

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	7 June 2016
Unique reference number	SC013828
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	White Lodge Centre
Registered provider address	White Lodge Centre, White Lodge, Holloway Hill, Lyne, Chertsey, Surrey KT16 0AE

Responsible individual	Lesley Robbins
Registered manager	Sophie Taylor
Inspector	Emeline Evans

Inspection date	7 June 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC013828

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are treated as individuals; their needs are carefully assessed and a team of nurturing staff provides a personalised package of care and support.
- Staff create an environment which is safe but not overly restrictive. This gives young people opportunities to socialise with their peers or spend quieter times on their own.
- Staff are knowledgeable about individual young people. This knowledge is widely used, particularly in handovers and shift planning. This enables young people to have positive experiences.
- Young people develop a sense of belonging as they are fully involved in decisions and therefore given responsibility in the home. Staff invest quality time with young people to achieve this.
- As a result of accessing this short-break service, young people have grown in their confidence, independence and ability to access a range of activities.
- The support that young people receive in relation to their complex medical needs is enabling young people to lead a higher quality of life and experience independence.
- Transitions into the service are a real strength, with staff making sure that both parents and young people are happy and relaxed.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
Maintain records for each child in Schedule 3. This specifically relates to ensuring that a copy of any plan for the care of the child prepared by the child's placing authority is obtained (Regulation 36 (1)(a)).	5 July 2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Ensure that individualised communication systems are implemented in practice ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24).
- Ensure that care planning reflects young people's support needs in relation to enabling staff to help children to understand what are safe boundaries and what makes a healthy relationship ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 39, paragraph 8.10).
- Ensure that external agency staff's qualifications and skills are taken into account before they commence work and documented on agency profiles ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.16).
- Ensure that all staff are familiar with and act in accordance with the protection of children policy ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.21).

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
9 December 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22 July 2015	Full	Good
17 January 2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
7 July 2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
It is evident that young people thoroughly enjoy and look forward to their short break. Comments from parents were varied but the majority positive including 'I am very happy with all aspects of the care received' and 'it makes him feel grown up and he just enjoys going so much'. Relationships were seen to be very positive, staff were attentive to young people's needs and clear boundaries were seen to be consistently reinforced. Staff know young people well and listen to them. As a result, young people develop a sense of belonging as they are fully involved in decisions and therefore given responsibility in the home. Staff invest quality time with young people to achieve this. As a result of accessing this short-break service, young people have grown in their confidence, independence and ability to access a range of activities. They acquire new skills such as eating and dressing independently and try new experiences including activities and foods. Young people meet individual goals. Progress for some young people may be slow but staff do not give up. One young person has recently been able to communicate with others using her preferred method of communication. The range of opportunities promotes young people's development. Young people are fully involved in everyday decisions. They are helped to understand why it may not be possible to act on some requests. On observation, a young person requested a certain cake, but due to food intolerances staff explained the reason why he could not have this. He accepted this and alternatives were given. A good knowledge of each young person's needs enables staff to tell if someone is unhappy and to respond accordingly. Young people are regularly consulted and feedback it acted upon. Care planning reflects the use of different forms of communication methods for each young person. Observations indicated that some basic communication methods are in place for example visual menus and pictures. However, individualised communication systems are not being consistently implemented. This does not provide young people with the necessary tools to be able to communicate and express their choices. Young people are cared for in line with their individual 'all about me' plans, which are in place from the time that they arrive to the time that they leave. Parents are involved in the reviewing of this information. These plans include individual assessments of need, any risks and emergency care. Files of young people who are 'children looked after' due to the number of days that they access the service do not currently contain a copy of the plan for the care prepared by the young person's placing authority or the placement plan. The absence of this information means that staff do not have an authoritative indication of the outcomes to be achieved or offer a clear guide for discussions with young people. Due to this lack	

of information, managers are unable to have a clear understanding of the progress that young people are making in respect of the wider plans for them.

The staff team works with local health services and parents to ensure that young people's health needs are being met. Young people with specific health needs such as epilepsy have clear protocols in place. During the inspection, concerns were raised by a parent over infection control. The organisation has already begun to take action and continues to further investigate to ensure that a solution is found.

As a result of some medication errors, adjustments have been made with medication arrangements to ensure that they are safe and effective. This has included looking closely at trends and patterns and if necessary monitoring staff and/or making adjustments to care planning. The support that young people receive in relation to their complex medical needs is enabling young people to lead a higher quality of life and experience independence.

The staff team has successfully supported young people to move on to adult care settings. They promote these positive endings and ensure that young people are well prepared. Transitions into the service are a real strength with staff making sure that both parents and young people are happy and relaxed. They are tailored to each young person's needs. One parent commented, 'Thank you for making him feel so welcome, it's been a far better transition than I'd ever hoped for.' Staff are conscious that transitions need to be right to enable a young person to feel safe and enjoy the experiences that the service has to offer. Both young people and families are well prepared.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people are safe because of staff vigilance in maintaining a safe environment at all times. Parents report young people's safety is given a high priority at the home. This short-break provision is part of a larger complex and safeguards are in place ensuring that no one has unauthorised access to young people. Staff receive regular training in relation to safeguarding procedures and do all that they can to ensure that young people are protected. They are able to recognise the diverse needs of young people with disabilities. For example, staff are vigilant but not overly intrusive in their supervision of young people and are aware of individual vulnerabilities. Risk assessments and protocols clearly state the risks associated with each young person and strategies for managing these, which include high supervision at times for some. This information is used fluidly across shifts with information being discussed at handovers and incorporated into shift planning. Young people enjoy sound relationships and interact positively with staff and others. Bullying is not identified as an area of concern and some young people have developed a tolerance of others since accessing the service. This is due to the attention given to ensuring that appropriate peer groups are in place for young	

people's visits. There is a sound level of joint working with other professionals. Thorough internal investigations take place following any safeguarding concerns with communication and feedback with social care agencies. The management team recognised reporting and recording of one safeguarding concern had not been prompt and appropriate action has been taken; there has been clear learning from this incident. However, parents have not been informed of referrals that have taken place; staff have not followed the organisation's policy, this may have caused some unnecessary anxiety for families. When a safeguarding concern has been reported, risk assessments are immediately formulated to minimise any further risk to the young people and enable staff to be aware of appropriate strategies to take. However, support plans following incidents do not reflect how to support young people in understanding appropriate boundaries and relationships. There is a reliance on external professionals to carry this out. Young people are not currently being supported by residential staff on how to keep themselves safe.

High staff ratios ensure that any challenging behaviour is managed in a positive and successful manner. Praise and celebration are an integral aspect of the home's approach to managing behaviour. As a result, there is no use of sanctions and there have been no physical interventions used since the last inspection. Restrictive practice does take place due to some young people being assessed as requiring specialised beds to keep them safe. The use of adapted beds has been thoroughly risk assessed and consultation with necessary professionals has taken place to ensure that they are appropriate for the individual young person. High supervision levels minimises the risk of young people going missing. Procedures are known by staff if this situation should arise. This ensures that prompt action can be taken to secure the safety of any missing young person. The staff are knowledgeable about the particular vulnerabilities of the young people and when young people are referred careful consideration is given to ensure that they can keep the young person safe. Protocols and effective risk assessment documents are in place to reduce known risks. This ensures that young people can take part in activities within the home, and outside, with measures in place to keep them safe.

Young people who access the service are not currently assessed as displaying high risk in the areas of self-harm or child sexual exploitation. Staff have undergone specific training, this covers how to recognise and respond to any suspicions or concerns should they arise.

There is a good procedure for selecting and recruiting staff and there is now clear management oversight during this process. All the necessary people involved in the recruitment process have undergone training in safer recruitment, this has enabled a revaluation of practice and to implement additional safeguards, for instance specific questions are now in place to explore when undertaking verbal verification on referees. This further strengthens the process to ensure that checks are thorough.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of	Good

leaders and managers	
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Young people achieving and having positive experiences is clearly a priority for the registered manager in the home. The registered manager has a clear understanding of young people's progress and constantly looks at how this is achieved and evidenced. This is used routinely across the shifts.

The registered manager provides clear and strong leadership to a well-qualified and experienced staff team. She has the necessary experience and is currently undertaking the appropriate qualification. There are detailed development plans in operation, which encompass a number of matters including finances, staff development and resources for the premises. Internal monitoring contributes to the development plan. Comprehensive self-evaluation fully evaluates and determines the strengths and weaknesses of the service and enables managers to constantly review practice to ensure that the quality of the care being provided is good and change practice accordingly.

There have been minimal changes to the staff team since the last inspection; this ensures that a stable staff group care for young people. Some staff are due to leave the home shortly, the organisation has begun to recruit to these positions to ensure a full complement of staff. Young people are fully involved in this process, this give them a sense of responsibility. Any shortfalls on the rota are covered by regular bank and agency staff known to the young people. On discussion, it is evident that these agency staff complement the staff skills. However, information relating to their skills and qualifications are not documented on the agency profiles and it is not clear if they have been fully taken into account prior to offering shifts. In particular, training has not been explored to ensure that they can fully support the young people.

Staff report that they are very well supported by the registered manager and that they have regular training, which provides them with the necessary knowledge and competencies to fulfil their role. The staff are very enthusiastic and passionate about their work and demonstrate that they know the young people very well. One parent commented, 'All the staff I speak to are really helpful and enthusiastic. This is seen by families as making a real difference and alleviates anxiety about their child being away from home.'

The registered manager has good monitoring systems in operation including regular file audits, internal monitoring reports, supervision and appraisal of staff. This all contributes to a sound understanding of the strengths of the service and any areas needing improvement. Monthly monitoring reports are undertaken by an independent visitor. These are now more detailed and offer challenge to the manager. The manager examines trends and patterns during these processes and information is then shared with the staff team.

The statement of purpose clearly states the aims of the service and the facilities and opportunities that it provides. There is a clear focus on working in partnership with young people, parents and other necessary professionals to achieve a consistent approach to meeting the needs of young people and giving young

people positive experiences.

Complaints are low due to the relationships formed with young people, their families and professionals. There was a complaint being investigated during the inspection, issues raised were being explored in a timely and professional manner. Parents and professionals spoken to felt confident in the organisation's ability to address and act upon any concerns.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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