

SC031504

Registered provider: Bristol City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This short-break centre is operated by a local authority. It is registered to provide short-break care and accommodation for up to five children and young people who have a learning disability and/or physical disability.

Inspection dates: 21 to 22 November 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 22 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: Sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection:

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children, young people and their parents receive a very warm welcome at this short-breaks home. The staff are highly attentive and fully focused on meeting the children's and young people's needs.
- The children and young people make good progress through a programme of goals and achievements. The registered manager maintains detailed records showing how the children and young people have developed since they first started to visit. These records are made available to them when they move on.
- The home is a relaxing and attractive place for children and young people to stay. There are good facilities to help them to keep busy and enjoy themselves, including a ball pool, a sensory room and an adventure playground.
- Children and young people are consulted about every aspect of their stay. This year, they have contributed to the home's activities programme, to menus and to choosing a camping holiday.
- Children and young people are kept safe when they visit the home. Staff receive clear guidance on how to manage complex behaviour. The registered manager reviews any incidents in detail and ensures that the staff learn from them.
- The home is very well managed. The qualified, experienced registered manager is fully involved with the children and young people. She is very supportive of the staff team and has ambition for the home's future development.
- The staff feel very well supervised and supported. They receive good-quality training and are highly motivated in their work.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Although the registered manager completes Regulation 45 reports to demonstrate how she reviews the quality of care, these have not, to date, been sent to Ofsted.
- The registered manager should make sure that when she carries out telephone checks on prospective employees, the conversations with referees are always recorded on the person's recruitment file.
- The registered manager's system for recording fire safety checks could be further improved by recording the times of day when fire drills take place. This would enable her to monitor whether drills are carried out at varying times, including in the hours of darkness.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/08/2016	Full	Good
29/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
16/12/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 44 (4)(a))	31/12/2017

Recommendations

- Ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguards children and minimises potential risks to them. In particular, the registered person should ensure that the process of verifying recruitment information, including conversations with referees, is clearly recorded on staff personnel files. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards 2015', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children and young people enjoy excellent relationships with the staff. There is a happy and relaxed atmosphere in the home, with much laughter and fun. The children and young people regard the experience as a sleepover with their friends.

Parents are overwhelmingly positive about the service. One parent wrote to the home and said, 'I cannot thank you enough for the kindness, professional care and ongoing work that you do with [name of child]. It is a massive support for us as a family.'

The staff enjoy their work and are highly motivated. The staff welcome the children and young people enthusiastically. They are fully focused on providing them with an enjoyable short break.

All the children and young people have made good progress. The registered manager charts the children's and young people's goals and achievements. Each individual receives a detailed electronic record of their experiences. This can be shared with members of their family.

The children and young people receive a warm welcome when they arrive for their short break. They are introduced gradually to overnight stays. This is very important for children and young people who find change difficult to manage. They may visit with their parents at first. If they feel confident, they may progress to staying for tea, before they visit overnight.

The children and young people can bring personal items with them to place in their rooms, so that they feel at home. The staff try to make sure that children sleep in their favourite bedroom, if they have one.

Each child and young person has a detailed placement plan to help the staff to care for them well. Their healthcare needs can be very complex. The staff have good-quality information about the children's and young people's medical conditions. This helps them to make the right decisions if the children and young people experience difficulties during their stay.

Behaviour management is very good. The staff and manager have a clear understanding of the need to avoid situations which the children and young people find stressful. As a result, staff very rarely need to restrain a child or young person. This is beneficial for all concerned.

The children and young people normally live with their parents at home. Parents take the lead in communicating with schools and medical services.

The children's and young people's views are sought at every opportunity. They are fully involved in regular house meetings. For example, they take an active part in discussing activities, meals and other areas of home life. These meetings are also used for instruction, for example in fire safety.

The children and young people are consulted on any changes in the home's decoration. One child chose a butterfly motif for a particular bedroom. She then went shopping with her key worker to buy a suitable picture for the room. The decision to go on a camping holiday came from a child's request. This resulted in four children and young people enjoying a short holiday together.

The children and young people thoroughly enjoy their activities. Every day, one member of staff is designated as the activity leader. For example, during the inspection children were decorating mugs, plates and cushions. They were very proud of the work that they had done. One young person was keen to show the inspector their brightly decorated items.

Children and young people also went out swimming with the staff. They sometimes go to the local zoo or to the airport to watch aircraft taking off and landing.

The home occupies a low-level, flat-roofed building with long corridors. It has the potential to appear institutional, but this is not the case. The staff have decorated the interior of the home beautifully with welcoming pictures and colourful animals on the walls. It presents a warm and welcoming environment.

Children and young people who stay at this short-breaks service can use a variety of different rooms to suit their interests. There is a sensory room, a ball pool and a quiet space for relaxation on beanbags. For those who enjoy excitement, there is an adventure playground, which includes a zip wire. The children and young people have discovered that the main corridor is good for playing skittles.

Children are encouraged to do as much as possible for themselves. They help with the cooking, food preparation, cleaning tasks and gardening. Children who have difficulty in feeding themselves are helped to develop these skills. One parent commented, in their feedback to the home, '[name of child] has an independence that is gained from attending [the service]. It is a time when she gets to go on a sleepover with friends and adults who she knows. She is even trying to dress herself.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

The registered manager ensures that every child and young person has a detailed risk assessment. This provides the staff with clear guidance on how to respond to their needs.

Children and young people are generally very well matched to help to ensure that everyone in the group enjoys a pleasant stay. Occasionally, some children's and young people's behaviour becomes difficult for the staff and other children to cope with. In these situations, the registered manager consults with parents, staff and other professionals. She reviews the risk assessment and the strategies for the young person. In one example, the manager decided that the young person would have sole use of the home during their short breaks. This has eliminated the risk to other children and young people.

The children's and young people's disabilities make it unsafe for them to leave the home on their own. As a result, they do not go missing.

The children and young people have well-written behaviour management plans. The registered manager and staff respond to every individual with respect and understanding. This helps to defuse potentially volatile situations.

As a result, the children and young people are very rarely restrained. The two restraints since the last inspection were appropriate and necessary to the situation at the time. Staff very rarely have to set consequences. The only one recorded since the last inspection was appropriate to the circumstances. A young person had a major incident in a supermarket over wanting more money for sweets. The member of staff decided that

the young person would not buy any sweets on that occasion.

The registered manager awards certificates to all the children and young people. These are displayed on the 'wall of achievement'. The children and young people are very proud of their certificates and love receiving them. Certificates have been awarded for listening, making good choices, choosing healthy foods, being kind, and helping with the garden.

The staff recruitment files seen during this inspection are generally good. They contain all the information required to reduce the risk of appointing unsuitable applicants. The registered manager always verifies references by phone. One example was found where she had not recorded the outcomes of these conversations. A recommendation has been made.

The registered manager ensures that the home's health and safety checks are up to date, so that the children and young people have a safe environment. Fire drills are carried out frequently. However, the time of day that these take place is not always recorded, so that they can be varied. The registered manager undertook to do this in future. No recommendation has been made on this occasion.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

This home is very well managed. The qualified, registered manager is highly experienced in her role. Staff commented that she supports them very well. This includes taking positive action if any of the children and young people target individual staff.

The staff receive regular supervision and training to enhance their practice. All the staff have completed mandatory training. This includes medication administration. Earlier this year, they undertook training in Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards (DoLS). There are currently no young people who need to be subject to a DoLS application. However, the staff are now aware of the legal requirement for these safeguards in certain situations.

The home has been fully staffed until recently. There is currently one staff vacancy for a waking night person. This has no impact on the children and young people, as most shifts are filled by existing staff. If agency staff do have to be employed, they do not work face-to-face with the children and young people. They are deployed for night waking duties only. This provides continuity of care during the children and young people's waking hours.

The registered manager is ambitious for the service. She is passionate about changing the culture of residential care. For example, she rigorously challenges the use of any institutional language and practices. She is well aware that choice of language is important. This helps to ensure that children and young people are kept at the centre of the home's ethos.

The home looks after children from minority ethnic and cultural backgrounds and across

a wide range of ages. Their unique individual needs are met well. The home values diversity and this is reflected well in the experienced, long-standing staff team.

The home has a well-written development plan. The registered manager monitors the home's progress rigorously. She uses team meetings to share information and good practice points with the staff. Team meetings also support the staff when they have to respond to complex, distressed or aggressive behaviour.

The registered manager has taken action to meet the single recommendation made at the last inspection. This was about the contents of staff files.

One exceptional strength of this home is the quality of consultation with children and parents. The registered manager incorporates their views into every aspect of the home's development. This makes this home a forward-thinking, positive and responsive service. The children and young people are always at the centre of all its activities.

The registered manager has prepared a detailed management review on the conduct of the home. The resulting Regulation 45 report contains clear evidence of the home's progress and aspirations for the future. The registered manager sends these reports to her line manager. She was not aware that they have not been forwarded to Ofsted, as required by regulation. This means that Ofsted does not have an up-to-date management review of the home, nor, indeed, a recent statement of purpose. A new requirement has been made.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the differences made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC031504

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Bristol City Council, Director of Legal Services, City Hall, College Green, Bristol BS1 5TR.

Responsible individual: James Beardall

Registered manager: Valerie Mower

Inspector

Heather Chaplin, social care inspector

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