

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	14/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC035380
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Stockton on Tees Borough Council
Registered person address	Stockton on Tees Borough Council, 6 Alma Street, STOCKTON-ON-TEES, Cleveland, TS18 2AP

Responsible individual	Shaun McLurg
Registered manager	Dawn Coyle
Inspector	Susan Atkinson-Millmoor

Inspection date	14/03/2016
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 judge that it has Improved Effectiveness. Children and young people receive exceptional care from committed, warm staff throughout their stay. The staff team work hard to ensure that children and young people enjoy their time at the home but also progress in all areas of their life. This combined with excellent community and family relationships demonstrates the how much the home has improved. Education is well supported by the home with routines continued for children and young people during their stay. This enables continuity and minimises the negative effects of change when moving from home to school. Transitions to and from the home are well planned in advance and effectively managed day to day. If change is needed to plans for an individual this is very child focussed ensuring they are listened to. A social worker said, 'They are very good at transition work.' And, 'They are proactive and always attend meetings'. Each child or young person has a comprehensive care plan that details needs, choices and methods of communication. Progress and achievements are recognised in individual files but also celebrated and displayed within the communal areas of the home. Communication is key because of the needs of some children and young people. The manager and staff address this need by the use of signs and pictures throughout the home. In addition there is an excellent technology room where equipment is available. This means there are a variety of methods children and young people use to express their views. The outcome is that children and young people develop a sense of belonging. Leadership and management is strong and supportive to staff. The extensive community involvement seen at the last inspection has further developed. Strong partnerships with local organisations has enabled the home to be a contributing part of the community. This result is an opportunity to challenge the views about children and young people with disabilities in the community and give something back. Staff are well trained and supported by the management team. Their development is seen as important in the home and the manager empowers staff to take on areas of expertise or interest. The impact of this is a stable, committed staff team who offer an	

excellent service to children, young people and their families. For example while on a stay a young person's parent was taking into hospital. Even though the young person was only staying a short time the staff recognised her anxiety and staff re-arranged work to ensure they could take her to the hospital. This re-assured the young person and the parent.

The management team are innovative and creative in developing the home. They identify areas of focus and ensure they present changes to the team in holistic way. Changes are researched, staff are consulted on findings and new methods are developed. Additional progress charts for children and young people have been introduced to outline small steps to be achieved in daily tasks in a visual way. This allows staff, children and young people to understand what is expected and how to achieve the desired result. An example of the chart shows a fictitious case to enable staff to learn in a safe way before implementation ensuring children and young people will have a clear understanding of their goals.

The home is spacious, comfortable and well maintained. The facilities available to children and young people internally and externally are excellent and risk managed well. The technology room has recently had equipment moved resulting in breaks in the sealed flooring. This needs repair to ensure infection control in this area.

Children and young people are given opportunities to experience wide and varied social activities during their stay. Staff and the registered manager believe in giving children and young people memorable experiences and examples are seen in pictures around the home. For example, three young people are planning a trip to Barcelona with staff. This is used as a learning opportunity with young people as well as the resulting enjoyment from the trip. This promotes self-esteem and resilience in young people. A social worker said, '(Name) is developing good independence skills and his confidence is growing.'

Behaviour is well managed with positive relationships. There are no episodes of missing and very few sanctions are used.

Records overall are excellent and show the child or young person's journey whilst staying at the home. Some entries because of the way they are written do not tell the whole story to any reader from outside of the home. The result is that information can be misinterpreted. The team have a vast knowledge of the individual children and young people that allows them to understand the recordings clearly.

Information about this children's home

This children's home provides short break care and accommodation for up to six young people who have physical and/or learning disabilities. It is operated by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/09/2015	Full	Outstanding
05/03/2015	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
07/01/2015	Full	Good
06/01/2014	Interim	Good Progress

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff understand the importance of clear recording, distinguishing between fact and opinion. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62 paragraph 14.4)
- Ensure the flooring in the IT room is appropriately sealed in accordance with the quality and purpose of care standard. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15 paragraph 3.9)

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 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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Manchester
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