

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	23/03/2016
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	Helen Simmons
Inspector	Lucy Chapman

Inspection date	23/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	sustained effectiveness
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 last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Sustained effectiveness. A confident and experienced Registered Manager leads this home with a commitment to achieving good standards of care for children and young people. The one requirement made at the previous inspection has been effectively actioned. A review of children and young people's care plans has been undertaken, now providing distinct formats for children and young people who stay for short breaks and those who are accommodated longer term. Persons with parental authority for the child or young person now agree and sign care plans. Recommendations made at the previous inspection are also implemented, or are in process of implementation. Children and young people's risk assessments have undergone review and updating. Improved risk assessments now comprehensively address areas of risk and provide clear guidance for staff to keep children and young people safe. Staff supervision is improved. Feedback from staff in respect of supervision has been incorporated into improvement plans. A new supervision proforma ensures the discussion of key issues at each supervision and supports clear recording of identified actions. Although supervision of employed staff is improved, supervision of agency staff has not received the same attention. It lacks comprehensive content and thorough recording. A further recommendation addresses this issue. Updating the statement of purpose is in process following the recommendation to do so but remains incomplete. The home is currently registered to provide short breaks; however, some children are residing on a longer-term basis because this home is considered by involved professionals to be their current best option. While such decisions have been made in children's best interests, this takes the home outside of its current terms of registration. The Registered Manager understands that a variation to the home's registration status will be necessary if such placements occur in the future. A requirement for the statement of purpose to be updated to clearly define service provision is repeated.	

All children and young people living in and receiving short breaks at the home are making good progress. Staff know children and young people well and provide care that meets their individual needs. One young person is receiving individual meals to support his special diet plan; another is receiving specialist medical attention that is supporting the improvement of her health. Links with a trained epilepsy nurse provides specialist training for all staff to meet another child's needs.

Children and young people take part in activities that they enjoy. A special trip to the fire station has been organised for one young person, with his friend accompanying him to help to nurture his relationship with peers.

Relationships between children, young people and staff are a positive feature of the home. A staff member said 'Relationships are brilliant. The staff know about children's behaviours and get to know each child and their personality. There is warmth and care. I think this is the best place to work ever'.

Staff safeguarding training is up to date. Any safeguarding issues are reported, recorded and actioned effectively. Purposeful links with the local authority designated officer and local safeguarding children board provide safeguarding quality assurance and guidance.

No children have been missing. One complaint made was effectively investigated and resolved; with a focus on reflection and learning for future practice.

Behaviour management in the home is of a high quality. There have been no sanctions and only three physical interventions. Staff know and understand children and young people's behaviour, leading to effective and child centred behaviour management strategies.

The home takes health and safety seriously. Fire drills are undertaken regularly, ensuring all staff and young people are practiced in fire safety procedures. The home environment is well decorated and furnished; maintenance is up to date. Equipment is in line with children and young people's needs, providing wide-ranging in-door and outside activities that children and young people enjoy.

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 with learning and physical disabilities for short breaks.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/08/2014	Full	Good
12/02/2014	Interim	Good progress
31/10/2013	Full	Outstanding

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.

Requirement	Due date
Compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. The registered person must ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner which is consistent with its statement of purpose (Regulation 16 (1 and 5))	20/05/2016

Recommendations

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

Ensure that staff supervision enables staff to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care, particularly the supervision of agency staff (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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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