

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	08/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC025657
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Creating Care Choices Limited
Registered provider address	38 Castle Drive, Ilford, Essex IG4 5AE

Responsible individual	Harjit Sanghera
Registered manager	Evelyn Daniel
Inspector	Linda Kim-Newby

Inspection date	08/03/2017
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 last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Since the last inspection, the home has extended its service by adding an annex to provide care and support for young people with mild levels of learning disabilities. The home has been approved to increase the number of young people from seven to 11. In an effort to prepare for the rising demand, the registered manager has employed new permanent support workers and is in the process of hiring an additional deputy manager. The registered manager has ensured that some of the recommendations made at the last inspection have been met and has actioned the others. Records of restraint are now accurate and sufficiently detailed to enable staff to identify practice and to respond promptly when any issues or trends emerge. Staff understand what restraint entails and receive refresher training. The manager ensures that at least one person on duty at any given time has attended suitable first-aid training. There are processes put in place to review the quality of care provided by the home, and a report is generated at least every six months. This report is sent to Ofsted, as well as the placing authority of all young people who are looked after. However, the reviews lack clarity about the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the young people. Most of the repairs have been completed, which has helped to provide a homely domestic environment for the young people. The workforce development plan records the ongoing training needs of staff, including a training plan for the coming year and a monitoring system of staff supervision. However, it does not include the use of feedback from the young people, their families and professionals in performance appraisals or as a tool for continuous improvement. In addition, while staff have said they receive formal supervision regularly in line with the development plan, as well as frequent informal supervision, the state of staff supervision files is not consistent with the workforce development plan. Recordings of supervision sessions are not easily accessible, and the recordings do not fully capture the manager's evaluation of how the staff are meeting the quality standards for the young people. Certificates of training completed by staff are not consistently located in the staff's files.	

The independent visitor's reports are comprehensive; however, they do not include interviews with young people on a regular basis. The reports also lack a rigorous assessment of the home's arrangement for promoting the welfare of the young people.

A complaint made since the last inspection was appropriately handled by the local authority designated officer and partner agencies. There were, however, learning points for the home which the registered manager has accepted and actioned. These include the need to report any allegations at the earliest opportunity, and for the young people to be better supported to understand what abuse is. In addition, the registered manager is to ensure that notifications of serious incidents are sent to the regulator, and ensure the delivery of robust practice supervision and continuous training of staff. Also, the registered manager is to ensure clear recordings of risk management evaluations of staff. The home does have a clear policy setting out arrangements for safeguarding of young people, and procedures for referring concerns to the placing authority or local authority.

Young people continue to make good progress. This is due to the actions of the staff and managers, who understand their complex needs and provide appropriate support. Despite their challenging starting points, young people are supported to improve their communication with those around them and build relationships with the adults in the home. Young people's cultural heritage is respected. The range of activities the home provides helps them to avoid feeling isolated due to their needs. Young people's views are sought for activity and meal planning, which helps them feel heard and valued.

Risk assessments are comprehensive and detailed, with appropriate measures in place to safeguard the young people. Behavioural support plans include specific targets and strategies to help young people achieve their goals. A rewards system is in place to reinforce positive behaviour. Monthly progress reports outline concerns and progress made from month to month in relation to the young people's health, communication, education, safety and other relevant areas. One young person's social worker stated that the monthly progress reports shared at children looked after reviews help to inform the planning and decision-making for the young person. The social worker also stated that the home is proactive in meeting the young person's needs, and ensures that he is safe. Communication between the home and partner agencies is open and regular.

Staff members say that they receive good induction and support from the team. They are aware of the training expectations for the year. One staff member stated that he knows he is making a difference in the young people's lives by the progress they make. Examples include young people being safe with themselves and others, being able to take public transport safely, being able to bathe on their own, and being able to enjoy contact with their families. The staff member said that the home takes pride in the work it does with the young people.

All of the young people except one attend school. Home tuition is provided to the young person who is not in education, with the local authority considering alternative options to further support the young person.

The young people who have left the home since the last inspection have been supported to move to long-term adult care arrangements such as care settings and living with family members. The managers and staff work with the young people to help them prepare for the transition to a new environment or to return to their families. They achieve this through supporting the young people with pre-placement visits, sharing their assessments with the new service, and helping the young people feel more confident in their self-care and life skills. The young people who have left keep in touch with the home.

Information about this children's home

This privately owned home provides care and accommodation for up to eleven young people who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/06/2016	Full	Good
17/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/06/2015	Full	Good
27/08/2014	Full	Adequate

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the young people are supported by staff to understand what abuse is, and that staff report any allegation of abuse immediately. The relevant officer within the local authority should be informed promptly of all allegations. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraphs 9.16–9.18)
- Ensure that notifications of serious events are sent to Ofsted. In particular, the registered person is to notify the regulator of any allegations made against staff working in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraphs 14.9–14.10)
- Ensure that the workforce development plan is used to record the ongoing training and continuing professional development needs of staff, and in particular that it includes a training plan for the coming year and a monitor of staff supervision. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)
- Ensure that a record of supervision is kept for staff, and that the record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)
- Provide a homely domestic environment for young people, in particular ensure that repairs are conducted and completed in a timely manner. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure that the independent visitor makes a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in the home's care. In particular, ensure that the reports contain interviews with young people, their parents and relatives. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)
- Ensure that the processes put in place to review the quality of care provided by the home, the experiences of children living there and the impact the care is having on outcomes and improvements for the children is underpinned by the quality standards. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraphs 15.2, 15.3)

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 that 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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