

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	23/06/2015
Unique reference number	SC029950
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Somerset County Council
Registered person address	County Hall, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 4DY

Responsible individual	Mr Robert Eveleigh
Registered manager	Mrs Tammie Rose
Inspector	Mrs Hawtin

Inspection date	29/06/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Declined in 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

SC029950

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children and young people enjoy spending time in this home. The staff are dedicated and experienced in providing children with individualised care. Staffing numbers allow each young person to have sufficient attention and support to engage in activities, focus on development needs, and to make choices. One young person described the home as a 'second home'.
- The safety of children and young people is a priority. Staff pay attention to presenting risks. They consult with parents and professional stakeholders and ensure children and young people's risk assessments are detailed and carefully considered. Children and young people are protected from harm; they appear comfortable and relaxed in this environment.
- The Registered Manager has an astute awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and is determined to drive continuous improvement. Substantial investment has been provided to the home, in particular making facilities more comfortable and inclusive. Young people benefit from the significant improvements already made, and the attention to continuous monitoring identifies future development needs.
- Staff work in partnership with parents, other professionals and support agencies. This work positively impacts on the safety of and progress made by young people. All young people have development targets and for some the change is notable, such as being able to sit and eat with others or using utensils instead of fingers. A parent commented 'we all work together with targets, my son has become more independent and wants to do a lot more, they listen to him and he gets lots of choice. I can phone anytime for advice, and the staff are great, they value my opinion, this home is a Godsend'.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
25: Fire precautions Ensure by means of fire drills and practices that persons working at the home and as far as is practical children are all aware of the procedures to follow in the case of fire. In particular, ensure that the records of evacuations and drills are clear. (Regulation 25 (1)(d))	25/07/2015
33: Employment of staff The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. In particular, ensure the quality and frequency of supervision is consistent for all staff. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	25/07/2015

Recommendations

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

- Staff should support children to access relevant leisure activities in the community and wider if appropriate, in particular improve the planning of community activities. (The guide to the quality standards: 6.6)
- Staff should be familiar with the homes policy on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objectives, and clear recording. (The guide to the quality standards: 14.4)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered as a Children's Homes providing short breaks for children with physical and learning difficulties.

The home is owned and managed by a local authority and the majority of the children accommodated are from the local area.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
09/09/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
19/02/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Many areas of the home have been transformed since the previous inspection. Bathrooms have been renovated to provide more suitable facilities meeting a greater range of needs and offering choice to children and young people. The main kitchen has been refitted with rise and fall surfaces which children and young people who use wheelchairs can now use. Throughout the home areas have been redecorated and refurbished. There is still some cosmetic work to do but all ongoing work has been approved and funding agreed. An open day is planned, which children and young people will attend and help out with. Parents, stakeholders, council members and members of the community have been invited. It is hoped to raise the profile of the home and the value of children and young people with disabilities. Transitions to and from the home are carefully planned. Prior to admission, staff carefully consider whether the home can meet the needs of the child or young person. Information is collected from parents and education providers as well as any specialist health services if appropriate. Staff also attend planning meetings and reviews attended by parents and other professionals. This enables them to understand the life of the child or young person. Children and young people's likes, dislikes and development needs are well documented and this in turn informs care planning and target setting. Each young person has development targets as part of their care plan. There is an emphasis on young people making progress and also enjoying their time in the home. A parent commented that their child enjoyed the 'additional attention of adults as at home he has to compete with the needs of my other children, there he gets the stimulation he needs'. She felt all of the family benefitted from this service. Alongside developing skills children and young people benefit from spending time with their peers. They enjoy a good variety of activities in the home which is well equipped and spacious. Some use is made of community facilities during school holidays and at weekends. This includes planned days out to local places of interest, bowling and beach days. However, there is a lack of forward planning by staff, which limits some community activities in the evenings after school. Although these may not be appropriate for all children and young people, others would benefit. There is continuity of staffing which supports young people to build effective and secure relationships with those caring for them. Staffing numbers are such that each young person has at least one member of staff paying particular attention to their needs. It is possible to see clear attachment between staff and young people. A parent told the inspector that her although her son has very little communication she would notice a significant change and he would become excited if she took the turning to the home on the way back from school.	

Children and young people have access to a computer with internet access. This provides educational opportunities and options to explore the wider world. The home also provides a sensory room, large grounds and gardens as well as a newly refurbish 'Snoozlum' which is very popular with children and young people who want a quiet place to relax.

A social worker commented 'the staff communicate well and are involved in all the joint planning. They have a pro-active rather than reactive approach to helping families and young people. The new manager has made massive progress and the place is almost unrecognisable from what it was 2 years ago'.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Each child and young person's needs and particular risks are detailed in behaviour management plans. Staff update these documents regularly or when required following any changes. Staff are made fully aware of any issues prior to caring for a child or young person. Presenting risks are discussed alongside care needs and development targets during the 'changeover' 'meeting held each day before children and young people arrive at the home. Therefore staff are aware of the current needs of the child or young person they are supporting. Staff understand how to promote positive behaviour and keep children and young people safe. They appropriately apply de-escalation techniques and distraction so physical intervention is kept to a minimum. Typically, holds mostly used are 'gentle guides' to avoid confrontation or to move away from potential risks. Staff make sure the home is safe for children and young people to use. The Registered Manager receives regular updates from the police which provide alerts should there be any new risks identified within the surrounding area. The staff would be able to take additional precautions particularly if any criminal activity is associated with the protection and/or exploitation of children and young people Young people have not gone missing from this home, neither are they involved in criminal behaviour. Safeguarding training is compulsory for all staff and they understand what action to take and who to contact in the event of a child or young person being at risk or making allegations. Guidance for staff and contact details of those skilled in dealing with safeguarding issues is readily available for all staff. The Registered Manager ensures there is careful selection and vetting of new staff. The homes secretary keeps an up to date record and ensures formal checks are in place and updated. This avoids those who are unsuitable from working with vulnerable children and	

young people.

The home is equipped with early detection systems and barriers in the event of a fire. Staff, children and young people have the opportunity to practise drills and evacuations. However, it is not clear from the way evacuations are recorded if all staff, and children and young people where appropriate have had the opportunity to practice these procedures.

Many of the children and young people visiting this home have communication difficulties and for some only those that know them well can determine their emotional presentation and/or the choices they make. Staff interact well with children and young people ensuring they are able to make choices and to demonstrate their dislikes or anxiety. The staff act accordingly to meet need and reduce any stress which children and young people maybe experiencing. Complaints are taken seriously and dealt with effectively.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
A qualified and experienced Registered Manager is employed to work full time in the home. In the two years she has been in post she has come to understand the significant strengths of the team. Taking account of feedback from professional stakeholders, parents and young people and from previous inspection findings she had been able to build on these strengths and deal with weaknesses to the benefit of children and young people. Each child and young person has a detailed plan and targets across all aspects of their development needs. The majority would have a communication plan and goal making them unique to each child. Planning for continuous practice improvement is ongoing and supported by the staff that are enthusiastic about developing the home. Recently a number of staff have taken on the garden as a project, gone is the rubbish, dilapidated clothes, and weeds of last year to be replaced with a pleasant tidy environment. Vegetables and fruit are being grown and the sensory garden is now a delightful place for children and young people with complex needs, especially those who benefit from sensory experiences. Parents and other stakeholders report that young people benefit from visiting this home. They feel communication and consultation is effective. A number of parents commented on the updates provided by staff about changes and improvements to the homes environment. Staff report that they feel supported by the Registered Manager and other member of the	

senior team. Each of them has an annual appraisal which identifies development needs. In addition, they access the training they need to do the job effectively and provide a suitable service to children and young people. Several staff have recently been appointed to look at how to improve the sensory experience of children and young people. They have undertaken specialist training in sensory processing and are producing 'sensory diets' and resource's for each child and young person where appropriate.

The frequency and content of supervision has improved over time and staff have received training in how to make the best of reflective discussions. There are still some gaps in the timeliness of supervision and the quality of supervision records is not consistent across all supervisees. This has potential to compromise staff's learning.

The statement of purpose is a clear and readily assessable document which provides information to professional stakeholders about the aims and objectives of the home. It has been regularly reviewed and updated by the Registered Manager. A separate document is available to children and young people. This is in an appropriate format containing symbols and large pictures so that the majority will be able to gain some information about the home.

Independent monitoring of the home supports the Registered Manager and allows for the early identification of any issues before they impact of the welfare of children and young people. The quality of this monitoring and the reports has improved over time and alongside regular monitoring by the manager provides a robust system for safeguarding those who use the home, developing services and avoiding concerns.

Networking and consultation with other agencies keep staff up to date with successful interventions. Children and young people have access to the services they need and the consultation allows for progress to be maximised across different environments.

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 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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