bedrooms. The area outside one house has had permission for a conservatory, which will give young people extra space.

Information about this children's home

This home is run by a charitable organisation and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to 19 children; 15 children with learning disabilities and up to four places for children with a physical disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/11/2015	CH - Full	Good
22/12/2014	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
28/08/2014	CH - Full	Good
16/12/2013	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
40 Notification of serious events In order to meet the notification of serious events standard (4) the registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if (e) there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))	17/3/16

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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