

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC013828
Inspector	Liz Driver
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Marsha Claire Wallis
Date of last inspection	24/03/2014

Inspection date	07/07/2014
------------------------	------------

Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
-------------------	-------------

The service is effectively and efficiently managed. The Registered Manager is leaving at the beginning of August and a replacement manager is being sought. Suitable cover arrangements have been planned until a new manager commences. The service provides a good standard of care taking each young person's individual needs into account. Staff work together to ensure that the young people have a good time during their short-break visit. One parent commented, ' I don't know where I would be without this service' .

Young people receive individualised care by a staff team who know the young people well. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of safe working practices, managing challenging behaviours well. Young people are supported to progress in many areas such as social development and independence. Staff use a variety of communication methods to gain the views of young people, this ensures young people feel valued and their views are taken into account. Increasing use of new communication technology is proving beneficial to both young people and staff.

Relationships between staff and young people are comfortable and professional, and body language shows that they feel safe and trust staff. Staff respond professionally and appropriately to unexpected behaviours and are equipped with the skills to

recognise when young people are upset or worried.

The leaders and manager know the service's strengths and weaknesses, they work hard to address gaps and secure improvements.

The one requirement relating to health and safety does not represent an immediate risk to the welfare or safety of young people. Two recommendations have also been raised to improve outcomes for young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide short-term care for up to six children and young people primarily with physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities. The home is located on a multi-purpose site and operated by a large charitable organisation managed by a Board of Trustees.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/03/2014	Interim	good progress
15/10/2013	Full	adequate
07/01/2013	Interim	good progress
07/08/2012	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
23 (2001)	the registered person shall ensure that all parts of the home to which children have access are free from hazards to their health and safety; specifically the flooring around the edges of the bathrooms and the safety of the extractor piping in the kitchen. (Regulation 23 9a))	29/08/2014

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take

account of the following recommendation(s):

- provide training that keeps staff up to date with professional, legal and practice developments; specifically around e safety and child sexual exploitation (NMS 18.1)
- ensure all individual records, specifically emergency fire evacuation plans, are dated to show when they were last reviewed. (NMS 22)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people make good progress as a result of accessing respite care at this service. They benefit from personalised support during their stay, which helps them grow in confidence and enjoy their respite time at the setting. Staff recognise the achievements young people make and these are celebrated visually with the 'achievement tree', where individual achievements are displayed on the pictorial tree for young people to see. Young people are encouraged and supported to be as independent as they are able. Mealtimes, activities and personal care tasks provide good learning opportunities and enable young people to develop life skills. In addition young people are cared for by staff who know their individual ways of communicating and expressing feelings and needs, which supports and guides individual progress. This ensures young people gain the maximum benefit from their stays. Parents say 'the service is incredibly helpful' and 'my child continues to make good progress with the support of the staff'.

Young people enjoy a wide range of activities both at the setting and in the community. Young people are encouraged and supported to learn and try new experiences when visiting the home. Staff ensure that young people make good use of age appropriate local amenities such as parks, restaurants and local attractions. This provides the young people with opportunities for social interaction. Young people have access to a variety of activities within the home including a range of sensory items. Staff support the requests of young people in resourcing their individual choices of toys and gadgets. Comments from parents include 'there is a good range of activities that my child enjoys' and 'staff understand my child's needs and provide him with the toys he enjoys which make his stays more enjoyable'. The opportunities provided are enabling young people's social and emotional development to progress.

The staff encourage and support young people to make healthy lifestyle choices through exercise and a nutritious diet. Young people are involved in contributing to the menu and are supported in food preparation; this assists in developing independence skills. Meal times are seen as social occasions and provide an opportunity to try new foods and develop new social skills. Young people are encouraged and supported to make decisions in order to maximise their independence; this maybe progressing from making a choice between 2 items of food to then be able to make a choice between 3 items of food.

Young people's educational needs are fully supported, with staff communicating well with the schools and attending educational reviews as appropriate. Staff work closely with teachers and individual targets are shared between the school and the home. This holistic approach ensures that young people are provided with support and guidance to reach their individual goals.

Young people are making good progress in their development and acquiring skills as a consequence of the quality of the respite care provided. They can access a full range of stimulating and appropriate opportunities as well as enjoying relationships with their peers and making new friends. New skills learnt such as making their beds, washing and cooking are preparing young people for the transition to adult life.

Quality of care

good

Young people benefit from good supportive relationships with staff. Staff are responsive towards young people's individual needs and understand when they are upset. Observations evidenced the trusting and fulfilling relationships between the young people and staff. Comments from parents include, 'lovely staff, very helpful', 'my child has very good relationships with the staff' and parents say they wouldn't be where they are without the kindness and support of the staff.

The care team communicate with young people using appropriate verbal skills and alternative methods of communication such as pictures and specialist interactive technology. This ensures that young people are offered choices in many aspects of their life including food, drinks and activities. It also helps young people to follow simple sequential pictorial instructions when carrying out personal tasks such as washing and cleaning teeth.

Young people are supported to make choices and express their and feelings in the running of the home. This is mainly done on a one to one basis on the days young people receive respite care. Young people are supported to be able to make a complaint with guidance visible around the setting, displayed on walls in pictorial format. This formal process is supported by staff vigilance at observing young people's changing mood or non-verbal communication in order to effectively manage anxieties or worries. Since the last inspection, no complaints have been received.

Young people are cared for in line with detailed 'All about me' plans, which include input from the young people and their family/carers. Individual needs are identified and understood by staff so they can meet the assessed needs. These care plans take into account the diverse and complex needs of the young people accessing the service including their medical, health and cultural needs and additional support required due to disability. These documents also include consent forms for medical treatment and first aid.

Arrangements for dealing with medication are safe and appropriate. There are excellent procedures for medication coming into and leaving the unit. Staff have received training in the safe administration of medication and this includes regular competency checks of their practice. Medication is stored, administered, and disposed of correctly and this contributes to young people's safety. Any medication issues are promptly referred, managed, and investigated to ensure that young

people's welfare is maintained, although a rare occurrence.

Young people's interaction and communication skills are developed through a range of varied and purposeful activities. Young people enjoy opportunities to play with friends and have fun. Good use is made of the many resources and facilities the service has to offer including soft play, sensory studio, hydrotherapy, and outside play equipment.

The home is situated in a residential area within easy reach of local facilities. Young people enjoy their stays in a safe and pleasant environment. The home has appropriate specialist equipment to ensure the individual needs of the young people accessing the service are met, such as adapted baths and ceiling hoists. Although some areas require repair, such as the flooring around the edges in the bathrooms, these do not pose an immediate health or safety risk. The extractor fan in the kitchen needs attention to ensure it is a permanent fixture.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people show that they feel safe in the home by their relaxed and trusting behaviour with the care staff. These relationships enable young people to feel safe and happy to raise any worries or concerns through their individual communication methods. Staff maintain a safe environment by being vigilant at all times. Staff receive regular training in safeguarding and demonstrate a recognition of the particular vulnerabilities relating to the needs of children with disabilities. Parents feedback that they 'know my child is safe when at the service'.

The risk of young people going missing is minimised by good staff ratios and level of staff supervision. A written policy is in place should an incident occur. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow in the event of young people going missing. Staff use rewards, positive encouragement and re-focusing distractions to de-escalate situations as much as they can. This has resulted in no physical interventions being undertaken since the last inspection. Placement plans identify risks for young people and preventative measures. These are clear and inform the staff of appropriate action to take, with regular reviews and monitoring taking place.

Two of the senior managers have designated responsibility for managing safeguarding concerns and provide knowledge and support to the Registered Manager and her staff team. All staff are aware of monitoring young people and reporting their concerns to a senior member of staff in response to an allegation or suspicion of abuse. The provision of clear policies and direct links to the Local Safeguarding Children Board ensure staff are able to report issues externally should this be required. Detailed reports and records are kept, stored securely, of any concerns or meetings relating to safeguarding and child protection incidents.

The home has a sound recruitment process in place, which ensures all the necessary

checks are completed before a member of staff starts works. All visitors are vetted and suitably supervised whilst on the premises. This protects young people from having contact with unsuitable people.

Routine checks of fire safety systems, equipment and gas and electric installations take place as required with well organised records kept. There are risk assessments in place, both environmental and individual to the young people. The premises are safe with good security systems in place taking into account the needs and characteristics of the young people. Robust fire procedures include regular fire evacuation drills with young people having individual emergency fire evacuation plans, although staff do not consistently record when they were last updated, even though in practice they have been.

Leadership and management

good

The service is effectively and efficiently managed. The Registered Manager has 7 years experience of managing the service and has suitable care and management qualifications. She is leaving at the beginning of August, with recruitment for her replacement in progress. Suitable covering arrangements are planned until the new manager commences. Improvements made over the last year have shown the manager's, and her staff team's commitment to improving the quality of care provided. This can be seen in the feedback received from parents, with comments such as `the quality of care my child receives is exceptional`, the manager always keeps me informed how my child is at the service` and `staff know me and my child extremely well`. There is clear communication between the service and parents. Parents are able to give their views and suggestions of places their child may like to visit and are given questionnaires that ask for feedback about the quality of care provided.

The Statement of Purpose clearly states the aims and objectives of the service and the facilities it provides. There is a clear focus on working in partnership with young people, parents and outside professionals to achieve a consistent approach to meeting the needs of young people. The young people's guide is informative and is suitable for the young people's level of understanding.

Leaders and managers make good use of monitoring activities relating to the quality of care provided and improving outcomes for young people. The internal and external monitoring of the home indicates that routine consultation with young people, parents and placing authorities takes place, and this enables the service to further improve the quality of care provided. Leaders and the manager know the services strengths and areas for development.

There is a clear complaints procedure in place for parents, professionals and staff to access. Excellent relationships with the registered manager and her staff team enable parents to raise worries and concerns before they become complaints. Parents are

confident in knowing these worries or concerns are immediately addressed.

The service is well resourced, ensuring that young people have good staffing ratios, access to purposeful activities and to leisure interests. The staff team are very enthusiastic about their work and they know the young people well. They work together and provide young people with consistent care. Staff undertake a detailed induction to provide them with the competencies required to meet the complex needs of the young people. Staff receive a range of training, however they have not received e safety or child sexual exploitation training which would enhance their skills and knowledge. Practice and knowledge is underpinned by regular supervision sessions where staff development is addressed.

Young people's files are stored securely and contain documents which are relevant and contribute to an understanding of the young people's lives.

At the last interim inspection in March 2014 there was one recommendation made, for the service to obtain parental permission for staff to administer first aid and medication; this is now in place.

Following this inspection one requirement has been made about maintenance of bathrooms and extraction in the kitchen. Two recommendations have been made for the service to develop staff training further and ensure fire evacuation plans are recorded following review.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.