

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	20/10/2015
Unique reference number	SC030677
Type of inspection	Full
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	Mrs Juliet Penley
Registered manager	Ms Sara King
Inspector	Trish Palmer

Inspection date	20/10/2015
Previous inspection judgement	sustained 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

SC030677

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people have built good relationships with a stable staff team.
- Staff are enthusiastic and work hard to give young people positive experiences.
- Staff offer young people a wide variety of activities both in the home and in the community.
- Staff recognise and celebrate young people achievements.
- Staff know the young people well and can interpret their individual communication styles and so meet the needs and wishes of young people.
- There is good communication between the home and parents.
- Staff listen to young people and act on their wishes and feelings.
- There is good communication with education providers.

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.

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Recommendations

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

The registered persons should take a key role in seeking to develop the homes effective working relationship in the local community, for example, with the local police officer. (Guide to the Children's Homes Regulations paragraph 10.3 page 52)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home provides short breaks for children and young people who have a learning and/or physical disability and 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
17/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
18/11/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
0/4/02/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The young people have developed good relationships with a competent staff team that know and understand their individual needs. Young people arriving at the service were welcomed into the home; staff offer them a snack and plan with them the afternoon activities. Staff spend quality time with the young people, a parent commented 'X loves coming here, he likes using the computer the homes gym and spending time with his friends'. A social worker commented 'X loves coming to the home, it's not just a respite service for the parents, X gets a lot from coming here as well'. The young people are involved in choosing from a wide variety of activities ensuring that they have a positive experience. Staff support and encourage young people to give feedback during their stay. These are in different communication styles so that all young people can have their views recorded. Staff use these to help support the young people during their future stays. Staff also support the young people in completing an 'all about me' booklet which evidences things that they have achieved and what is important to them. These are completed every six months, they are child friendly and have photos of achievements and activities and are used in reviews. A copy is given to the parents and young people in order to build memories of their time in the home. The young people have regular house meetings, staff use the picture exchange communication system (PECS) so that all young people can communicate their views. The minutes are in PECS form and displayed on a board, there is also an outcome board so that young people can see that their wishes and feelings have been listened to and acted upon. A young person recently chaired the house meeting and this is on the minute's board along with photos. Information is displayed in the home about events in the community as well as any religious and other celebrations such as Halloween coming up. Parents have signed to say they are in agreement with young people celebrating different religious festivals. There is an achievement board which is updated monthly, parents are sent copies of certificates that young people obtain. Staff understand how important it is for young people to have their achievements recognised and celebrated.	

There are PECS boards around the home that young people can show staff if they are feeling worried or upset as well as how to complain, what to do if they feel bullied and information about contacting an advocate or Ofsted.

The regulation 44 visitor also speaks to young people, parents and social workers as part of the independent visit.

There have been two complaints since the last full inspection both from parents. These were resolved to parent's satisfaction within an appropriate timescale and social workers were kept updated.

The staff have good links with education providers. Link workers visit the school on a regular basis and are involved in education reviews. The staff work closely with schools in looking at targets for young people, the home will draw up a plan which the school also confirms. This ensures that school and the home work together to support young people. A parent commented 'staff come to all X's school meetings'.

The young people are supported and encouraged with independence according to their age and ability. Staff ensure that young people are placed in appropriate groups taking into account their age, ability and vulnerability. This enables them to form and maintain friendships, which are important to them.

Staff understand that transitions for young people can be difficult; young people as part of their induction pick their own bedding and rugs to personalise their rooms during their stay which helps them to feel settled. A social worker commented, 'the home understands that transitions can be difficult, one young person still cannot manage an overnight but comes in during the evening, staff are working with her at her pace to ensure that transition is successful.'

The home has recently been re decorated, young people were consulted in choosing colours. There are photos around the house of young people and staff on activities and canvases that young people have painted which give it a homely feel.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The environment is safe, there is appropriated security on the doors and windows, young people have accesses to a large garden, which contains swings, trampoline	

and other outdoor equipment as well as a sensory garden and the homes gym.

Young people have a personal evacuation plan and a copy of this is by the front door so that it assessable to staff in an emergency.

All health and safety checks are up to date and fire evacuations are completed with the young people. There are lockable cabinets in the bathrooms containing items staff need for personal care. Some bedrooms also contain lockable cabinets where emergency medication is placed during the night. This safeguards young people, as they are not left unattended.

Young people have not gone missing since the last full inspection, staff spoken to were aware of the missing policy and of the protocol between the home and police. Staff are very aware of the young people who would try and leave the home, these young people have one-to-one staff support in the home and two to one when out in the community. This enables young people to have the opportunity to go out and have the same experiences as their peers. A parent commented, 'staff know that X will try and abscond, they know him well and I know he is safe here, I wouldn't bring him if I didn't think he would be safe.'

The home does not have any links with the local police officer in order that the staff and young people can build a positive relationship with them.

There have been eight physical interventions since the last full inspection. These have all been appropriate and used to safeguard young people. Staff support young people to comment on these. Parents and social workers are notified.

There are clear behaviour management plans in place for young people that display challenging behaviours. These are reviewed and monitored regularly and parents have an input and sign. There are comprehensive risk assessments in place which parents help complete and which ensure staff know young people in sufficient detail... It also ensures that parents are aware of how young people are safeguarded during their stay.

There is a robust medication policy in place, a new member of staff was able to show how medication was booked in and out, administered and recorded. All staff have recently updated their medication training. Young people GPs have signed to confirm what medication young people are receiving with the dose.

Recruitment is robust, all checks are completed before staff start work. A record of these are kept in the home.

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	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The registered manager has been in post since March 2015 and has the relevant qualifications and experience to run the home. There have been several changes in managers over the last year. Staff spoken to say that they feel that the manager is working with them to develop the home and care practice and feel that she is supportive. A member of staff spoken to reported, 'there have been some new staff which is good as we complement each other with experiences'. Staff receive monthly supervision, and annual appraisals are on file. There is a good induction for new staff and probation meetings are completed at three and six months. There are regular staff meetings where young people and care practice are discussed to support staff in keeping young people safe. There are good concise care plans on file which parents are involved in completing. A social worker commented, 'there is good access to information, care plans are updated by staff and they do good reports and feedback.' Another said, 'the home works well with parents and young people, we have regular meetings.' There are positive relationships between parents and staff, the manager has recently e-mailed parents about the stake holders meetings and the benefits of these for parents and young people, and as a result there has been an increase in parents attending. The manager has also set up a confidential e-mailing system through which she informs parents of plans for developing the home, another is sent six months later informing parents of the progress made and asks for feedback regarding what impact it has had for them.	

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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