

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC034953
Inspector	Stella Henderson
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Northgate House Northgate Halifax West Yorkshire HX1 1UN
Responsible individual	Gary Pickles
Registered manager	Aaron McLoughlin
Date of last inspection	08/08/2014

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

This inspection

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

At the last full inspection the home was judged to be good overall. A requirement was made to address a potential conflict of interest between the independent visitor and the Registered Manager. A recommendation to improve practice in the disposal of medication was also raised.

Action has been taken to address all these matters which has improved the quality of practice in both areas. This demonstrates the Registered Manager's continual drive for improvement but a number of new procedural shortfalls are identified at this inspection.

Behaviour is generally managed well. Young people new to the home are beginning to conform to expectations and the number of restraints is on a downward trend. However the sequence of events leading up to a restraint is not always clearly recorded. This has no impact on young people but may cause confusion with regard to the legitimacy of the intervention.

The home's behaviour management strategy states that young people are allowed only a cold drink if they have failed to keep in touch with staff and arrive home later than anticipated. This policy has not yet been implemented but is unnecessarily punitive and without rationale.

Risk assessments are effective in reducing risk and managing risky behaviours. However assessments are not always updated, for example where young people's risks around child sexual exploitation are reduced. This has no impact on young people but may lead to the implementation of unnecessary strategies and actions.

Overall the quality of care that young people receive continues to be of a good

standard. Several young people are new to the home. The Registered Manager has taken prompt action to ensure their immediate needs for stability, safety and routine are met.

This has enabled young people to settle quickly into the home and for them to begin to accept the help they need to make good progress in their lives. Some young people are now better placed, emotionally, to begin to engage with specialist services, such as Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services.

School attendance of young people who are new to the home is steadily improving from very low percentages. Some young people are receiving additional tuition to enable them to catch up with their peers.

Young people continue to be protected by an effective range of safeguarding measures. The number of missing from home incidents is decreasing and risks have reduced for young people who were assessed as being vulnerable to child sexual exploitation.

Contact with family has improved significantly in some cases. Health outcomes are improving and young people who were previously on electronic tags are choosing not to re-engage in offending behaviours. Young people have been effectively supported to move on in a planned way to independent living or rehabilitation with family. The home continues to provide out-reach work for some of these individuals.

The Registered Manager exhibits many leadership strengths, including success in building positive relationships with young people. He also continues to drive professionalism and outcomes-based practice amongst the staff team through a time of organisational change. The manager's quarterly monitoring and oversight of the home's operation in general is thorough and evaluative. It remains focused on achieving continual improvement for young people at the home.

Information about this children's home

This children's home is operated by the local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to five young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/08/2014	Full	good
18/12/2013	Interim	good progress
30/05/2013	Full	adequate
14/11/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress

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
17A (2001)	Ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home a written record is made in a volume kept for the purpose. This is with specific reference to improving recording of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure (Regulation 17(B)(3)(b))	04/03/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and

fair and are understood by all staff and children (NMS 3.8)

- ensure that records are clear, up to date and stored securely and contribute to an understanding of the child's life. This is with specific reference to ensuring the risk assessments accurately reflect agreed levels of risk. (NMS 22)

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.