

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC030367
Inspector	Clare Davies
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Registered manager	Kelly Ann Lawson
Date of last inspection	18/12/2014

Inspection date	30/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Leaders and managers have made significant improvements to develop this service and ultimately enhance the residential experience for young people. The commitment to safeguarding young people continues to strengthen as a core objective. Since the last inspection the safeguarding procedures have been revised to ensure they reflect the current local and national safeguarding issues. They now provide clarity on how early help can be considered and highlight learning points from a sample of serious case reviews. Attendance at the Local Safeguarding Children's Board events ensures that policies and practice are current up to date.

Ofsted received a complaint about this home and the safeguarding concerns raised within the complaint formed key lines of enquiry through this inspection. In recognition of the time required to promote the safety and well-being of young people, an assistant post has been created to support the designated lead person for safeguarding. Staff are trained to have a broad understanding of safeguarding issues such as female genital mutilation, domestic abuse and hidden harm. Young people are provided with knowledge and skills on how to keep themselves and others safe. Through discussion, workshops and online resources they learn about e-safety, the dangers of going missing and the risks of sexual exploitation.

There have been three incidents of young people going missing over the last three months. On such occasions the staff are diligent in their efforts to locate young people and arrange their safe return. There is collaborative working with the police and the police community support officer (PCSO) is known by young people and staff. There are plans for the PCSO to deliver workshops to young people on personal safety. In addition, leaders and managers are proactive and have invited the head of the missing from care team to visit and review their policies and procedures to ensure best practice.

A small group of young people are participating in a workshop to provide feedback and review aspects of behaviour management. They are meeting with key staff to discuss when physical holds are appropriate and how to avoid physical intervention. Leaders and managers are committed to restraint reduction resulting in a reduced level of physical intervention in January and February 2015 compared with the last few months of 2014.

The integration of the new model of trauma informed care has promoted development in communication and styles of care practice. For example, weekly reports to parents, carers and social workers provide up to date regular feedback about young people and their progress in this placement. Parents have welcomed this style of communication with comments such as, 'good idea', 'thank you for instigating this' and 'this is a positive way forward and much appreciated'. This effective communication addresses one recommendation that was raised at the last inspection. An adjustment made to radiators in one of the houses meets the second recommendation that was raised. This ensures that they do not get dangerously hot to avoid any risk of injury.

Communication across the organisation has improved through weekly newsletters to all staff. This is an effective way of delivering key messages from leaders and managers and promotes the development of the new therapeutic model. Residential staff report how helpful this weekly bulletin is to inform them of matters across the organisation wider than their own day to day practice. Staff are informed and consequently 'on board' with the development plans. Relevant articles within the newsletter are shared with young people.

Communication and consultation with young people has improved through the introduction of dedicated times available to meet with a senior manager. A colourful poster with photographs of nine senior managers invites young people to make appointments with the managers of their choice. They are able to chat and raise any concerns or suggestions. This practice is a good example of the accessibility to senior managers and the promotion of consultation. Young people have good relationships with staff, the strength of these enable them to feel confident in raising any problems or concerns.

Leaders and managers have a good grasp of the strengths of this service and areas for development; this is further enhanced through the improvements made in communication. The registered manager effectively monitors the quality of care with good analysis to identify any patterns and trends. An independent person completes monthly checks and submits reports to Ofsted in a timely manner. Further monitoring occurs through senior staff making unannounced visits to young people in residential care. This activity is to further safeguard young people and has been instigated as a response to learning from a national serious case review. Rigorous monitoring activity is an example of how safeguarding is at the core of care practices within this setting.

Since the previous inspection, three young people have moved on from this placement. Young people receive support in their transition from this home. Staff actively work with other agencies to ensure young people receive the necessary resources for their move to the next placement. Many young people have written letters to the staff since leaving, as some like to maintain contact with staff and friends. Social workers and parents have provided positive feedback to the manager and staff, expressing their appreciation for the support that is provided to young people during their placement and, 'to make the transition possible'.

Young people have access to an extensive range of therapeutic services that are available individually and as a group intervention. These integrated services within the organisation ensure that they are readily available to support the emotional health and well-being of young people. To offer additional services the organisation has increased the number of occupational therapists employed. Similarly, a member of staff has been appointed as a transition co-ordinator to dedicate time towards planned transitions into and from the home. This organisation is committed to improving the quality of care for young people as evidenced with the employment of specific additional staff.

At the time of this inspection, young people were enjoying a school holiday activity programme. This included off site trips and use of on- site facilities such as, a music room, an art room and an outdoor area for ball games and activities. Young people enjoy visiting local attractions for example, skate parks, swimming pools, cinemas and parks. They benefit from these social interactions where they can learn new skills and participate in community events. There are no requirements or recommendations from this inspection.

Information about this children's home

This independent charitable school is also registered as a children's home. The school follows the principles of care and education developed by Rudolf Steiner. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to a maximum of 42 children and young people with emotional or behavioural difficulties or complex needs. The accommodation for children and young people is provided across seven houses located on or near to the school site.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/12/2014	Full	good
25/03/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
05/11/2013	Full	good
26/03/2013	Interim	good progress

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.