

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC030677
Inspector	Emeline Evans
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	West Berkshire Council
Registered person address	West Berkshire District Council, Council Office Market Street NEWBURY Berkshire RG14 5LD
Responsible individual	Juliet Valerie Penley
Registered manager	POST VACANT
Date of last inspection	18/11/2014

Inspection date	17/03/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

Since the last full inspection, there have been changes within the management team for the home. There has been an interim manager in position who has since left the service; this has left the home without a Registered Manager since August 2014. There has been a period of uncertainty for the staff team since this time. The organisation has taken action, a new manager has very recently been appointed who is suitably experienced, and she has applied to be registered with Ofsted. The interview process was undertaken at the time of this inspection and further checks are currently being obtained as required. The management team have focused on meeting the previous requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. They have also worked hard on developing and supporting the staff team and embedding new processes and practice. The manager understands the strengths of the home and is aware of areas for development and displays the capacity to further improve the service. There is a development plan in place; however, this was formulated by the previous manager and has not been reviewed to reflect the current position of the home. Therefore, the strengths and areas for development as explained by the manager are not incorporated into this plan.

Staff work in partnership with parents and professionals to assess young people's needs prior to coming to the home. There are currently two referrals in the process of being assessed to ensure the home can meet the young people's needs. There has been three transitions out from the service, two on to adult services and the other young person chose to no longer access the service. The transitions have been managed remarkably well by staff.

There are regular visits to monitor the conduct of the home under Regulation 33 of the Children's Homes Regulations, and the manager has reviewed monitoring systems in the home and quality assurance monitoring checks are now completed in line with Regulation 34 on a regular basis. These visits include consultation with and

observation of young people. The managers examine trends and patterns during these reviews and information is shared with the staff team.

Since the last inspection, there has been a focus on gaining young people's views. Young people have contributed to the decoration of the children's home. This level of involvement empowers young people and values their contribution, regardless of their disabilities. The environment is more child friendly and personal touches have been added; this leads to a more homely feel.

A higher number of staff have now been trained in epilepsy and the administration of emergency medication. The previous requirement, to address deficiencies in this area, has been addressed. However, there is no evidence to demonstrate if staff have completed first aid training. On inspection of the rosters, on occasion, shifts are planned and there is not a member of staff with a first aid qualification. This could put young people at risk by not having suitably qualified staff available. Rosters have been improved since the last inspection, with hours worked now being detailed. It is now easy to establish who is working at certain times.

The home works effectively in partnership with external agencies such as health services, schools and parents. Allegations, or suspicions of harm, are promptly shared with external safeguarding agencies for consultation and appropriate action taken. There have been no concerns reported since the last inspection. The organisation has reviewed the safeguarding policy and has included information in relation to child sexual exploitation; this is now a detailed policy. However, the local authority designated officer has yet to approve this policy and procedure. Therefore, this recommendation has been repeated.

In recent months, records have been improved with any amendments to care plans being signed and dated. This now ensures staff are referring to up-to-date information. In addition, supervision arrangements for staff have been reviewed. All staff including bank staff are now receiving regular supervision with the manager having a clear oversight of these processes.

There is a real commitment from the management and staff team to further raise the standard of care provided to the young people who come and stay in the home. They have clear vision and realistic aspirations for the service to achieve positive outcomes for the young people. Three recommendations have been repeated, two are previously detailed. The children's guide has yet to be reviewed; the manager has started to look at this area and is going to be involving the young people in its development.

Information about this children's home

This home provides short breaks for children and young people who have a learning and/or physical disability. The home is jointly funded by a Primary Care Trust and a local authority, and managed by the Children and Young People's Directorate of the local authority. The home is registered to accommodate up to six children and young people. Other services offered include day care, after school care and support groups.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/11/2014	Full	adequate
04/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
26/09/2013	Full	good
21/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
20 (2001)	ensure that at all times, at least one person on duty at the children's home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 20 (2)(e))	30/04/2015

Recommendations

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

- update the organisation's safeguarding policy and procedure to include information about child sexual exploitation and allegations against another

child. Also forward a copy of the updated policy to the local authority designated officer for approval (Statutory guidance, vol 5, para 2.67)

- review the children's guide to include how children can contact their independent reviewing officer, Ofsted, and how to secure an independent advocate (NMS 13.5)
- devise and implement a written development plan, for the future of the home, either identifying any planned changes in the operation or resources of the service, or confirming the continuation of the home's current operation and resource. (NMS 15.2)

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.