

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	24/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC035155
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Calderdale Metropolitan District Council
Registered provider address	Northgate House, Northgate, Halifax HX1 1UN
Responsible individual	Anne Tully
Registered manager	Jane Stanley
Inspector	Stella Henderson

Inspection date	24/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
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 outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judged that it has improved effectiveness. Children and young people continue to be cared for exceptionally well by caring and attentive staff who know them well and meet their needs to a high standard. Strong links with families mean that staff have up-to-date information about each child and young person using the short-break service. This ensures that everyday practice meets their known and emerging needs. Children and young people enjoy meaningful activities during their short breaks. They do things that interest them and give them new experiences, such as going roller-skating and using trampolines. For some, these are first-time experiences that are helping to extend their fitness and social horizons. Children and young people also engage in quieter activities during their short breaks, as their needs and preferences indicate. For example, a new and relaxing experience for children and young people is bathing in the Jacuzzi bath. This is an additional facility and one that enhances their sensory experiences. Very careful thought and consideration are given to the grouping of children and young people who have short breaks together. This ensures that their needs are compatible and that friendship groups can be maintained. Parents and professionals continue to be confident that this service provides their children with high-quality care in a safe environment. There are no concerns about exploitation, and children and young people do not go missing from home. Staff have made effective contributions to child protection assessments when required. The environment is physically safe for children and young people. Access to the home is limited, and all visitors are met by staff at the door. Excellent partnership working means that children and young people experience a seamless transfer between school, home and the short-break service. This is because there is a very effective exchange of information about children's and young people's plans, education and health needs. When necessary, staff have gone the extra mile to support parents, by providing additional support over the Christmas period, for example, when help would not normally have been available. Outcomes for children and young people who use the short-break service are continually improving, because staff are supportive and persist in trying to create	

opportunities for children and young people to reach and go beyond their potential.

For children and young people who have complex needs, these can be very small changes but, nevertheless, they may represent significant change. For example, for one young person this meant needing less adult support to dress himself; for another it meant colouring a picture.

One particular achievement since the last inspection is the take-up of short-break services by children who, with their parents, attended a voluntary support group for children who had complex needs when they were toddlers. This was, several years ago, an innovation by the manager to extend use of the facility to the community and 'host' the support group. It was predicted that many of the attendees may well need the short-break service at a future date.

The manager's forward-thinking planning and generous sharing of resources have enabled children to become familiar with staff, the home's environment and the equipment available. This has made their eventual transition to the short-break service much more straightforward, reducing the anxiety of both children and parents at this significant change in their lives.

The manager continues to provide very effective leadership of the staff team and since the last inspection has made further improvements in the home, some based on requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. For example, staff have had access to further development opportunities, and changes have been made to care planning documentation. Staff supervision sessions are improved, and recording of physical restraint has improved. This demonstrates that the manager learns from inspection activity and improves the service accordingly.

Monitoring remains strong. It continues to identify where further changes need to be made to improve the quality of care for each child. This means that each child and young person has their short-break experience tailored entirely to meet their complex needs and choices.

Information about this children's home

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

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
04/10/2016	Full	Outstanding
12/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/12/2015	Full	Outstanding
06/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 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 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 whom 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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