

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC033120
Inspector	Natalie Burton
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Luton Borough Council
Registered person address	Luton Borough Council, Town Hall George Street LUTON LU1 2BQ
Responsible individual	Joanne Fisher
Registered manager	Christine Marie Ali
Date of last inspection	14/10/2014

Inspection date	02/03/2015
Previous inspection	adequate
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged adequate at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

The home was judged as adequate at the last inspection in October 2014. Since that time the manager has addressed the five requirements and two recommendations that were raised. The home has continued to make significant progress, which has led to positive outcomes for young people.

The service has an updated missing child policy, which was written in consultation with the local police. Management have informed all staff and young people, social workers and parents of the implementation of the policy. In addition, all children and young people have a missing person profile that provides a detailed overview of their information and a recent photograph. While there have been no missing incidents, staff are aware of the procedure to follow in the event of a child or young person going missing. Therefore children and young people are sufficiently safeguarded.

Management have ensured all staff have completed training in child sexual exploitation and first aid. This has included on line training and discussions in team meetings. Staff have an increased understanding of potential risks to young people and the skills to meet their individual needs.

Staff and management have made improvements to children and young people's individual risk assessments and the support required while participating in community based activities. Each young person has an individual risk assessment completed before leaving the home or accessing an activity. For example, if a young person has a history of no danger awareness and has tried to run off in the past, they may link arms with staff while in the community. Therefore, any potential risks to children and young people are assessed and action taken to reduce the risk before the activity is undertaken.

Staff and management have made improvements to the records kept in the home. Short break plans are clearer, up to date and provide sufficient detail of the individual needs of the child or young person. For example, plans now include night time routines, restriction of movement risk assessment and how each individual is supervised within the community. Plans are easier for staff to read and refer to. They link with health care plans and risk assessments. Children and young people benefit from a consistent approach and response from a staff team that are clearly knowledgeable about their individual needs.

Regular supervision sessions ensure that staff are able to share their concerns, ideas for improvement and discuss the progress that children and young people make. In addition, these records are signed at the end of the supervision. As a result, children and young people benefit as they are cared for by staff that are well supported by managers.

The manager has written and implemented a development plan. This includes improving consultation and communication skills with children and young people and ensuring the home is personalised and well maintained. The plan identifies how the service can improve the quality of care provided to children and young people.

During the inspection, a shortfall was noted regarding recruitment checks of staff that have previously lived abroad. While all staff have a disclosure and barring check for their time while in this country, the service has not completed a check for the time abroad. This does not ensure that all staff are suitably vetted to work with children and young people.

The Registered Manager is committed to making further improvements to the service provided to children and young people. Other developments since the last inspection include helping children and young people to know who to safely approach if they need anything. The staff have enabled some children and young people to spend time at the local fire station, and to meet with the local police support officer. This provided emphasis on helping young people to identify a safe body through the use of a uniform.

Young people have made progress in areas such as trying new foods and accessing school with reduced anxiety through staff transporting on occasions from the service. Other areas of progress are with some children and young people's communication and social skills and staff having an informed awareness of each individual's needs.

The rapport between staff and children and young people is warm, caring and respectful. Observations during the inspection noted appropriate relationships and engagement between staff and young people.

Information about this children's home

This home provides short-break care and accommodation for five young people. A local authority owns and operates this setting.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/10/2014	Full	adequate
13/02/2014	Interim	satisfactory progress
15/10/2013	Full	good
31/01/2013	Interim	good progress

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 the children's home has a record of the recruitment and vetting checks which have been carried out on those working for the children's home which includes where the person has lived outside of the UK, further checks as are considered appropriate where obtaining a disclosure and barring service is not sufficient to establish suitability to work with children. (NMS 16.3 (f))

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

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.