

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	12 April 2016
Unique reference number	SC036026
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Sheffield City Council
Registered person address	Sheffield City Council, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH

Responsible individual	Dorne Collinson
Registered manager	Patrick McGeeney
Inspector	Stella Henderson

Inspection date	12 April 2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC036026

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people are making good progress and there is a proactive approach to making sure that they are safe.
- There has been considerable improvement in how the home is managed. This is having a positive effect on young people's quality of care and their future prospects.
- Monitoring has been strengthened. This is a much more effective process, which better identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the home.
- Partnership working is effective. The manager and staff work well with other professionals to support young people.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home. It is registered to accommodate five children with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29 December 2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
30 June 2015	Full	Requires improvement
24 February 2015	Interim	Inadequate progress
9 May 2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people are making good progress across all aspects of their development because they experience good quality care and support. They have opportunities to explore their career options, how they relate to others and manage the challenges of growing up. Their emotional health is improving. This is evident in the way that they are able to get on with their lives and begin to invest in the future. For example, young people are actively engaged in considering what they want to do in terms of work and college. They understand the value of further learning in terms of securing the kind of careers that they aspire to. Staff work well with all education providers to make sure that young people are supported to make the choices that are right for them. Young people are being effectively prepared for eventual independence: a process that is tailored to meet their individual needs. Thanks to helpful visual aids, young people and staff can see what has been achieved and what still needs to be done. This is particularly helpful for those who have English as an additional language. Young people generally enjoy good health and are able to look after the majority of their own health needs. Effective staff guidance supports young people to make sensible decisions based on the expert health advice available to them. They take part in activities that promote social inclusion as well as good health, such as going ice-skating, playing cricket and going to the gym. Young people have a clear voice in decision-making processes, although this is not always captured in their records. There is a clear understanding of what staff can agree to on behalf of young people. Matters are escalated if others are not making decisions for young people within reasonable timescales. This is a recommendation that is now met. Young people report having good relationships with staff. They feel that their culture and religion is respected and they value the support of staff. Help and assistance are offered to enable them to maintain contact with their families, particularly for those who live some distance away. A requirement to improve admissions to the home is met. The process is now more considered with the manager insisting on the fullest information from social workers before the admission is agreed. This has a positive impact for young people in several ways. It protects the safety and well-being of young people already placed at the home. It gives time for staff	

to absorb information about new referrals, enabling them to forward plan and get as many services in place as possible.

This has resulted in one young person going back into school, albeit for a short period of time, on just his second day at the home. This was after a period of several months' absence. A social worker explained that staff were, 'waiting to welcome him', and that it was a, 'worthwhile process'.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Staff take prompt action to safeguard young people. For example, one member of staff had the presence of mind to record a car registration number and make contact with a local taxi firm when concerns emerged. Staff go out looking for young people if they go missing from the home, although such events and the risks of exploitation have significantly reduced. Local police feel that the home is good at managing these incidents. One officer said that staff were, 'very good at passing on significant information and proactive in reporting at the appropriate time'. A requirement and recommendation to improve risk assessments are met. There is greater analysis of the actions that young people take when they place themselves at risk, and of what they do to protect themselves. This 'lessons learned' approach helps everyone to understand what motivates young people and how risks can be further reduced. Young people report that they have good relationships with staff. They know that staff care for them because staff do the kind of things that good parents do, for example checking that young people are safe when they are out and about, and making sure that they spend time with them. The smaller but no less important aspects of keeping young people safe are attended to, for example ensuring that they take a cycling proficiency test, speaking to a neighbour who had caused a young person concern and checking on them when they are out and about. Young people are happy to engage with staff in planned one-to-one time and activities. One member of staff said, 'The manager wants us to be with young people.' This simple but effective strategy conveys to young people that they are valued and that staff are interested in them and what they do. It also provides a useful way of managing behaviour. Staff are around to spot the first signs of trouble as	

well as being on hand to reinforce positive role modelling. As a result, the home has a very harmonious feel, and sanctions and restraints are seldom applied.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager possesses a level 4 qualification in management. He has managed the home for six years. He ensures that the home fulfils the ethos outlined in its statement of purpose to, 'provide a warm, caring and nurturing environment where young people are encouraged and supported in reaching their full potential'. Since the last inspection, the manager has changed his approach to the leadership and management of the home. His analysis and reflection on his role and responsibilities has led to considerable improvements in his practice and that of the staff team. This has led to more proactive and consistent management of the home. Staff are being held more strongly to account, and monitoring has improved significantly. This requirement is now met. Better audits of documentation are now providing useful measures of young people's progress. As a result of these changes, the quality of care that young people receive is good, and their prospects are improving. In addition, case recording has improved. This is a requirement from the last inspection that is also met. Young people get good all-round support because of effective partnership working. There are regular meetings with a clinical psychologist, the looked-after children's nurse and education and safeguarding professionals. These keep everyone's focus on the needs of young people. Consultation and feedback from professionals helpfully inform the manager's consideration of new admissions to the home. Staff have the qualifications and training that they need to do their job well. They are effectively supervised and are clear about the manager's expectations that they are with young people, keep up with recording and adhere to policy and guidance. This is helping to improve efficiency as well as ensuring that young people make good progress.	

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 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 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 whom 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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