

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC030967
Inspector	Julie Rimington
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Hartlepool Borough Council
Registered person address	Civic Centre Victoria Road HARTLEPOOL Cleveland TS24 8AY
Responsible individual	Sally Robinson
Registered manager	Sylvia Anne Lowe
Date of last inspection	27/11/2014

Inspection date	06/03/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection in November 2014

This inspection

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

This home was judged as good overall at the previous full inspection in November 2014. At the full inspection a number of outstanding features relating to the outcomes for children and young people and the quality of care were highlighted. Since the full inspection the Registered Manager has addressed a recommendation requiring all staff to have annual appraisals. Following this interim inspection the home is judged to be sustaining effectiveness. Shortfalls in practice have been identified at this interim including lack of knowledge and understanding of safe use of the internet and the use of external and internal monitoring.

The home continues to deliver outstanding outcomes for children and young people within this short breaks service. Children continue to make improvements in a range of areas, including self-care, independence skills, listening to others, communication and behaviour. Their progress is monitored on a monthly basis against their individual goals and short break plans. Children with very complex needs and disabilities improve their ability to do things for themselves. This may include using new communication systems or taking part in activities which they previously would have not been encouraged to do. Some of the children and young people show significant improvements in being able to help in their own personal care, whilst others learn to control behaviours through an excellent rewards approach.

Children and young people thrive within a warm, structured and nurturing environment. Outstanding care is provided by the committed and enthusiastic Registered Manager and staff team who are aspirational for children and young people to achieve to the best of their ability. As a result the children and young people's sense of security and belonging are enhanced as their self-esteem and self-confidence improve. Children and young people report that they feel 'safe' and

'happy'.

Parents express a high level of confidence, trust and satisfaction in the care the home provides for their children. One parent spoke of how her son loves coming to the home and the difference it has made to the rest of the family. Another parent wrote 'I don't know what we would do without the home, they are so kind'

The children and young people enjoy a varied range of interesting and stimulating activities, including trips out. The activities are designed for each child or young person ensuring they enhance their abilities but take account of their vulnerabilities. This helps to improve the young person's understanding of the world around them and improves their self-confidence, self-esteem, and self-worth.

The staff team describe a sense of achievement and fulfilment from caring well for the children and young people, in helping them grow and develop. The staff team respect the dignity of children and young people and show increased awareness through training of emerging areas of risk. The Registered Manager and staff team need to review their understanding of the use of the internet, as currently this is not robust enough. They need to consider the risks children and young people face with regard to using the internet, yet still allow them to explore and learn about social media and the positive aspects of using the internet. Without this, children and young people could be at risk of harm from exploitation.

Young people are observably relaxed and secure in the home. There are no incidents of young people going missing or bullying since the last inspection. Allegations are taken seriously and relevant professionals including the local authority designated officer are involved in prompt and thorough investigations. All accidents are well recorded and responded to effectively; body maps are completed and shared with parents. The actions of the Registered Manager and staff team ensure young people are protected from harm and feel safe.

The Registered Manager has good oversight of records. Staff meetings show discussion of key areas such as risk and young people's health and behavioural needs. Material standards and facilities of the home are maintained to a good standard. Fire drills and equipment checks take place regularly to ensure the arrangements for fire prevention are safe and appropriate.

The Registered Manager and staff team consults with children and young people and their parents about the service the home provides. However, the Registered Manager has not introduced a robust, fully evaluative monitoring system to ensure that she meets the regulations and standards and that the care of children and young people remains outstanding. For example, there are well maintained files recording events, risk assessments and care plans but the Registered Manager has not fully developed a system to ensure that any emerging themes or trends are used to amend or enhance delivery of the service. In addition external monitoring reports describe the care provided but do not fully evaluate it.

Information about this children's home

The home provides accommodation for up to eight children who have learning disabilities. It is operated by a local authority. Most children come for short breaks under shared care arrangements, although some live here permanently.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/11/2014	Full	good
25/03/2014	Interim	good progress
14/08/2013	Full	good
11/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure the manager regularly monitors, in line with regulations, all records kept by the home to ensure compliance with the home's policies, to identify any concerns about specific incidents and to identify patterns and trends. Immediate action is taken to address any issues raised by this monitoring (NMS 21.2)
- ensure staff encourage children to take appropriate risks as a normal part of growing up. Children are helped to understand how to keep themselves safe including outside the home and when using the internet or social media. This to take into account the child or young persons possible use of the internet (NMS 4.4)
- ensure staff are equipped with the skills required to meet the needs of the children and purpose of the setting, and training keeps them up-to-date with professional, legal and practice developments and reflects the policies, legal obligations and business needs of the home. Specifically staff training on e-safety (NMS 18.1)
- ensure visits of the home carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant

checks set out in regulations and guidance and checks of any disciplinary measures and use of restraint and records of missing person's reports. Specifically the reports analysis and evaluate the information rather than describing provision. (NMS 21.7)

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.