

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	14/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC030677
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Sara King
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

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 judge that it has sustained effectiveness. Young people continue to make good progress; they are learning life and independence skills. Staff actively encourage young people to engage in activities and these develop their confidence and abilities to complete basic life skills. The programme being offered to young people provides education in all areas of personal and social skill development, such as cooking, budgeting, dressing, bathing and basic household tasks. This is enhancing their future life opportunities. The 'All about Me' booklets, which young people are completing with staff support, provide a visual record of all the activities that young people engage in. They record their likes, dislikes, things they have achieved, things they are developing or working on and the memories they have from attending the home. Staff have focused this development on the older group who attend the home and they now plan to follow the programme of activities with all young people. Staff are very positive and motivated in their roles in the light of the impact this new approach is having with young people and their engagement. Care plans are currently under review, and because of this many have several additional comments added to them. Managers plan to complete this work swiftly and for each plan to be in its most current form prior to a young person's next planned visit to the home. Staff update risk assessments following incidents or concerns. Staff follow detailed, clear plans and protocols to support young people when their health deteriorates. Staff acted appropriately when a young person became unwell and required additional support and care. Plans evidence that they were reviewed following the event. Plans detail young people's needs and what is required to meet them. Staff received additional training to ensure that they have the required skills to support young people with their individual health conditions. Young people attend education while at the home; staff facilitate transitions and travel arrangements for each young person as required. Staff maintain good, effective daily communication with education providers, ensuring young people's	

smooth transition each day.

Staff are active in developing communication systems in the home to enable young people to share their views about the quality of care they receive. Staff facilitate house meetings once a month for young people to share their views about their likes and dislikes about activities, food choices and aspects of decoration in the home. Staff are exploring, reviewing and developing how they create regular opportunities for all young people to share their views. The feelings board is used to ask young people how they feel throughout their time at the home. Staff use visual routines boards and choice boards to support young people in selecting the activity they wish to do. Staff offer a choice of colourful bedding to young people when they arrive at the home.

Staff have good relationships with young people, with key staff having detailed knowledge and understanding of key children and their needs. Staff are very knowledgeable about the young people they care for. They understand their individual communication methods and behaviours. Staff were observed to be caring in their approach with young people and young people trust the staff they have come to know.

A robust approach and ethos to safeguarding is adhered to in the home. The safeguarding policy has been updated and reflects the specific risk factors for disabled children and young people. Managers have implemented a new system for recording, reviewing and monitoring safeguarding concerns. This has had a positive impact with clear evidence trails for all concerns from instigation to outcome. Managers monitor the implementation of actions that arise from any review.

Staff are trained in the home's preferred method of behaviour management, staff do use physical intervention but this has only been to manage significant risk. Staff follow detailed behaviour support plans when supporting young people. One viewed was in the form of a traffic light system detailing the behaviours which may be exhibited, what it might mean and how to respond to that behaviour. It is an easy plan to follow and promotes a consistent approach by staff. One plan of approach viewed was not as clear to follow and detailed behaviour inarticulately. Managers updated and amended this plan immediately. Staff use a reassuring hand on a young person's arm when they appear unsettled or distressed. Staff record all incidents, physical interventions and sanctions within the home's detailed record system. Managers review and monitor all records, and they are currently reviewing systems to ensure that they do not duplicate records.

Very few sanctions have been given. An example of an effective sanction was when a young person was asked to mop a floor after having thrown a drink onto it. One sanction recorded restricted access to technology, but it did not state for how long this was to be in place. Staff record their observations of young people's responses to sanctions. Staff are exploring and reviewing whether there are alternative ways to gain young people's views following incidents or sanctions.

Staff have recently reviewed their wi-fi policy and young people's levels of access to this in the home. They now complete a detailed risk assessment prior to young people having access to this. They have planned for an outside provider to offer additional education to young people about e-safety and the risks associated with social media. Currently young people are all supervised while accessing the internet.

Managers have effective and robust links with outside agencies. The local police officer visits the home to talk with young people and provide education in a variety of forms about how to stay safe in the community.

The home has experienced staff shortages; managers have attempted to recruit to the vacancies but have been unsuccessful. They have managed the shortages with little or no negative impact on young people. Managers have utilised bank staff who have also completed the home's training programme and possess the required qualifications. There are plans to complete another recruitment drive.

There have been improvements to the frequency of supervision that staff access, but some gaps remain.

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and run by the local authority. It provides short breaks to children and young people with physical and/or learning disabilities. The home is registered to provide care for up to six children and young people.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/06/2016	Full	Good
18/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/10/2015	Full	Good
17/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 recommendation:

- As set out in regulations 31-33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

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 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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