

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034415
Inspector	Simon Morley
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Joanne Carter
Date of last inspection	06/01/2014

Inspection date	22/10/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	adequate

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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The management, staffing, facilities, aids, adaptations, activities, multi-agency working and high standards of care all contribute to good and some excellent outcomes for children and young people. All aspects of care planning and practice are highly personalised to meet the individual needs of each child and young person. Evaluation and review of children and young people's progress is less robust compromising how future achievements are promoted.

Staff provide a supportive, nurturing environment in which children and young people feel safe and are able to develop very good relationships with staff. The needs and views of children, young people and their parents are significant and influence how care practice develops. Children and young people have positive views about their care and this is reinforced by comments from parents and stakeholders who also rate the service highly.

Leadership and management is judged adequate for failing to keep up with legislation, in particular changes in regulations. This has not impacted directly on the care of children and young people but shortfalls do limit the focus on continuous improvement. Also the management of recruitment has not ensured a fully rigorous approach in vetting agency staff.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and managed by a charitable trust. The home forms part of a campus including a school and residential provision for adults.

The home provides long term care for up to eight children and there is separate accommodation for up to seven children at a time staying for short breaks. The service is for children with severe and profound learning disabilities, physical disabilities and sensory impairment. Children frequently have complex health care needs as well, for example needing percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy (PEG) feeding, epilepsy and diabetes.

The school was inspected at the same time as this inspection and a separate report is available. At the time of inspection there were 20 children who received a short break service predominantly at weekends.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/01/2014	Interim	good progress
12/09/2013	Full	good
18/02/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress
15/06/2012	Full	good

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
4 (2001)	compile in relation to the children's home a written statement (in these Regulations referred to as "the	31/12/2014

	statement of purpose") which shall consist of a statement as to the matters listed in Schedule 1 (Regulation 4 (1))	
26 (2001)	not employ a person to work at the home unless full and satisfactory information is available in relation to him in respect of each of the matters specified in Schedule 2. In particular ensure that for agency staff there is evidence of two written references, including a reference from the person's most recent employer, if any (Regulation 26 (1), (2) & (3) (d))	28/11/2014
31 (2001)	review the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the premises of the children's home at least once in each calendar year (Regulation 31 1A (b))	01/12/2014
33 (2001)	ensure the independent visitor critically examines and scrutinises the way the children's home is managed and the quality of care the children's home provides (Regulation 33(3))	31/12/2014
33 (2001)	ensure the independent person interviews with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents, relatives and persons working at the home in order to form an opinion as to whether children accommodated are effectively safeguarded and the conduct of the home promotes their wellbeing (Regulation 33 (8) (a) & (b))	31/12/2014
34 (2001)	establish and maintain a system for monitoring the matters set out in Schedule 6 at least once in every 3 months and improve the quality of care provided. The system shall provide for consultation with children accommodated in the home, their parents and placing authorities (Regulation (1) (a), (b) & (3))	31/12/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure each child's placement plan is monitored by a key worker within the home who ensures that the requirements of the plan are implemented in the day-to-day care of that child. In particular review and evaluate children's progress and achievements; and ensure behaviour management plans are up to date. (NMS 25.2)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Children and young people make good progress across a range of outcomes and make excellent progress in school. They benefit well from the effective way in which they receive individual care when at the home. There are numerous examples of where children and young people have very specific needs met, such as personal care, communication, socialisation, and health. Parents commented, 'Staff know my child's needs well, they are friendly and caring, very child centred approach.'

All children and young people have excellent attendance at the provider's school. This includes children and young people who stay for short breaks and attend this school. Some individuals who stay for short breaks go to other schools and also have very good attendance. All children and young people who attend the provider's school meet their expected targets and most of them achieve more than these. They achieve more than their peers who are day pupils due to the integrated approach with care staff. Given the needs of children and young people, progress is in small steps but is significant. Children and young people make achievements in communication, socialisation and making choices. They benefit from the use of assisted technologies. One parent said, 'Our son's communication and education skills have exceeded our expectations.'

Children and young people benefit from the multi-agency input available on campus including speech and language therapy, occupational and physiotherapy, visiting doctors and dentists. This ensures individual health needs are promoted. Parents commented:

'Our child has been unwell whilst there and the care that he has had from staff and nursing has been excellent'; and 'always received excellent care and my son needed to put weight on and in so many months the staff had achieved this goal.' Children and young people improve their physical posture, diets, sleep patterns and reduce negative behaviours such as self-induced vomiting.

Children and young people improve their emotional well-being from sensitive care. This ensures they are all able to participate in activities, access the community and increase their socialisation. They enjoy a wide and stimulating variety of activities. The home has plenty of toys, some assisted technology, an activity room. Children and young people access the sensory room, sensory garden, hydrotherapy pool and rebound therapy that are all on site.

Children and young people who come for short breaks, spend the rest of their time at home with their families or carers. Parents are welcome to visit the home and staff will work alongside them particularly at the first short break. This helps staff understand children and young people's individual routines and needs. Some children and young people are also able to keep in touch using telephones and video links

during their stays, depending on their individual ways of communication. Children and young people in long-term care are able to remain in contact with their relatives. This helps maintain their sense of identity and social support networks.

Children and young people develop their knowledge and skills to be more independent. Predominantly this is in gradual steps in developing independent personal care skills or improving communication. For example getting dressed, brushing their teeth, making yes or no choices, using assisted technology to ask for more and also to control their environment. Children and young people have access to switches that will turn on a disco ball or light up an underwater scene on the wall in their home. Parents commented: 'I feel staff make an effort to provide independence and learning at every opportunity'; 'choice is one of the things he has excelled at with excellent help of the staff'; and 'our son is non-verbal yet staff understand his attempts to voice his needs and act accordingly.'

Quality of care

good

Children and young people enjoy good relationships with staff and thrive on the individual, caring, sensitive support staff provide. Parents commented: 'We cannot fault the services and staff. They are part of our extended family'; and 'it's a good short break centre; lovely homely facilities.'

Staff work hard to develop good relationships with children and young people regardless of their diverse needs and ability to communicate. Staff know children and young people well and help them to make choices using eye-blinking, eye-pointing, gestures and switches. Some children and young people will take staff by the hand to show them what they want. Children and young people benefit from on-site speech and language therapy and communication passports that inform staff of the right individual communication strategies to use.

Alongside individualised care planning and support, this attention to communication helps children and young people benefit from having their diverse needs met and to enjoy their time at the home. Children and young people on short breaks look forward to their visits. Parents commented: 'My child is happy there and returns home happy'; 'they care and that is noticeable'; and 'they are really good with my child.'

There is an effective integrated approach with school that helps promote children and young people's education. Targets, aims, objectives and care strategies are consistent across the home and school, helping to promote consistency and progress. The manager has plans to develop and integrate this further.

Staff knowledge of individual needs, their professional, friendly approach to care, close supervision and support, all contribute to helping children and young people behave well. Staff provide clear boundaries, day to day structure and routine for

children and young people to follow. This particularly helps individuals who prefer consistency and struggle with change. There is also plenty of flexibility to adapt routines for children and young people who prefer their own space. For example children and young people can relax in their rooms using specific individual aids such as vibration pads and watch their favourite films.

Medication arrangements are safe and effective, so that children and young people take the medication they need at the correct times. Medication needs are reviewed to ensure children and young people are getting the right individual benefits. Staff are also trained in: epilepsy; catheter care; moving and handling and PEG feeding to support children and young people with their complex health needs. There is a good holistic approach to health care with physiotherapy, speech and language input, a hydrotherapy pool and rebound therapy all available depending on individual needs.

Children and young people have detailed care plans that set out their diverse needs and how staff will support these. These plans include specific detailed information about communication, mobility needs, and health needs as well as individual likes and preferences about heating, lighting, bedding and leisure time. Each individual has specific aims and objectives for promoting autonomy, independence and socialisation. Although care plans are of high quality and detail, and guide staff in supporting individuals, the aims and objectives, and the achievements children and young people make are poorly evaluated. This compromises how well the care planning process is able to promote children and young people's progress. The manager had already identified this and plans are in place to improve this deficit.

The home is clean, well-maintained and adapted for the needs of children and young people with disabilities. This includes a wide range of aids and adaptations such as: wheelchair access, passenger lift, specially adapted baths, extensive overhead tracking, specialised beds, wheelchairs and other furniture. This means that all children and young people regardless of their needs can make full use of the home's facilities.

Very good arrangements are in place for children and young people new to the service. This is based on a thorough assessment of their needs and includes parents or carers staying overnight to help contribute and work together. This ensures care plans are thorough and that children and young people are only admitted when their needs can be met.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Children and young people are safe living at the home and they report they feel safe, cared for and protected. Safety is given a high priority in all aspects of their care such as children and young people's individual vulnerabilities, their health, food safety, infection control, health and safety checks, moving and handling equipment and security of the home.

The planning of children and young people's care effectively identifies risks together with clear actions to reduce them. In line with the ethos of the service, care practice protects children and young people at the same time as promoting their equality of opportunity, autonomy, choice and development. This ensures children and young people are PEG fed safely, enjoy the right physical environment for example, heat, lighting, noise, and also receive additional verbal reassurance regards their sensory impairments. Staff know when individuals are upset, how to promote choices, how to support safe and fun use of the hydro-pool, kitchen and manage trips out safely. Priority is given to the diverse needs and vulnerabilities of children and young people. Various stakeholders commented, 'Staff see children as individuals and respond appropriately'.

Staff are trained in child protection and know how to report any concerns they have about a child or young person's welfare. No child protection referrals have been made to the local authority since the last inspection. None of the children receiving a short break service are subject to child protection plans. However, the manager and staff are knowledgeable about signs and symptoms of abuse and confident in being able to communicate any issues if necessary. There is regular use of body maps and sharing of information with placing authorities to promote children and young people's safety.

Where needed, there are specific behaviour management plans. These plans are not always reviewed in a timely manner to ensure they remain up to date. The current impact of this is minimal as there is little in the way of challenging behaviour for staff to manage. Any challenging behaviour is seen as part of an individual's disability. No sanctions are given, as they are seen as inappropriate in managing these children and young people's behaviour. There is also no use of physical intervention. Close supervision, use of re-direction and other non-physical interventions are used to de-escalate any challenging behaviour and keep all children and young people safe. Staff receive regular training to safely de-escalate any incidents. Good staffing levels and close supervision of children and young people ensure that there is no bullying and no one goes missing from the home.

A thorough recruitment process is in place to ensure only appropriate people are employed on a permanent basis to work with vulnerable young people. The process for agency staff is less robust in ensuring the agency has carried out all required checks. In this case, the majority of checks are in place and agency staff work closely with permanent staff so risks to children and young people are minimised.

Leadership and management

adequate

Leadership and management are adequate, because the registered person and Registered Manager have not ensured that management arrangements have kept up-to-date with changes in legislation and regulations. This includes required changes to monitoring, information to be included in the Statement of Purpose and developing a location assessment for the setting.

The formal processes required by regulation for monitoring the quality of care, are not effectively contributing towards continuous improvement. Quality monitoring reports do not reflect robust consultation with children, young people, their parents and placing authorities. These shortfalls compromise the home's effectiveness when establishing rigorous systems for improving both the quality of care, and outcomes for children and young people.

An annual development plan sets, and the Registered Manager oversees a range of internal auditing. For example, of case files, supervision and medication arrangements. Staffing posts have been re-structured with the aim of providing better care and plans are in place to incorporate more assisted technology in the home. This would give children and young people more choice and control over their home environment.

The Registered Manager responds well to complaints. For example, a parent complained about a child being left in front of the television after school. As a result practice has changed around the transition time from school to home providing more staff time to interact with children and young people. Parents commented: 'If I am not happy it is taken very seriously and will be dealt with'; 'we have an open and easy relationship, our son's interests and us as a family are always valued'; and 'staff have always been available or contact us if requested.'

The Registered Manager also took immediate action to obtain a copy of the up-to-date regulations and plan what needs to change as a result. This demonstrates a commitment to and capacity for future improvements. The manager has been in post for over 12 years and is suitably qualified to run the home.

Staff are clear about the function of the home, their practice upholds the aims and objectives to provide a safe, homely, stimulating environment. There is good staff morale; they feel well supported by the management team and their own colleagues. Staff receive regular, effective supervision and have opportunities for reflecting on practice. This helps staff to provide children and young people with high standards of care. Staffing levels also contribute to this. As a result, children and young people benefit from highly individualised care that meets their needs in a home that is safe and enjoyable to live in.

Children and young people benefit from staff that are well trained to meet their individual needs. About 75% of staff have achieved the required care qualification and the remainder are working towards it. In addition, staff complete a wide variety of training in subjects such as disability equality, eating and drinking, gastrostomy

feeding, mental capacity, pressure care, postural management and sleep systems.

The vast majority of care records contain detailed relevant information about children and young people in a clear and comprehensive manner. This helps the staff team to understand the needs of children and young people and also reflects a personalised and individualised approach to meeting the needs of children and young people.

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.