

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC035518
Inspector	Sarah Oldham
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Registered manager	Samantha Marie Chesney
Date of last inspection	14/03/2014

Inspection date	18/11/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	None

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

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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At the last full inspection in November 2013, the service was judged to be good with outstanding features. The following interim inspection in March 2014 judged the home to be making good progress. The home continues to provide young people with excellent levels of care and support. This enables them to make good progress overall.

Young people benefit from highly personalised care and support. Individual placement plans identify the holistic needs of young people. These are implemented by staff who have an excellent understanding of supporting young people with complex needs, whilst working in partnership with parents and other professionals, thereby ensuring continuity of care and enabling young people to progress well. The vast majority of young people attend the on-site school. Residential and school staff work together to further promote the overall positive outcomes for young people.

The Registered Manager provides a good oversight of the home providing strong leadership. She is aware of the strengths of the home and the areas for on-going development and improvement. Her regular monitoring of the home is further supported by independent visitors monitoring of the home. However, the views of parents are not consistently sought by the independent visitors. Therefore, a recommendation has been made in relation to this.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is owned and managed by a charitable organisation. It is registered to provide both short breaks and longer-term care to children and young people with complex disabilities and sensory impairment. The home also accommodates young people aged over 18 and is registered with the Care Quality Commission. The home forms part of a school campus and the school is inspected separately by Ofsted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/03/2014	Interim	good progress
13/11/2013	Full	good
29/01/2013	Interim	good progress
18/10/2012	Full	outstanding

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure that visits of the home carried out under Regulation 33 include relevant checks as set out in regulations and guidance (this is in respect to recording the views of parents) NMS 21.7

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **outstanding**

Young people make good progress during their placement at the home. They benefit from attending specialist education that enhances their learning and enables them to make significant educational progress. Communication is supported through detailed assessments from speech and language therapists. Young people use a range of communication aids and techniques and staff have specific training and understanding of these methods. This means young people have effective support to enhance their learning and development and ensures they are able to communicate their wishes and views well.

Young people have very positive attachments with staff, who have an excellent understanding of the individual needs of young people. Residential staff work in close partnership with the on-site education, speech and language therapists, physiotherapists and nursing staff to promote the holistic needs of the young people.

Individual risk assessments outline potential risks and how these will be minimised. These assessments are kept under regular review to ensure any changes are clearly identified and appropriate strategies implemented. Where there have been identified shortfalls, these have been addressed and robust measures undertaken to address this.

Young people take part in a range of activities, both within the home, the school and in the local community. The school has regular after school activities, including massage and relaxation, cookery and games. Within each house, there are also a range of games, activities and sensory rooms as well as outdoor games equipment, including bikes. This enables young people to take part in activities on an individual basis or within groups with appropriate levels of support from staff members.

Families are made to feel welcome at the home by staff and this is reflected in their positive comments. For the vast majority of young people, there are no restrictions on contact. However, if there are, these are clearly known and followed to ensure the safety and welfare of the young people is promoted at all times.

Young people are consulted about their home and contribute their views to how the home runs. This includes personalising their rooms, the activities within the home and their likes about food provided. Their views are central to the practice of the home and this promotes stability of placements.

Quality of care **outstanding**

Staff have consistently high aspirations for young people. They provide excellent levels of care and support to enable young people with complex needs, to further develop their skills and abilities. This enables them to grow in confidence within a safe and caring environment.

Placement planning is highly individualised and addresses the holistic needs of young people. This includes health care and educational needs. The vast majority of young people attend the on-site school. Residential staff work in partnership with education staff to promote educational outcomes as well as supporting young people to take part in after school clubs and activities. One young person said 'it's good living here.' Another young person signed they liked staff and liked the home.

Young people are able to communicate their views well with staff that have an excellent knowledge of the different range of communication techniques individual young people use. Information for young people is also provided in a range of formats. This includes the young person's guide to the home and how to make a complaint or raise a concern. This ensures all young people have a good understanding of the home and can raise a concern with staff or managers of the home.

The home has access to a range of health care professionals to support young people's health care. There is a school nurse, occupational therapist, physiotherapist, speech and language therapist as well as good access to children and adolescent mental health nursing staff. In addition, young people are registered with doctors and external health care professionals. This means their health care needs are clearly known and supported to maximise their health outcomes. For those young people who receive a short break service whose health care needs remain the responsibility of parents, are also able to access the schools health care professionals to ensure they receive continuous health care support. One parent said, the progress my child has made during their placement at the home has been absolutely remarkable and it is positive that all staff work so well together as well as keeping us fully involved with our child's care.'

home is situated within its own grounds within a residential area. There are good transport links to the local town. The accommodation provides a range of facilities to meet young people's needs. The home is currently having extensive rebuilding work undertaken to provide updated housing. However, this has not detracted from the on-going maintenance of the current facilities to ensure they provide a safe, pleasant and well maintained environment for the young people.

Keeping children and young people safe **good**

All staff undertake regular safeguarding and child protection training. This provides them with the knowledge and understanding of the specific risks and vulnerabilities of young people. Individual risk assessments in place further underpin the support provided. The home has good links with external agencies involved in safeguarding children and young people, including the local authority designated officer (LADO), safeguarding board and community police. Good practice recommendations and specific guidance are implemented to further promote the safety and welfare of young people.

Incidents of missing from home are rare. However, detailed procedures and risk assessments clearly identify action to be taken in the event of this happening.

Young people with complex physical needs have additional moving and handling assessments undertaken by occupational therapists. This is to ensure that young people who require support with their mobility have the necessary equipment to promote this. However, a recent incident when there had been a change of equipment identified resulted in the wrong support being provided. This was raised as a complaint and has been investigated under the homes complaints procedure. The service has put in place appropriate guidance to minimise the risk of this recurring.

Staff are aware that young people with complex needs are vulnerable to heightened emotional distress. All young people have detailed behaviour management plans in place. This promotes positive de-escalation and re-direction techniques. Physical intervention is only used when a young person is at risk of harm to themselves or others. Detailed records are maintained of these incidents and reviewed by the manager to ensure the behaviour management plans are followed and staff have acted appropriately. Multi- agency reviews of behaviour management plans are also undertaken to further support young people's needs. Sanctions are rarely used and again, these are monitored to ensure support strategies are effective. Recruitment and selection processes are robust. Staff are only employed following clear guidelines in accordance with safer recruitment and selection procedures to prevent unsuitable people having access to vulnerable young people.

Health and safety including fire safety is given high priority. All young people have their own fire evacuation plan in place to ensure that they are effectively supported in the event of a fire. Other health and safety checks and maintenance is undertaken to ensure equipment used is serviced regularly and promotes overall safety for young people.

Leadership and management

good

The manager has been the Registered Manager of the home since December 2013. She has the necessary skills, experience and qualifications to provide effective management of the home. She takes responsibility for the five residential provisions that make up the children's home registration. She undertakes regular professional development and training to ensure that her practice promotes positive outcomes for young people as well as communicating high expectations of staff.

All staff undertake a range of training, both in-house mandatory training and external training. The vast majority of staff have obtained, as a minimum, a level 3 qualification in caring for young people. Those who have not obtained this qualification are enrolled on the course. In addition a number of staff hold degrees and diplomas in caring for children with complex needs and autism. The service also supports staff to undertake these additional qualifications. Staff receive regular supervision, attend multi-disciplinary staff meetings and have annual appraisals. This means young people are cared for by staff who have the skills and knowledge to support them to achieve positive outcomes.

The Statement of Purpose is regularly updated to reflect the service the home provides. It is made available to interested parties, including parents and social workers. The young people receive a children's guide. This is available in a number of formats to enable them to have an understanding about the home and what it is like living there.

The Registered Manager undertakes regular monitoring of the service, including a comprehensive three monthly report. A copy of this report is provided to Ofsted. Additional external monitoring is undertaken by independent visitors. However, some reports contain greater information than others and there is an inconsistency with regards to obtaining the views of parents and social workers. The Registered Manager has reviewed the format of these reports and additional training has been provided to ensure they provide robust external monitoring.

At the last inspection, two recommendations were made. These were in relation to the regulation 33 visitor examining the records of any physical interventions. This is now completed. The second recommendation has been partially addressed. This is in relation to the independent visitors consulting with parents. Although this is now being undertaken by some independent visitors, this is not consistently implemented. Therefore this recommendation has been reiterated at this inspection.

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.