

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC013743
Inspector	Paul Taylor
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	Deanna Margaret Neilson
Registered manager	Gaynor Alexandra Catherine Wicks / Tracey Terry
Date of last inspection	28/08/2014

Inspection date	22/12/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

The home was judged good at the last full inspection in August 2014. At that inspection one requirement was made relating to improving some aspects of the décor of the home. This has been robustly addressed and an active refurbishment program has made substantial improvements to the quality of décor throughout the home. In particular, considered and detailed attention has been given to the personalisation of young people's rooms. Bespoke design to some parts of the rooms have enhanced their quality with a view to making the young people relaxed and 'at home' in their rooms. For example, having an electronic photograph album placed fixed into a cabinet has enabled young people to see photographs of their family while ensuring that the mechanism is tamper proof. Additionally, young people are consulted on how they would like their rooms to be refurbished and the maintenance staff then ensure this is carried through.

A recommendation was also made at the last inspection relating to ensuring that all members of staff receive regular supervision at intervals outlined in the organisation's policy in this matter. This recommendation has not been addressed and there are still occasions when members of staff do not receive regular supervision. Despite this shortfall, members of staff report good levels of support from colleagues and managers and are confident that issues can be raised and dealt with at any time. However, formal recorded supervision at regular intervals is not occurring for all members of staff. The recommendation remains.

Since the last inspection the home has introduced monthly meetings to review health and safety and maintenance of the home. The meetings are attended by key members of staff including managers and maintenance managers. This approach ensures that any shortfalls are identified and clear plans put in place to address areas of concern. Examples of concerns addressed have been repairs needed for fire doors and moving and handling equipment being serviced and repaired when

needed.

Feedback from parents continues to be very positive about the care shown to the young people. One parent of a young person who has moved on successfully from the home to a long term placement has commented 'We cannot thank the staff for all their care, kindness and wonderful support.'

Young people's meetings are now taking place more regularly and this has enabled them to voice opinions about some aspects of life in the home. For example, choosing what activities they would like to do and what party themes they would like. This is a very well thought out process which has been prepared and paced at a level that the young people can cope with. Careful consideration has been given of each young person's abilities and different styles of communication.

The home has an electronic process for recording accidents. This includes information of the resolution to each accident. For example, an explanation of how a young person may have come by a minor injury and what measure needs to be taken to avoid a repetition. On occasion, the information has not been recorded on this system but has been completed in written form elsewhere. This is a minor shortfall which has not affected young people's safety but does make the task of auditing accidents more difficult.

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
28/08/2014	Full	good
16/12/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
21/05/2013	Full	adequate
06/02/2013	Interim	inadequate progress

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that staff have consistent access to support and advice, and are provided with regular supervision by appropriately qualified and experienced staff. (This relates to all members of staff receiving supervision in line with the organisation's policy) (NMS 19.4).
- ensure consistent implementation of the written policy that clarifies the purpose, format and content of the information to be kept on the registered person's files and information to be kept on the children's files. (This is with regards to ensuring that electronic records of accidents have the resolution and outcome of the accident and measures taken clearly recorded.) (NMS 22.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.