

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032315
Inspector	Janet Hunnam
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Brighton & Hove City Council
Registered person address	Kings House Grand Avenue HOVE East Sussex BN3 2LS
Responsible individual	Jenny Brickell
Registered manager	Clare Brunt
Date of last inspection	12/02/2014

Inspection date	22/12/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	outstanding
Outcomes for children and young people	outstanding
Quality of care	outstanding
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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Young people thrive in the home as a result of nurturing, caring relationships with staff, which provides them with a secure base of stability and trust. Interactions are supportive and respectful and based on staff knowing young people extremely well. Exceptional levels of individualised care allow young people to achieve positive outcomes and benefit from their short breaks at the home.

Staff are highly skilled in managing young people's behaviour and promoting positive relations. They demonstrate excellent understanding of young people's individual personalities, interests, strengths and needs. Close liaison with parents and carers and health professionals result in highly detailed support plans, recognising young people's specific vulnerabilities and outlining effective strategies for staff to provide high standards of care. Staff actively encourage young people to make choices in their daily lives and promote their independence at every opportunity.

Young people's needs and their welfare are central to all aspects of how the home operates. Excellent safeguarding practices protect young people. Sensitive and supportive relationships underpin a culture of safety. Staff monitor and supervise young people closely, reacting promptly and appropriately in all situations to protect young people. Staff are aware of young people's specific vulnerabilities and complex needs and have strategies in place to successfully manage their behaviour, minimise

the risk of harm and encourage young people to behave appropriately. Parents and carers are confident that young people are safe at the home.

Comprehensive and rigorous monitoring systems ensure the home maintains high standards of care. Led by a highly effective Registered Manager, the skilled and competent staff team are dedicated to providing outstanding levels of care for young people. Young people's needs are central to all practice, planning and development within the home. Development of the service is evident with improvements in practice having a positive impact on young people.

One shortfall was identified at this inspection in relation to making telephone enquiries following receipt of written references.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides short break care and accommodation for up to five children with learning or physical disabilities. The home is operated by a local authority and is fully equipped to deal with the needs of the children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2014	Interim	good progress
25/07/2013	Full	outstanding
13/03/2013	Interim	good progress
26/06/2012	Full	outstanding

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 that for all people working in or for the children's home, telephone enquiries are made as well as obtaining written references. (NMS 16.1)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people receive excellent levels of care and support and as a result make considerable progress and significant development. Highly individualised, consistent support allows young people to develop trusting relationships with staff, which builds their confidence and sense of safety and security. Detailed and thorough care planning in consultation with parents, carers and professionals enables staff to know young people very well. Consequently, young people flourish knowing staff appreciate them as unique individuals. Parents report that young people look forward to their stay at the home and thoroughly enjoy their experience.

Staff meet young people's health needs to a very high standard and are proactive in promoting good health. The complex health needs of some young people are closely monitored, with specialist support from external health professionals, ensuring young people receive appropriate care.

Staff recognise the value of education and provide effective support for young people to attend school regularly. They liaise with schools to share practice and strategies, to consistently meet young people's specific needs and promote their growth and development. This excellent consultation between the home, school, parents and specialist health professionals support educational outcomes and ensure key information about young people's day-to-day lives is shared to benefit young people.

Young people access a wide range of activities within the home and the wider community enabling them to extend their social experiences and develop their skills and confidence. Young people enjoy the excellent resources provided by the home.

A strength of the home is the focus on promoting young people's independence skills. Structured individual goals, which are meaningful, realistic and appropriately challenging, enable young people to make progress with their personal care skills and daily living skills. Staff are patient and supportive in assisting young people to acquire new skills to maximise their potential. As young people learn to do things for themselves, their confidence and self-esteem grows.

Quality of care **outstanding**

Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff in a nurturing and caring environment. Extremely committed staff value each young person as an individual and understand their specific needs. Interactions are supportive and respectful and based on staff knowing each of them very well. Consequently, young people enjoy their time at the home. In a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, young people are

confident and trust the staff caring for them. Parents and carers are confident in staff's abilities to care for young people with complex needs.

Staff are highly skilled in managing the behaviour of young people and promoting positive relations. Staff demonstrate exceptionally good understanding of young people's individual personalities, interests, strengths and needs. Consequently, young people make progress in improving their behaviour and developing independence skills.

A culture of promoting young people's choice is evident. Using a variety of communication methods, staff enable young people to put forward their views and decide for themselves on day-to-day matters such as activities, what clothes they would like to wear and which staff they would like to support them in their personal care and help at meal times. Young people's questionnaires also provide staff with information on their views about the home. Young people receive visits from youth advocacy workers to ensure their views are heard. The Registered Manager is passionate about ensuring young people's views are heard and is proactive in encouraging other professionals to make sure that young people are involved fully in their review meetings. This attention to young people's personal views allows young people to feel valued and respected knowing they are listened to, thus building self-esteem and confidence in the adults who care for them.

Highly individualised support plans, compiled in close consultation with parents and carers, outline all young people's needs and specific strategies for staff to support them effectively. Young people's plans include clear developmental goals with progress recorded daily during their stay and regular reviews of the goals. This focus on specific goals promotes young people's development and positive outcomes. Exceptional multi-disciplinary working with close liaison with specialist health professionals such as physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, school nurses and the child and adolescent mental health service ensures young people receive consistent approaches to promote their development.

Staff are well trained, confident and competent in meeting young people's often-complex health needs. Robust systems are in place to ensure staff administer medication safely. Rigorous monitoring of the administration of medication, together with an annual re-assessment of staff's competencies in this area, safeguards young people. The home provides a healthy environment with home-cooked, nutritious meals and opportunities for young people to engage in physical activities, contributing to high levels of health care.

Staff are active in supporting young people to attend school. Detailed planning ensures staff maintain young people's routines, providing consistency so that young people are confident in attending school whilst on a short break and benefit from their educational opportunities. Close liaison each term with school staff allows young people to experience continuity in strategies to support them, resulting in improvements in their behaviour and consequently their educational engagement and

attainment.

The home provides excellent facilities for young people within an environment that is homely and welcoming. Young people have access to enriching and relaxing activities enabling staff to engage young people positively and young people clearly enjoy these experiences. The home is well-maintained to a high standard and designed to meet the needs of young people with complex needs.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

Safeguarding young people is of paramount importance at the home. Efficient and effective systems are in place to protect young people and promote their welfare. Parents have no concerns about young people's safety whilst staying at the home. Staff are competent and appropriately trained in safeguarding measures. Any issue of a child protection nature is promptly and properly referred to the relevant authorities ensuring that any safeguarding concerns are considered to protect young people. Close monitoring and supervision of young people by staff protect young people. Young people do not leave the home without permission.

Young people clearly trust staff who care for them. Staff have an excellent understanding and knowledge of young people and their specific vulnerabilities. This enables them to identify triggers and warning signs of negative behaviour. They react appropriately in line with young people's support plans and risk assessments to keep young people safe. Staff receive training in the use of physical intervention and crisis management but rarely resort to restraint. Staff use low-level physical intervention to prevent young people harming themselves or to prevent harm to staff. Staff are skilled in de-escalation techniques, which are tailored to each young person and outlined in their individual support plans. Staff record all incidents involving physical intervention in detail and reflect on such incidents with a focus on how support can be more effective. The Registered Manager closely monitors these records.

Staff are carefully selected to work with young people at the home and recently young people have been involved in the recruitment process. However, telephone enquiries are not made following a written reference to verify the authenticity of the reference. The home is rigorous in its approach to all health and safety matters. All required tests and servicing takes place including fire safety checks and drills.

Leadership and management **outstanding**

A highly effective manager provides clear leadership for the home. She has been registered with Ofsted since 2007 and has appropriate experience and qualifications. She clearly understands the needs of young people and the support and guidance staff require to meet young people's needs, which are central to all practice, planning

and development at the home. All decisions focus on young people's best interests and promoting their progress and outcomes.

The home continually seeks to improve the service and the Registered Manager understands the strengths of the service and areas for development. Recent developments include compiling 'hospital passports' for young people providing all relevant information should they require a hospital visit, personalised questionnaires to gain young people's feedback and redecoration of some areas. The Registered Manager has also updated the missing from home policy in liaison with local police, strengthened transition planning for young people leaving the home and is working closely with advocates to add further value to their consultation with young people. A development plan is in place, which is extremely child-focused and designed to improve outcomes for young people. No requirements or recommendations were made at the previous inspection. Two complaints have been recorded and the response demonstrates these have been appropriately managed.

Rigorous monitoring systems are in place to maintain high quality care. The Registered Manager monitors all key records on a weekly basis with systematic follow-up with staff where shortfalls in practice are evident. Monthly reports from an external visitor add further value to the quality assurance process to maintain and drive high standards.

Staffing levels are high reflecting the complex needs of young people at the home. Managers ensure young people receive the level of support they require to meet their needs and ensure they have positive experiences during their short breaks. Staff receive excellent levels of training, supervision and support to enhance and inform their care practice. Regular team meetings provide a forum for reflection and review of how staff are meeting young people's needs and how staff can improve the service offered to promote positive outcomes.

Communication between the staff team, professionals and parents and carers is effective. Record keeping is of a high standard. These records contribute to a good understanding of young people's lives, ensuring the needs of each young person are fully appreciated and addressed.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.