

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	24/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC028599
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Children and Family Services Limited
Registered provider address	Prospero House, 46–48 Rothesay Road, Luton LU1 1QZ

Responsible individual	Ruth Kirchner
Registered manager	Ruth Kirchner
Inspector	Debbie Young

Inspection date	24/03/2017
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness. The manager has met all of the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. The staff are suitably qualified as they have achieved their level 3 diploma or are working towards this qualification within the appropriate time frame. The manager monitors the staff's progress on this. The staff complete specific training as part of their induction, within a rolling training programme. This training underpins practice, helps the staff to carry out their roles and responsibilities effectively and enhances the care provided to the children. The internal and external monitoring is effective and considers the views of parents, children and professionals. These important views contribute to the review and assessment of the home and the care provided. There is a focus on the short-term development areas set for the next six months. A workforce development plan outlines the induction period for new staff as well as the supervision policy. There is clear focus on improvement, which is supported by actions identified to drive improvement. Suitable modifications have been made to improve the fabric of the home. A new heating system, new electrics, new kitchen and an ensuite bathroom have been installed. The manager is committed to further improving the environment and facilities for the children. The staff complete social stories with the children to make sure that they understand the building work that is taking place. The children are reassured that this will make their home a nicer environment to live in. The up-to-date location risk assessment includes reference to local facilities and relevant social and crime intelligence information. The assessment identifies potential risks and raises awareness of any issues or concerns in the home's locality. The children are safe at the home. Risk assessments are comprehensive and up to date and signed by the staff. The placement plans for the children clearly show strategies to help the staff to manage the children's behaviour effectively. A professional said, 'They [the children] are happy and settled. Some of the children can vocalise and they are happy and safe.' The staff do not use physical interventions. They use distraction techniques and	

talk to the children, which works well.

The children have been in placement for a significant period and they have formed good relationships with the staff and each other. Family members are very happy with the level of care provided to the children. They are reassured that the needs of their children are met. One parent said, 'I am very happy, and he [the child] is happy. They [the staff] do a fantastic job. He has a good relationship with the staff. I am very pleased; they are meeting his needs well.'

Children are making good progress in all aspects of their development, and negative behaviours are reducing. They are happy and settled because the home provides them with stability and consistency. The children thrive because of the routines and the new opportunities and activities.

The staff support the children to go to and from school. An education professional said, 'We have meetings with the managers on a regular basis. We are kept up to date with everything and we also discuss the children in detail in the monthly meetings.' This reinforces the ethos of the team around the children.

One of the children has his brother to stay overnight. The staff have clear plans and assessments, and monitoring is in place to support this. The staff maintain records and observations of each stay. This has so far been very positive for all of the children. It is strengthening the relationship between the brothers. This supports family relationships.

The children discuss activities and food choices at their regular meetings. Picture cards and social stories enable the children to participate. The staff said that this is a productive way of seeking the children's views and wishes. The children's guide is accessible for the children and gives clear information of whom to contact if they are unhappy. The staff are proactive in ensuring that the children engage with a number of activities, which promote their social skills, communication and confidence.

There is a clear safeguarding policy. The staff escalate any concerns and make clear records of accidents and any injuries to the children. Children's welfare is a priority. The staff are proactive in seeking support for the children's behaviour and health needs and notice if there are any changes. They seek help for the children as soon as possible.

From observation, it is clear that there are positive and nurturing relationships between the staff and the children. The children seek out staff after school and are keen to talk to them about their day. They communicate excitedly about their plans after school. The staff know the children's favourite activities and strive to give them opportunities to try new experiences. This ensures that the children can participate in the wider community, thereby developing their confidence and self-esteem.

The home is well led by the manager, with the support of the deputy manager. The staff work well together. They are committed to the children and see this as a 'family'. A mother said of her son, 'He is happy here and is always really pleased to

come back after contact. They know him really well.'

Information about this children's home

This home offers care and accommodation to up to seven children in two adjacent houses. Children placed here have additional needs, including a learning disability and/or a physical disability. A private company owns and operates this provision.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/08/2016	Full	Good
04/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
03/12/2015	Full	Requires improvement
19/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 whom 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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