

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC033127
Inspector	Ann-Marie Born
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	North East Lincolnshire Council
Registered person address	Vulnerable Children Management Team Western Site, Cambridge Road Grimsby Lincolnshire DN34 5TD
Responsible individual	Daren Russell Hale
Registered manager	Karen Julie Stones
Date of last inspection	26/03/2014

Inspection date	30/12/2014
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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	outstanding
Leadership and management	outstanding

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	outstanding
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Children and young people receive outstanding care in all three units of this home. Exceptional care planning ensures that all of their diverse, holistic and specialist needs are comprehensively identified and fully met. As a result children and young people thrive and make exceptional progress in their overall development, communication skills and confidence in their ability to form inclusive relationships. A speech and language therapist said, 'Without a shadow of a doubt she is making progress because of them. She wouldn't have come this far without the support they have given her and she wouldn't have been as secure and confident as she is without them'.

The proactive and committed management team are continually striving to improve children and young people's care and empower them to achieve to the best of their ability. They are aspirational for children and young people to have every opportunity to participate fully in the community. The management team are excellent role models for staff members and work in close partnership with other professionals. The resultant continued developments have led to consistent outstanding judgements across all grades for this home. The complex health service manager said of the home, 'I think they are very, very good and I'm proud to work alongside them'. The one recommendation made at this inspection, to improve the consistency of recording following an incident or physical intervention, relates to

practice that does not have any direct negative impact on the care of children or young people.

Children, young people, their parents and professionals are universally positive about the excellent quality of care provided by the nurturing and enthusiastic management and staff team. Children and young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff and each other enabling them to grow in self-esteem and confidence. Children and young people develop an understanding of their value and self-worth. A parent said, 'The best thing I ever did for my son was letting him come here because they've made such a difference for him in his life. I think it is outstanding because the staff go above and beyond, they don't do it for the money; it's because they care'.

Stringent attention to excellent safeguarding procedures ensure that children and young people are provided with a sense of security and belonging while being kept safe. A parent said, 'I've asked them to let him stay 'til he's 25, he loves it so much here. I was scared when he first came because he can't speak but I'm 100% sure he is safe and happy here. When we get here he turns and waves bye to me because he is so pleased to be here'.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is part of a local authority children's disability service offering care for children and young people aged between 5 and 17 years with learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities.

The property is purpose built and all on one level. It provides accommodation in two units for eight children or young people receiving short break services. Longer-term care can be offered to four children or young people within an attached bungalow, which is self-contained.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/03/2014	Interim	good progress
29/10/2013	Full	outstanding
15/03/2013	Interim	good progress
09/10/2012	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 all staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping, trained to maintain them and to understand the need to be careful, objective and clear when making records; specifically, ensure records of incidents and restraints are of consistent high quality. (Children Act 1989 guidance and regulations - Volume 5 – 3.28)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Children and young people make substantial progress, within their abilities, in forming sustainable attachments with staff. Growth in confidence to communicate with others enriches children and young people enabling them to make friends within the home. As a result children and young people's self-belief and sense of belonging are enhanced empowering them to engage in inclusive activities within the community. This effectively broadens their horizons. A parent wrote, 'You have given him his independence and learnt him his life skills as well; he loves going'.

Children and young people's emotional and physical health improve as a result of the consistent attention paid to their identified needs. Exceptional partnership working with specialist health professionals ensures that children and young people are 'thriving' enabling them to fully benefit emotionally as well as physically. A physiotherapist commented, 'The way they've engaged with the programme is outstanding. (Name) is progressing brilliantly, she's amazed us with how far she has come'.

Children and young people all attend full time education where they are achieving to the best of their ability. They further benefit from the positive learning opportunities provided by the enthusiastic staff team to participate in craft work and use appropriate computer packages. As a result children and young people develop much improved motor skills and take pride in the work they produce, further building self-esteem.

Children and young people's sense of self and pride in their ability to contribute to their home and community are substantially increased by the inclusive chances offered to them. The innovative and nurturing management and staff team use 'wishes and feelings' sessions imaginatively with children and young people to enable them to suggest improvements to the home. Children and young people's suggestions include buying a double buggy for dolls, having their own memory stick so they can save computer games between respite stays and for staff to clean the minibus. In addition, children and young people from all three units participated in preparing for a 'fest' to celebrate their home this summer. This provided them with the opportunity to learn new skills while recognising that they were part of a community. Children and young people feel that their views are valuable and they can help improve facilities for everyone who accesses the home.

Children and young people are fully supported to maintain important familial relationships. Parents report very positively about the assistance they receive while their child is receiving respite care and during those times when they need some extra support. Children and young people's heritage is well planned for and guidance is actively sought from their parents to ensure that their cultural traditions are

understood and maintained. Consequently children and young people feel secure enabling them to understand and trust their place in the home and with their families. A parent said, 'I think this place is excellent, outstanding. I couldn't say anything bad about it at all. They have given me so much support as well, there is always someone to talk to and if I ring and they're busy they will always phone back'.

Children and young people develop important life and social skills in preparation for transition to other provisions or adult services. For example, being able to toilet themselves or taking responsibility for their own personal care. The exceptional use of individual 'All About my Transition into Adulthood' booklets enables young people to identify their 'transition support team', express what their wishes are for their future and recognise when they have achieved the steps towards their goals. A social worker commented, 'I have observed real progress in young people receiving care there, leading to us working toward positively moving one young person on to mainstream services'.

Quality of care

outstanding

The skilled and nurturing staff team know the young people in their care extremely well. They work patiently and tirelessly to build positive and caring relationships. Staff members understand and utilise each child or young person's individual communication method empowering them to express their wishes and feelings. This includes sensitively arranging for a family to send compact discs in a child's native language for her to listen to at bedtime. Consequently children, young people and staff evidently enjoy excellent, trusting relationships. A parent said, 'I know the staff love him like I do, they make him feel so happy and they understand him and know him'.

As a result of the positive relationships they have with staff, children and young people learn how to form friendships with each other. This further enhances their sense of belonging and respite and care experience. Very careful matching processes promote these friendships. The proactive and skilled management team ensure that children and young people of the same abilities have respite together. Children and young people report that very often the best part of their stay is spending time with their friends. One young person wrote, 'I love coming to (name) because the staff are kind and friendly and I have made some good friends' and another wrote, 'I like my group of friends I come in with'.

Exceptional individual communication methods are skilfully administered by the committed staff team. This empowers all children and young people to share their wishes and feelings. Many of these sessions are written down and placed on children and young people's files so that they and their families have a record of the choices they have made. This effectively forms part of their developmental history. Children and young people feel listened to and valued. A staff member explained, 'I did the happy/smiling face paddles with him and he was realising what they meant, and

when he said he felt loved he kind of went all giggly and lovely to see, you could see he really felt it. I'm glad he does feel loved because he has captured a lot of staff's hearts'.

Complaints information is available to children and young people in a range of methods. These include their 'Have Your Say' booklets and suggestion boxes in each of the three units. In addition children and young people are supported through visits to the home by an independent advocate on a regular basis. There have not been any complaints.

Exceptional care planning ensures that all of a child or young person's holistic, diverse and unique requirements are well understood and processes are identified to meet those needs. Care planning commences prior to admission when the motivated staff team visit children, young people and their families to start building nurturing relationships. During these visits children and young people's health care requirements, communication skills and cultural backgrounds are assessed so that individual support can be provided immediately. For example, recent admissions have included the need to arrange for specialist medical training for staff, carefully planning bedroom colours and establishing whether a young person has a specific cultural diet. A social worker said, 'They take time to understand a child's needs in the early planning and provide the care for the individual child's needs'.

Care plans are reviewed regularly by key workers and all progress is recorded, complete with photographs, so that children and young people can recognise the progress they have made. As a result children and young people are fully supported to grow and develop to the best of their ability while living in the home or enjoying their respite breaks. A social worker wrote, 'Staff understand and meet the needs of the children and what outcomes the placement hopes to support/achieve. Children who stay there are safe and happy, they make friends and have fun'.

The knowledgeable and skilled staff team work closely with generic and specialist health professionals to ensure that children and young people's health needs are understood and met. This includes providing complex health care for children and young people with life threatening conditions. Exceptional partnership working with specialist health professionals allow children and young people to have a positive care experience, including participating in inclusive activities in the community notwithstanding their health needs. In addition, comprehensive medication procedures are effectively applied ensuring children and young people receive their appropriate medication. The complex health service manager stated, 'I'm really really happy there is good communication across all levels, I have high aspirations but that team have never failed to meet the mark. As for being safe, those team are on it'.

Young people who have an identified need, have prompt access to the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS). Staff liaise effectively with professionals from this service. On occasion it is felt by the staff in the home that the CAMHS provided is not of sufficient longevity. However, they report that the CAMHS always

accepts re-referrals and that young people benefit from the interventions they receive.

The proactive and motivated management and staff team are aspirational for children and young people to achieve to the best of their academic ability. They liaise closely with schools but also promote learning within the home. The growth of craft work and activities provided for children and young people provides them with the opportunity to improve their dexterity while learning new skills and engaging in a fun pastime together. The results of their work are displayed in the home further enhancing children and young people's sense of achievement and belonging. A social worker commented, 'Enrichment is a given at this unit'.

Involvement in inclusive activities both within the home and in the community is a strength of this home. Children and young people are provided with access to a range of activities and opportunities which they would not normally be able to do. This effectively broadens children and young people's horizons while they have fun and build lasting friendships. One parent commented, 'He is encouraged to be independent when possible. They take him out', and a young person stated, 'I like the kids I come in with. I like my room. I like to go to golf. I like the quiche for tea'.

Children and young people enjoy their residential and respite stays in a home which is well-equipped to meet their needs. The spacious, comfortable and homely units are appropriately designed and laid out to match their specific physical and emotional requirements. These defined spaces empower children and young people to safely express themselves without impinging on other young people's enjoyment or endangering them. Children and young people thrive within this nurturing, stimulating and well planned environment.

Keeping children and young people safe outstanding

Children and young people feel safe in this home where their individual vulnerabilities are known and well planned for. They are fully supported to be able to take part in thoroughly risk assessed inclusive activities in the community, thereby increasing their sense of belonging and self-esteem while maintaining their safety. Staff are aware of the potential for bullying behaviours. They pre-empt this by matching placements carefully and sensitively enabling children and young people to understand the impact their behaviours have on others. A young person wrote, 'I have never been bullied at (name) but I was at school and I told (name) and they got it sorted out. I like (name) and want to keep coming forever'.

Effective missing person's protocols are well known to staff. The high level of staff supervision and appropriate internal physical safeguards mean that children and young people do not go missing from the home. Exceptional individual risk assessments and excellent individual 'grab cards' ensure that vital information would be readily available to inform police if a child or young person were to go missing

from an activity in the community. Children and young people are effectively safeguarded by these measures.

The patient and committed staff team are excellent role models for children and young people. Positive behaviour is consistently promoted. Exceptional individual behaviour management plans ensure that children and young people's triggers are understood and recognised leading to behavioural improvements. Any negative incidents are recorded and audited demonstrating improvements as they occur so children and young people can learn from their behaviours. A parent commented, 'They understand my daughter and know when to give her space and when to insist'.

On occasion some young people's 'unkind' or self-harm behaviours need to be managed by way of physical intervention. Such events are rare and staff are well trained in safe and appropriate restraint techniques. However, although this does not have a negative impact on the care of children or young people, not all recording of incidents and restraints is of the same consistent high quality.

Comprehensive local authority recruitment and vetting procedures are effectively followed. Children and young people are protected from being cared for by people who may pose a risk to them. A physiotherapist stated, 'I just think they are brilliant and she couldn't be in safer hands'.

Robust health and safety procedures are stringently applied ensuring that the home is physically safe to meet children and young people's needs. Regular evacuation drills are repeated where necessary ensuring that staff understand how children and young people would react in an emergency. These inform children and young people's excellent individual evacuation plans providing further safeguards. Parents commented, 'Professional, experienced and skilled staff provide a home from home environment' and 'I never have to worry when he is there'.

Leadership and management

outstanding

The experienced, well qualified manager has held Registered Manager status of this home since May 2010. She holds a degree in Autism and is on the final stages of a Level 7 qualification in Leadership and Management. She is fully supported by an equally able deputy and her line manager. Children and young people fully benefit from the strong leadership and guidance this partnership provides to staff members. The complex health service manager needs said, 'They are a very outward and forward thinking team and very tuned in to the needs of young people'.

No requirements or recommendations were made at the last inspection, nevertheless the home has ably shown its continued capacity for development. A number of new policies and procedures have been implemented which further enhance the care for children and young people. These include night evacuation practice and medical care within the home. New progress sheets have been implemented on children and

young people's files which demonstrate the impact living in or having respite stays in this home, has had on their lives.

Comprehensive Statements of Purpose and Children's Guides are provided for all three units within the home. These clearly inform all interested parties of the care to be provided. Consequently children and young people are appropriately placed enhancing their opportunities for success.

Excellent external monitoring processes fully contribute to the safety, development and care of children and young people accessing the respite service and living in the home. Children and young people are empowered to share their views, and the opinions of parents, carers and professionals are gathered as part of the manager's internal auditing practices. The information captured is used to augment and inform the home's development plan. For example, new link worker responsibilities in 2015 will include 'recognising the neglected child'. In addition, the computer software on children and young people's computers will be updated so they can access a 'symbol supported communication aid' further improving their communication skills.

Children and young people benefit from high staffing levels. A number of new staff have been appointed since the last inspection to specifically care for children with life limiting conditions in one of the units. This ensures that their needs are appropriately met as a result of the nurturing and skilled care they receive. A social worker commented, 'Excellent caring staff, who are knowledgeable about the young people they support'.

Staff report that they receive regular good quality training to meet the needs of children and young people. The proactive management team ensure that staff also receive specialist training in order to meet children and young people's unique and diverse needs, for example managing specific health requirements. A staff member said, 'Staff are well trained, especially in specific areas of medical procedures. The units are well organised'.

Children and young people are safeguarded by the multi-agency approach to their care provided by the prompt notification of all significant events to appropriate parties. Children and young people's records are stored securely. They are written in a child friendly format and updated regularly. They contribute to an understanding of children and young people's development from their starting points.

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.