

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	14/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC030439
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Stephen Mullins
Inspector	Paul Clark

Inspection date	14/02/2017
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 sustained effectiveness.	
Young people living in this home, either as a short stay arrangement or as young people permanently living in the home, benefit from a thorough initial assessment of their needs and careful planning on how these needs are to be met. These plans are made in consultation with the young person and their families, social workers, schools and health professionals. Plans are regularly reviewed and amended as necessary. Key workers have a good knowledge of young people's care plans and of the progress that young people are making. This means that there is good oversight of each young person's care. Young people are introduced to the home through a gradual introduction programme of visits and overnight stays. This makes them familiar with a new living arrangement and the staff and young people that they will be living with. Young people and families really benefit from their time spent in the home. One social worker commented, 'It was a really positive experience for him and he made huge progress with eating choices and the healthy eating promoted by the home. He engaged in outside activities, which he hadn't done previously, and the home helped the family in their management of his challenging behaviour.' When young people leave the home, this is generally because they have reached the age when they need to be transferred to adult care services. The home supports young people through their transition to adult services and this ensures that young people and families form strong connections to the new service. One social worker stated, 'There was good transition planning to adult services and the staff went over and above the call of duty in this regard.' There is effective internal monitoring of the home. Monthly reports from independent visitors contain recommendations for service improvements, which have been seen to have been acted on. Similarly, the six-monthly reviews of the quality of care, conducted by the registered manager, identify areas of service development, which have also been seen to have been acted on. This gives young people using the service a better quality and experience of care. There are good procedures and policies in place, designed to keep young people safe. Staff are appropriately trained in these procedures, and in methods of safe care, including physical restraint, although this is seldom necessary in this home. There is good liaison with the local authority designated officer, who reported that	

there are no current or recent safeguarding concerns about this home.

Parents, social workers and other professionals say that the home actively communicates with them about individual young people's care needs, and this ensures that young people receive continuity of care.

The manager and staff now have a clear understanding of how pupils' premiums for children who are looked after are used. This was a recommendation of the previous inspection. The home is still in the process of purchasing and installing computers to support young people's educational progress.

Information about this children's home

This home is registered as a children's home providing full-time care and short breaks for up to six children and young people, irrespective of gender, who have emotional or behavioural difficulties, or learning disabilities.

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
11/10/2016	Full	Good
29/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/11/2015	Full	Good
05/02/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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

Recommendation

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

- Ensure that children have access to a computer and the internet to support their education and learning unless there are specific safeguarding reasons why the access would be inappropriate. In such cases, the home should consider whether and how it can support the child to access the computer and the internet safely. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.19)

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 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 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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