

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	07/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC034083
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Cumbria County Council
Registered person address	Organisational Development, The Courts, English Street, CARLISLE, CA3 8NA
Responsible individual	Deborah Evans
Registered manager	Caroline Reid
Inspector	Lisa Gregoire-Parker

Inspection date	07/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.	
The registered manager has the required level of experience and qualifications. The manager has been in post since 2007 when the regulation became the responsibility of Ofsted. Two experienced and qualified assistant managers support the manager. They have both worked in the home for a long time. The young people and the staff benefit from having an established management team. The staff team is stable, and a number of staff members have worked there for a considerable amount of time. There have been slight changes in the team in the last couple of months. This has been due to natural ends of contracts and the cover for one member of staff who is being supported to complete her social work degree. Two requirements and two recommendations were made at the last inspection. The requirements relate to behaviour management policies and records, and the statement of purpose. The recommendations were to promote restorative sanctions and improve management oversight of control, discipline and restraint. These have been successfully addressed. However, practice around sanctions is still not restorative in nature, and therefore this has been set as a further recommendation. Young people are making good progress in all areas. One area of strength is the continuous improvements made in attendance and attainment of education. Young people benefit from having a member of staff who has the coordinating responsibility for all educational matters. This role, in partnership with all of the staff team, is enhancing young people's educational outcomes. Staff communicate effectively with education colleagues, which promotes good working relationships between the two settings and supports young people's goals and achievements. A positive incentive scheme is in place to encourage young people to engage in education. This is supported by a clear, achievable and inclusive action plan. Young people are responding very well to the strategies in place. One young person had not been in education for two years and now has an attendance of 80%. Together with this, two young people have 100% attendance. The manager has a good understanding of the needs of the young people. Staff work well with social workers and health colleagues to ensure that the care that	

young people receive is in line with their care plans. There has been one new resident since the last inspection. The assessment completed prior to admission supported the successful transition for the young person, and they have settled very well into their new home and are making good progress. Young people are supported in having contact with their families, and all arrangements are in line with their care plan.

Young people receive additional support from an emotional health and well-being practitioner. This role adds value to the care of the young people. The practitioner undertakes a thorough and evidence-based assessment and plan for each young person and shares this with the manager and staff. This assists the day-to-day care for the young people. Furthermore, it informs the therapeutic care and the life-story work undertaken with the young people. The practitioner undertakes joint therapeutic sessions with the key worker to provide young people with consistency and ongoing support. Staff receive training to explore and understand behaviours and to learn strategies and approaches that will support young people effectively.

Young people's records are generally clear. However, not all health needs are included in the health plans, and risk assessments are not robust enough. Management oversight is evident in some recording, yet this is not consistent. This has contributed to assessments and plans not being clear enough. Although risk assessments and health plans are not thorough enough, staff do keep young people healthy and safe. The evaluation of practice is not always documented, and thus it is not routinely used to inform future practice. This is particularly evident in the missing from home records and the sanction records. Furthermore, maintenance issues, such as repairs to the home, are not routinely identified and repaired in a timely way. Quality assurance systems do not provide the rigour required to ensure that all risks and hazards are identified, documented and acted on effectively.

Young people benefit from effective behaviour management practices. They receive support and incentives to take responsibility for their own behaviour and make good choices. This is in line with the principles of the education incentive and it is proving successful. Sanctions have subsequently reduced, and there have been no restraints since the last inspection. However, when sanctions are used, they are not proving to be effective, as young people repeat the same behaviours. Young people would benefit from sanctions that are restorative in nature and have the desired impact.

Staff encourage young people to access a variety of activities and try new things in both their local community and the surrounding area. Some young people recently took part in an adventurous activities and personal development course. The purpose of the course is to build up trust and relationships through young people taking part in a variety of activities. These included kayaking, tight rope and abseiling. Young people reported that they enjoyed the course and are keen to return to do it again. One young person said in their feedback that they 'didn't want to go home', and that they 'had the best time ever'. Consequently, young

people have enjoyed trying new and fun experiences, which have developed their confidence and helped them to learn new skills.

Information about this children's home

This local authority home is registered for six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural and learning difficulties. It provides care for girls and boys from 12 to 17 years of age.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/12/2016	Full	Good
18/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
22/09/2015	Full	Good
12/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets the Care Standards Act 2000, Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'. The registered person(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must: (2)(h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. This is particularly for the management and monitoring of health plans, missing from home reports, key-work sessions and the maintenance of damage to the home.	19/04/2017
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered manager must ensure: (2)(b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm. In particular, all risk assessments must include all risk factors identified, the level of risk posed and the safeguarding measures in place to manage the risks.	19/04/2017

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendation:

- Ensure that any sanction used to address poor behaviour is restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.38)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection 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

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 who it is trying to help, protect and look after.

This inspection focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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