

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	04/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC035155
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered provider address	Northgate House, Northgate, Halifax, West Yorkshire HX1 1UN

Responsible individual	Anne Tully
Registered manager	Jane Stanley
Inspector	Pauline Yates

Inspection date	04/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC035155

Summary of findings

The children's home's provision is outstanding because:

- Young people experience short-break care that significantly contributes to their outcomes and overall quality of life. They make excellent individual progress from their starting points.
- Staff respond sensitively and with insight to the complexity of needs that young people present. The progress of young people and delivering high quality care are central to the concerns of staff.
- Parents and professionals value highly the service that the home promotes and delivers. They feel confident that staff ensure the safety of young people at all times and that young people enjoy and benefit from their time at the home.
- Managers promote a culture of learning and are always striving to improve young people's experiences.

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 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must ensure that within five days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3)(c))	31/10/2016
14: In order to meet the care planning standard, with particular reference to aims and objectives for young people relating to those outlined in local authority plans and suitable consultation when changed, the care planning standard is that children: (1)(a) receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.	30/11/2016
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality of care review') at least every six months. The registered person must supply to HMCI a copy of the quality of care review report within 28 days of the date on which the quality of care review is completed. (Regulation 45 (1)(4)(a))	31/01/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2). In particular, that supervision should be recorded in a level of detail that reflects the discussion, is focused and is reflective in nature.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority short-break children's home. It is registered to provide short breaks for up to six children with physical and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/12/2015	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/10/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Young people experience a high level of care that enriches their lives. They are offered a wealth of opportunities that would otherwise be difficult for them to obtain, without the support and encouragement that staff offer. Staff are ambitious for young people to develop their tolerance to new experiences and integrate these experiences into their learning and overall development. These opportunities include regular and sustained community- and home-based activities, such as trampoline centres, walks in local parks, arts and crafts, fund-raising events, soft-play areas, swimming, sensory rooms and gardening. Young people grow in confidence through pleasurable and appropriately demanding experiences. They learn to enjoy activities they would have previously resisted. For example, young people, who previously reacted negatively to change and leaving their homes, now enjoy regular outdoor activities. This widens their opportunities for social interaction and brings benefits to their lives. Young people learn new communication methods and this reduces their frustrations and distress significantly. Harming themselves or others reduces as their abilities to communicate their needs increase. Staff work extremely hard, and with tireless patience, to help young people express themselves. For example, one young person can now communicate when they are in pain. This means that staff can respond swiftly and ensure that the young person does not experience unnecessary distress. Staff continually promote the development of life skills. The highly complex needs of each young person are understood well by the staff and they are individually encouraged to practise and learn new skills. These can range from brushing their teeth and washing their hands to assisting with laundry tasks and preparing simple meals. Through an individualised approach to offering care, staff meet the wide and diverse needs of young people exceptionally well. Staff bring about sustained and positive changes in young people's lives. Through staff consistency and diligence, young people establish routines that previously they have struggled with. For example, staff have established good night-time routines with some young people, who previously would be awake throughout the night. This ensures that young people have the rest they require in order to participate fully at school and in other day-time activities. Families value highly the contribution that the service brings to their children's lives and the lives of the families as a whole. One parent commented: 'He can now ask	

what snack he would like and what drink he would like. Being calm is a big jump in his progress. When he first started going he was aggressive and very, very unpredictable. This has been a massive improvement.'

Staff work extremely hard to understand young people's needs and preferences, and in developing the means of the young people to be able to express those. A range of techniques are used, such as picture exchange systems, sign language, 'sequence-strips' and technology such as specialist packages on 'tablets'. One social worker commented: 'What the home did was gather his voice and this has been achieved.'

The home is a comfortable and welcoming environment that offers stimulating outside space, which young people continually use, soft play areas, a sensory room and many indoor play opportunities. Young people enjoy their stays at the home. One parent commented: 'He absolutely loves going. I have trouble getting him out of there when I go to pick him up, he loves it so much.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Young people feel safe at the home. This is demonstrated through their reactions to arriving and leaving the home, the progress they make while there and through testament of their parents. The high staffing ratios and good safety procedures ensure that young people are cared for in a safe environment. As a result, risks from missing from home or being exploited by others are minimised. Parents feel confident in the safe care that is provided by the staff. One parent, commenting on how safe they felt their child is, said: 'It is a very safe environment. It is like sending him to school, but better.' There are thorough procedures in place for the recruitment of staff. This ensures that young people are protected from people who may pose a risk to their welfare and safety. Young people, through visiting the home, learn to live cohesively and tolerate others around them. This is helped through careful matching of needs, personalities and friendship groups. This ensures that young people are not unnecessarily distressed by noise or activity levels. There are robust procedures in place for the administration of medication. Multiple daily audits and checks ensure that any potential errors are quickly identified and	

avoided. Regular health and safety checks by staff and managers ensure that the environment remains safe and is maintained to a high standard.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The manager has been registered to manage the home since 2013. She has many years' experience in the care and accommodation of young people and is suitably qualified. The manager is passionate about her role and continually seeks to improve the life chances and outcomes for young people. She leads an equally enthusiastic staff team, which is focused and driven in its work with young people. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and development areas of the home and there is a realistic and achievable plan in place that drives these developments forward. In their pursuit of delivering high quality care, staff place a strong emphasis upon communicating with other professionals and parents. The sharing of ideas and approaches ensures that young people are offered consistency across many settings. This assists in supporting the progress that young people make. One parent commented: 'The home communicates really well with school, especially around his toileting and communicating. This means that everything is very fluent for him.' The staff and managers continually seek feedback from parents, and there is an open and active culture of learning and seeking to improve the service. Staff act as strong advocates for young people and offer appropriate support to parents and carers. One parent commented: 'If you want something to change, they change it. It is very much tailored to the individual child.' Another parent commented: 'They have been brilliant really. They told us the wheelchair isn't right and they rang the council on our behalf. There was a problem with slings and they rang the physios and they pushed for them to do it for us.' There are good procedures in place to ensure that young people new to the home are made comfortable and that staff understand well their physical, emotional and medical needs. One nurse, impressed with the high level of pre-admission planning and attention to detail applied by the staff for one young person, wrote: 'In my opinion this case has highlighted the skills and dedication of the entire staff team as a whole within the home.' The management team provides good levels of support to staff, ensuring that they receive regular supervision and ongoing daily advice. However, the records of	

supervision are not always legible and it is not clear whether targets set previously have been met. In addition, notes kept on supervision are functional and do not contain a reflective process. This reduces insight of other managers in the absence of the supervisor.

The manager has a strong presence within the home and sets high expectations of the staff to provide the best possible care. A learning culture is promoted by the managers, with staff being encouraged to develop their skills and knowledge base continually. This ensures that the complexity of young people's needs continues to be met at a high level.

There are suitable processes in place, both formal and informal, that the manager uses to ensure that she has a good overview of the quality of care being offered. However, not all aims and objectives set by staff correspond to local authority children in need plans, and some aims vary across different documents. In addition, for some young people, changes were made to the aims without clarity or documentation as to why these changes were made. It is not clear whether these aims were achieved or were considered inappropriate for the young person.

Although the manager's quality of care review was completed, this was not sent to Ofsted within the timescales prescribed by regulations. This reduces the insight of the regulatory body into the functioning of the home.

The manager is creative and tenacious in her ability to generate extra income for the home. Opportunities are created for fund-raising and these funds are put to good use in ensuring that young people are given the best possible opportunities to experience new and exciting activities. Recent improvements to the home include the installation of a jacuzzi bath. Young people enjoy the sensory experience of lights, music and physical stimulation, making daily routines more pleasurable.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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 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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