

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC032315
Inspection date	25/07/2013
Inspector	Liz Driver
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Date of last inspection	13/03/2013
--------------------------------	------------

© Crown copyright 2013

Website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

This document may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that the information quoted is reproduced without adaptation and the source and date of publication are stated.

Service information

Brief description of the service

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.

The inspection judgements and what they mean

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

Overall effectiveness

The overall effectiveness is judged to be **outstanding**.

Children make significant progress as a result of spending regular periods of short breaks time at this setting. Highly motivated, sensitive and caring staff provide very individualised support to children with complex learning, health and communication needs.

The extremely effective multi-disciplinary working approach enables staff to provide the right level of care for short periods of time, some of which is intensive care support. As a result children have extremely positive outcomes in all areas including education and engagement in activities.

Children with complex communication difficulties have a voice in this home. Staff are relentless in promoting choice for each individual child. Staff use methods of communication particular to each child plus advanced technology systems. Children are at the centre of practice and this can be seen with the extremely positive relationships between staff and children. Children enjoy their time spent at this setting.

The leadership and management is strong and highly effective. The Registered Manager leads by example and fully understands the numerous strengths of the setting and is able to identify areas to be improved on.

Parents comment 'my child has a great time and always comes home happy', and 'I completely trust the staff to do their best and care for my child.' Professionals comment 'the staff team are committed' and 'this is an excellent service.'

Outcomes for children and young people

Outcomes for young people are **outstanding**.

Children make excellent progress in many areas of their lives as a result of staying at this service. They make excellent progress as a result of highly individualised support, which enables them to have improved confidence and to express themselves in unique ways. Children are able to access many activities in the wider community and enjoy the excellent facilities on offer at the setting.

Staff support children to develop an awareness of their behaviours and emotions which results in them being able to express themselves appropriately. The emotional well-being of children is promoted to the highest level. As a result children are happy at the home and enjoy their time spent there. Parents say that their children have a great time and always go home happy.

Children are at the centre of all practice and there is a culture of respect and dignity. Children feel comfortable with staff and interact extremely well with them. Staff understand the specific ways each individual child communicates. This means children with severe communication difficulties have a voice and are able to make choices. Children are able to express themselves in as calm an environment as possible. As a result incidents are infrequent.

Children's educational achievement is enhanced through the culture of a total learning environment where skills learned are applied to everyday living. Individual targets include educational targets that are unique to each child. Overall children make exceptional progress in developing their skills and confidence and access a wide range of experiences they obviously enjoy. Children cannot take responsibility for their own health however they are encouraged and do get fully involved in reviews and meetings. Staff continually encourage children to make choices in all aspects of their lives; a real strength of the setting. However small, progress can be seen and staff give children great encouragement and praise.

Staff are very accessible for parents to discuss their children and any changing needs that have occurred since their last stay at the setting.

Children enjoy their stay at this setting and the time spent with staff.

Quality of care

The quality of the care is **outstanding**.

Staff deliver consistently high standards of care meeting individual complex needs with commitment and sensitively. The approach to planning is excellent with well organised records kept and extremely comprehensive care plans in place that are reviewed and updated regularly.

There is exceptional multi-disciplinary working with close liaison with the specialist school nursing service, children and adolescent mental health service and the physiotherapy service. Innovative and creative strategies are in place that ensures children make progress in numerous aspects of their lives, for example sensory stimulation. Strategies are shared with others such as teachers and parents. Progress is documented and celebrated, no matter how small. Outstanding relationships with parents and external agencies ensure children receive the care they need. The short break experience and social interaction that comes with it adds to the children's progress and development. All aspects of care are highly individualised and very regularly reviewed to meet the changing needs of children. Children are encouraged to participate in their reviews with the assistance of up-to-date technology. High quality planning ensures children's individual and diverse needs are met in each scheduled care episode. Excellent preparation for admission is carried out that result in a smooth transition from home to setting.

The dedicated staff team are committed to improving life chances for children. They support education placements with strong communication between the home and school. Staff attend reviews, including educational reviews. Parents say 'staff are very professional, friendly and willing to help.'

Staff support children to integrate into the wider community. The children thoroughly enjoy all the activities they participate in. Staff place the well-being of all children at the centre of their practices, consistently and professionally. Communication methods vary according to individual children's needs. Picture and new technology enable children to express their views and wishes and make choices. This also enables children to participate in their reviews.

All medication is stored appropriately and there is a comprehensive and thorough system to ensure safe receiving, administering and disposal of all medicines. Systems in place to check and monitor medication administration result in very few discrepancies. There are very detailed and up-to-date health plans in place for complex health needs such as epilepsy and gastrostomy feeding. Staff are very well trained in case of an emergency, and are able to administer emergency medication if necessary.

Accommodation at the home is of a very good standard. Children's needs are met at the setting with excellent resources such as a sensory room and activity room. Staff respect children's privacy and ensure their dignity is maintained, especially when carrying intimate care needs.

Safeguarding children and young people

The service is **outstanding** at keeping children and young people safe and feeling safe.

Staff understand children's individual needs and vulnerabilities and do all they can to protect them from harm. Staff are confident in processes to follow should they be concerned for a child's safety. Clear procedures guide staff through processes for

referral if indicated.

Staff are fully trained in the home's approved behaviour management restraint techniques and apply them only when necessary. The vast majority of physical interventions are soft and only carried out to prevent children from harming themselves. Non-verbal clues from children indicating how they are feeling is readily picked up by staff and acted upon. Interventions guide children rather than restrain them.

Professionals and parents all comment on how well the setting protects children. Proactive safeguarding practice together with a staff team who are very well informed of individual vulnerabilities provides enhanced protection. No children go missing due to the high levels of support and staffing numbers. All staff are carefully recruited and selected with visitors closely monitored. There are clear and robust procedures for making a complaint, although these are extremely low. The environment is physically safe and undergoes rigorous health and safety checking on a very regular basis. Excellent individual fire risk assessments and evacuation plans are in place if a fire occurred.

Leadership and management

The leadership and management of the children's home are **outstanding**.

Established systems ensure the home runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis, and up-to-date policies and procedures support and promote good practice. Parents, social workers and a range of professionals are extremely positive about how the home operates.

Monitoring is very good with the manager being able to assess the quality of care and make changes if needed. She leads by example in every way. Leadership arrangements are very strong. Equality and diversity is excellent.

There is a strong and highly effective management team fully supported by a committed and experienced staff team who work together extremely well. The Registered Manager consistently sends out positive messages to staff and communicates high expectations about sustaining improvement. The manager routinely makes good use of a range of rigorous monitoring activities relating to the quality of care, which results in improved outcomes for children. The targets for development of the service are realistic and fully involve the whole staff team. Staff receive excellent training, supervision and maintain excellent relationships with a wide range of multi professionals.

Records are clear, up to date and stored securely. They provide an understanding of each child's experiences and plans. Short break care at this setting has a very positive effect on children's progress with clear targets put in place and met.

The previous requirement to complete regulation 34 reports at six monthly intervals and send a copy of every report to Ofsted within 28 days of completion has been

met.

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 *Inspections of children's homes – framework for inspection* and the evaluation schedule for the inspection of children's homes.