

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	01/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC031698
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	East Sussex County Council
Registered person address	County Hall, St Annes Crescent, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1UE

Responsible individual	Elizabeth Rugg
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Suzy Lemmy

Inspection date	01/03/2017
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 judges that it has sustained effectiveness. There has been a change of manager since the last inspection. The newly appointed manager has extensive experience in adult learning disability services. She is in the process of registering with Ofsted. The requirements made at the last inspection have been actioned effectively. Good-quality supervision sessions enable staff to reflect on their practice and their role. The manager has devised a system to monitor supervision to ensure that sessions are conducted monthly, in line with company policy and the statement of purpose. The recommendation about staff qualifications has been met. All contracted staff have the level 3 qualification or are working towards it. The manager is working with agency staff to ensure they have the level 3 qualification or its equivalent. Recommendations made at the last inspection have been implemented, or are in the process of being implemented. There is now a thorough risk assessment in place in relation to the use of door alarms. The manager uses forums such as team meetings and daily handovers to communicate changes to children's and young people's care plans clearly. Staff are provided with the necessary information and guidance to keep children and young people safe. The manager seeks feedback from parents and social workers in order to develop the service. Two young people have moved from short-break stays to living full time at the home. Staff have worked hard to ensure that both young people were supported well during the change. One of these young people was observed during the inspection to be enjoying positive interactions with staff. However, further discussions are needed in relation to a health issue and when to call the police for assistance in managing his behaviour. Meticulous goal planning and support from the staff team allow children and young people to achieve measurable success. Targets are set in small steps to ensure that	

the children and young people can learn new skills at their pace. All the children and young people are gaining new skills. For example, one young person is now able to sit with his peers at mealtimes and another has increased the variety of food that he will eat. These young people previously struggled at mealtimes.

Staff work effectively with external organisations. Positive relationships are built with appropriate outside agencies, including social workers and health and education professionals. A social worker said, 'Communication and working in partnership is excellent, the manager keeps in contact regarding any changes'. A parent said, 'I am happy with my son's care; there is good communication between the staff and myself.'

Staff actively listen to children and young people, and strive to understand their wishes and feelings. When necessary, changes are made in accordance with the children's and young people's expressed wishes. Staff communicate with children and young people using their preferred communication method. Staff hold regular children's and young people's meetings which they record pictorially for children and young people to reflect on. These meetings enable staff to understand and improve the children's and young people's experience of using the service.

Staff have received safeguarding training, including awareness of child sexual exploitation. Staff implement the policies and procedures in place to protect young people. One staff member said, 'We get mandatory training and time to complete any online training needed'. There have not been any safeguarding issues since the last inspection.

Children's and young people's emotional well-being is of prime importance to staff. Restraints are rare, due to the staff's ability to manage challenging behaviour. A calm and measured approach is adopted to defuse incidents. Staff record the effectiveness of de-escalation techniques, and these accounts are analysed by the manager. However, other incidents are not recorded with enough detail to enable the manager to evaluate the circumstances and to inform practice.

Fire risk assessments and regular fire drills are carried out. A personal emergency evacuation plan is needed for one young person to ensure that the correct procedures are clear. He struggles to comply with the evacuation policy. Staff need to be aware of the actions that they should take if there is a fire. Further work needs to be undertaken to help this young person to understand the risks posed. The manager is addressing these shortfalls.

The home environment is well decorated, with good resources including a well-equipped play area outside. Staff carry around bunches of keys, and this creates an institutionalised atmosphere.

Staff create opportunities for children and young people to have one-to-one time as well as enjoying time together as a group. They enjoy activities in the community. Staff took one young person to see his favourite football team play at

their home stadium. Staff respond to children's and young people's needs with utmost respect and concern. During the inspection, one young person was attending a hospital appointment in preparation for an operation. Staff have used social stories to prepare the young person, and are supporting him and his family throughout the procedure.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by the local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children and young people who have learning and physical disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/10/2016	Full	Good
23/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
17/12/2015	Full	Good
23/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must enable, inspire and lead a culture in relation to the children's home that: (h) uses monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(h)) This is in relation to the recording of incidents for evaluation.	28/04/2017
14: The care planning standard In order to meet the care planning standard, the registered person must ensure that children: (1)(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home. (Regulation 14(1)(a)) This is in relation to ensuring that staff know when to call the police for assistance and know what medical interventions are required.	28/04/2017
After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must ensure, by means of fire drills and practices at suitable intervals, that persons working at the home and, so far as reasonably practicable, children are aware of the procedure to be followed in case of fire. (Regulation 25(1)(d)) Specifically, they must ensure that the plans are clear for one young person who is likely to refuse to leave the home.	28/04/2017

Recommendations

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

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely domestic environments. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)

This is in relation to ensuring that staff do not carry bunches of keys around visibly at all times.

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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