

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	23/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC032315
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Lucy Chapman

Inspection date	23/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC032315

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Accomplished managers lead a committed and highly trained staff team. Staff know children extremely well and have a thorough understanding of their needs. They are very well equipped to meet the complex needs of children who have short breaks in the home.
- Listening to children is intrinsic to the home; their views are central to development planning. Currently, children are choosing the equipment for a new log cabin in the garden.
- Parents speak extremely highly of the care that the home provides. One parent said, 'I absolutely feel that they treat them as their own child. I can leave him with 100% confidence. He is well taken care of and loved.'
- Behaviour management plans for children are exceptional. They are thoughtful plans, guided by input from child and adolescent mental health services professionals. Meticulous behaviour plans enable staff to anticipate and meet children's needs effectively.
- Children participate in a wide range of opportunities and experiences, both in the home and in the local community. Activities include ice-skating, theatre trips, theme park outings and music sessions. Children undertake regular activities that they enjoy and try new experiences that broaden their outlook.
- Staff are committed to facilitating communication for all children, including those who communicate non-verbally. They demonstrate extraordinary commitment to learning each child's communication style and exploring each child's wishes and feelings; this facilitates excellent care provision.

Full report

Information about this children's home

A local authority runs this short-break children's home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children who have learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/05/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/12/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/05/2015	Full	Outstanding
24/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Children develop exceptional relationships with staff. Staff value children, describing them as 'the strength' of the home. Highly motivated and comprehensively trained staff confidently meet children's complex needs. Staff value children, care about them, and speak highly of them. The admission of children to the home is always after extensive assessment and child-centred planning. This facilitates excellent transitions that allow children, and their families, to settle well. There is an intrinsic culture of listening to children and enabling them to make decisions about their care. Staff know and understand children's individual communication techniques. This enables each child to make choices about the activities that they undertake, the food that they eat and the staff who care for them. They are involved in the development of the home, including staff recruitment and choosing new equipment. The attention to detail in respect of children's health is meticulous. The home works seamlessly with health professionals so that staff are thoroughly equipped to meet children's highly complex health needs; as children's needs change, staff immediately retrain. Opportunities for children are excellent; they try new experiences and develop their interests. The home has an enabling approach and provides new, varied and exciting opportunities for children inside and outside of the home. The home has an unquestionable impact upon children's progress. Activities planned carefully incorporate children's individual goals. Parents describe staff as 'aspirational'. A parent said, 'He has really developed since being at the home. He has developed his life skills in dressing, washing, cooking and clearing up and these skills have transferred home.' Staff value children's achievements, big and small. Their achievements are on proud display around the home, and are incorporated into memory books to provide each child with a personal record of their accomplishments.	

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Safeguarding starts at the point of referral. Children's risks are well understood, with clear guidance to staff to minimise and respond to risk inside and outside of the home. All staff take children's safety seriously and successfully manage individual risks. Children's risk assessments are highly individualised; they enable children to take risks, develop new skills and safely develop their independence within their level of ability. The inspector observed exceptional trusted relationships between staff and young people. A parent said, 'What's really impressive is that all staff know the children really well. They can understand my son's vocalisations and eye movements to understand his needs.' Staff really know children and understand their individual communication systems; this enables staff to provide safe and responsive care. Safeguarding policies are regularly reviewed and staff demonstrate a thorough knowledge of safeguarding procedures. Staff notify all significant events to relevant authorities and take all required action to keep children safe. Safeguarding training is proactive; it includes research-based training from safeguarding leads and includes specialist training in the safeguarding of children who have disabilities. The home environment is adapted without delay to meet children's assessed risks. For one child, the replacement of a window provided integral blinds, where blinds posed a risk. For another child, the purchase of a new specialist sling facilitated safe care as the child grew. As children's safe care needs change, equipment is immediately updated and staff retrained to manage children's changing needs proficiently. Behaviour management is exceptional. It is research based, includes multidisciplinary professional input and meets children's individual needs effectively. A parent said, 'Staff are able to anticipate his needs; they are able to anticipate and respond to his mood and behaviour and to prevent incidents.' Furthermore, accomplished behaviour management has enabled some children to begin to understand their own emotions and behaviour, and to seek out for themselves environments to regulate their mood. This is a significant achievement and has a considerable impact upon children's personal well-being. The home environment is well maintained and homely. Health and safety monitoring is meticulous. All staff take health and safety seriously; this provides a safe environment for everyone.	

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The long-term manager relinquished her registration to take on a promotion secondment. She has returned to her role, with additional skills and experience, and is in the process of re-registration. In her temporary absence, expert interim management arrangements maintained the exceptional standards in the home, and offered stability to staff and children. Long-term staff know children well and have excellent relationships with them. Staff value and care for children. One member of staff said: 'The children themselves make the home. It's a big thing for them to feel comfortable in respite. The children come first with staff; everything goes back to the individual child.' Staff are highly trained to meet children's needs. Specialist training equips staff to meet children's highly complex individual needs competently. Their training is updated as children's needs develop and change. Staff supervision is both supportive and challenging; all supervisors complete reflective supervision training. One member of staff said, 'Supervision is incredibly useful; we look at what has gone well and reflect on things that haven't gone so well and learn from this, and pass this on to other members of staff.' Such supervision, with open and honest practice discussion, supports the high-quality practice observed in the home. Management monitoring is meticulous. Daily, weekly, monthly and quarterly monitoring give the manager exceptional oversight of the home. In addition, the manager undertakes shifts to give oversight of staff practice and the day-to-day care. The manager addresses any areas requiring development effectively; this brings sustained improvement to the home. The manager has a detailed understanding of all children and closely monitors their progress. Documentation clearly demonstrates the positive impact that the home has on children's progress. The home demonstrates exceptional partnership working to meet children's needs. Proactive links with child and adolescent mental health specialists, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, dieticians, teachers and social workers facilitate best care for children. Parents speak extremely highly of the service. A parent said, 'My son has a wonderful time, he is really happy staying at the home. The staff have been amazing in looking after my son's changing care needs and have been extremely supportive.'	

Exceptional links with local charities provide funding for equipment and experiences that children value. The home promotes community links, and children attend local events and festivals. Managers are committed to promoting equality and challenging discrimination to ensure that children have suitable access to local services and facilities.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people, and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 that 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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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