

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	05/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC036186
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Deborah Hill
Inspector	Phillip Morris

Inspection date	05/10/2016
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	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC036186

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- This service delivers excellent and outstanding care to young people with a wide range of learning and physical disabilities. The staff team is highly knowledgeable, nurturing and skilled.
- The staff team works effectively and in partnership with a wide range of health professionals and, as a result, young people receive excellent healthcare.
- Young people's education and development are a key priority. Staff ensure that educational and developmental targets at school transfer to the service and are implemented. This results in young people making good academic and developmental progress.
- The staff team understands the importance of well-planned support for both new young people coming to the service and those leaving to adult care services.
- Young people are protected and safeguarded by a knowledgeable and experienced staff team.
- The service is led by a registered manager who is committed and is driving this outstanding service forward.
- Staff members receive training and development in all aspects of care practice. They receive regular supervision and oversight by experienced deputy managers.
- There have been one requirement and two recommendations made at this inspection. The registered manager is to ensure that staff members involved in physical restraints receive timely debriefings, that young people are spoken to and their views obtained, that information from a broad range of sources is harnessed to inform young people's plans and that the registered manager completes a workforce development plan.

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(s) 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(s) must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
35. Behaviour management policies and records The registered person must ensure that— (3)(b) within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person'); (i) has spoken to the user about the measure; and (c) within 5 days 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)(b)(i)(c))	18/11/2016

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should have a workforce development plan, which can fulfil the workforce-related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

Full report

Information about this children's home

A local authority operates this registered children's home. The home provides care for up to eight children and young people with learning and/or physical disabilities, including sensory impairment, under short-break arrangements.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
13/01/2016	Full	Outstanding
12/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
31/12/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Young people receive excellent care, provided by a dedicated staff team. Staff have a breadth of knowledge, skills and experience which enable them to work effectively and efficiently with young people. A parent stated of his son, 'He is happy to come here and we know he is safe. This is what you want.' Young people benefit from a consistently high ratio of staff, who have an in-depth knowledge of the young people, many with highly complex health and care needs. Consequently, young people enjoy their breaks and, at the same time, families receive valued respite. Young people enjoy excellent relationships with staff, with mutual affection displayed, as may be seen in any loving family environment. A young person commented via a survey, 'I like going. I like staff because they take me to play golf, fishing and football, and I like the staff.' Young people's health is maintained to an exceptionally high standard. Staff complete individual healthcare assessments prior to new young people coming to the service. These assessments inform plans detailing their health needs and the actions that staff need to take. Staff harness the advice and services of a range of health professionals, including occupational therapists, physiotherapists and community nurses. For example, joint training sessions organised for the staff and designated health professionals equip staff to meet young people's needs. Many young people have exceptionally detailed and precise healthcare needs, and staff show skill and diligence in meeting these needs to a consistently high level. Young people's emotional and behavioural needs are prioritised through staff working in partnership with the local child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) for young people with learning disabilities. The advice of CAMHS is utilised effectively through good and detailed behavioural support plans that are drawn up and implemented by staff. As a result, young people's physical, emotional and behavioural needs take precedence and are met consistently. The registered manager and staff understand and value their role in supporting families and carers. The manager and staff recognise the needs of families and carers for well-planned respite care for their young people. Successful relationships are achieved through good communication, flexibility to provide additional care when needed and the good quality of care that is provided. For example, a social care worker described how a family benefited from advice and support: 'They have gained some ideas from the service about the best way to manage his behaviour, and he benefits greatly from sensory communication.' Fundamental to young people making developmental progress is education. The registered manager and staff work in partnership with schools and colleges to help	

young people to progress. Staff regularly attend reviews at school, and transfer key learning and development targets to placement plans. They effectively weave targets into activities that are undertaken with young people. Staff communicate well with schools, and provide advice and guidance if required. For example, a school was struggling to manage the behaviour of a young person, so a meeting was held in which a staff member who is knowledgeable about the young person provided strategies for managing the behaviour which were readily accepted by school. This example provides evidence of a versatile service extending its knowledge and skills and exceeding its normal role in providing excellent services for young people.

Staff members understand and implement cohesive and comprehensive plans for young people. Plans contain information from the registered manager and key workers, who have collated and analysed information, to provide the staff who are caring for young people with direction. Further strengthening of the care planning process could be achieved using a wider range of available information from agencies. Plans are constantly reviewed and adjusted, reflecting the changing needs of young people. As a result, staff provide effective care guided by excellent plans, overseen by the registered manager.

Young people's and their families' views are important and valued. The registered manager canvasses young people and their families using surveys and questionnaires. Additionally, individual key-working sessions have been developed to capture young people's views on the care that they receive. A number of communication systems, including pictures, Makaton and symbols, mean that young people communicate their ideas and views. The young people are supported by the services of an advocacy project and have regular access to social workers and other professionals who are independent of the service. The registered manager and staff provide young people and their families with the service guide, including information on the complaints process. The service has received no complaints from young people, their families or others, but all have access to a transparent and easily accessible complaints process.

The registered manager and staff understand that key points of transition for young people can be difficult. Those young people coming to the service for the first time, and likewise those leaving the service, receive thoughtful and meticulous planning and support. Periods of transition are successful, because they take place slowly and carefully. Young people are well prepared through establishing relationships with those caring for them, engaging in activities that are important to them and staff making extensive efforts to understand young people. Plans are adjusted and proceed at the young person's pace, so they do not hamper the young person's progress.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Safeguarding young people takes precedence at this service. Young people are kept safe by a knowledgeable and experienced team of staff who have undertaken extensive training and development in safeguarding young people. They have completed all the mandatory safeguarding training, together with training in understanding the risk to young people of exploitation and bullying, and in relation to the home's management of health and safety, including fire prevention and evacuation procedures. The registered manager promotes the safety of young people through safe recruitment of staff. Potential new staff members go through rigorous processes, including checking applicants' work history, taking and verifying references, and completing identity and criminal records checks. New staff benefit from a thorough induction process which includes structured programmes, and mentoring and supervision by experienced colleagues. Because of these robust processes, well-vetted and inducted staff members care for young people in a safe manner. Young people enjoy and benefit from receiving breaks in a safe and secure environment. The service is well equipped with soft play areas, a sensory room and communal areas, providing a good space for young people to relax in and enjoy. Rooms are decorated and equipped to cater for the specific needs of the young people staying in them. There is evidence of personalisation of the building by young people, with photos and artwork. The registered manager has recently completed a good and in-depth location risk assessment. This considers risks to young people from the surrounding community and environment. The assessment additionally supports the registered manager and staff when completing individual activity risk assessments. Consequently, young people enjoy this very comfortable and homely environment and are kept safe. Staff have a good, in-depth and extensive knowledge of the young people and their complex behaviours. The staff respond well to challenging behaviour that may place the young person and others at risk of harm. This has, at times, required staff to resort to the use of physical intervention to keep young people safe and reduce the potential for incidents to escalate. These interventions have been proportionate to the circumstances and carried out in line with authorised methods of intervention. Staff receive regular training in the use of physical restraint which prepares them well to manage difficult and potentially dangerous situations. Following interventions, the registered manager has not undertaken debriefing sessions with staff in a timely manner. They have not spoken to the young person involved or recorded this conversation. This means that the registered manager and staff cannot fully learn lessons from such incidents. The registered manager	

and staff work to avoid the need for physical intervention and promote positive behaviour through implementing positive behaviour support plans. When the behaviour of young people becomes unacceptable, staff will use, to good effect, restorative approaches to behaviour management, with young people making amends for poor behaviour. This approach, supported through discussion between the young person and staff members, helps to improve behaviour overall.

The registered manager understands what constitutes significant incidents of concern and responds robustly. The registered manager notifies Ofsted of significant incidents, and allegations against staff are dealt with quickly and in a decisive manner. There has been one allegation made against a staff member. The registered manager took appropriate action in line with the local safeguarding children board's procedures and kept the welfare of young people as her main priority.

Staff promote positive relationships between young people, and bullying is not accepted. The ratio of staff to young people is high and so young people are never alone, which helps to prevent bullying. Additionally, staff organise joint activities and match young people carefully to support the development of relationships. The registered manager and staff completed an anti-bullying audit of staff practice to be confident that they were taking all reasonable measures to prevent bullying. The staff have developed an anti-bullying charter. Staff and young people understand the charter, and this is the cornerstone of positive practice to prevent bullying while improving relationships.

The registered manager ensures that the medication administration system is robust and safe. All staff complete medication administration training. The storage and dispensing of medication is safe, with two staff administering medication. The manager oversees the system, with recording and checking taking place daily. This reduces the potential for errors to occur.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The registered manager is committed and dedicated to providing an exceptional service. She is an experienced childcare practitioner, and has worked at the service since 2002. She holds a suitable qualification in residential care leadership and management. She has been the registered manager since January 2016. She possesses an exceptional knowledge of caring for young people with physical and learning disabilities, and she has harnessed her skills and knowledge, transferring these to her new role as the registered manager. She has responded well to the recommendation set at the last inspection to ensure that individual risk assessments are completed when young people go swimming. The second recommendation was to ensure that staff sign and date all records. The registered	

manager has completed these successfully.

The registered manager ensures that staff receive regular, good-quality supervision that supports them to provide excellent care. Supervision is guided by an agenda that reviews the care provided to young people, appraises staff performance and identifies future actions to be completed. Staff have formal developmental reviews annually. These reviews identify key areas of strengths and areas for development. They recognise the efforts of staff in caring for young people. The registered manager has not yet developed a workforce development plan that would assist her in strategic workforce planning, going forward. The registered manager receives regular supervision and oversight of her work from a senior manager who is visible and supportive. This means that young people receive excellent care from staff, well supported by a strong and stable management team.

The registered manager recognises the importance of maintaining strong relationships with partner agencies. Partnership working in this service is exceptionally strong. There are regular meetings with other agencies regarding young people. The service develops joint training with other agencies to develop the skills and expertise of the staff, particularly in regard to young people with specific needs. Collaboration with agencies helps young people to make progress in all aspects of their lives, and one social worker stated, 'Communication is good, and they will always contact me.' These comments reflect feedback provided by other professionals that is positive regarding the registered manager's and staff's commitment to providing excellent services.

The registered manager monitors the quality of care provided by the service effectively. She takes a meticulous and systemic approach to monitoring quality. She has recently implemented a case file audit system with the aim of improving the quality of recording and ensuring that key information is assimilated into files. Young people's individual targets and achievements are monitored, together with objectives set by other agencies. She utilises to good effect the reports completed monthly by an independent visitor, and she consistently identifies patterns and trends that influence the progress of young people. This means that the service is responsive to young people's changing needs and develops practice to promote young people's welfare.

The registered manager prioritises the health and safety of young people, staff and visitors. She recently completed a thorough and in-depth audit that reviewed all the organisation's policies and processes. The home's risk assessments were fully reviewed, together with the essential equipment used by young people, for example hoists and other lifting equipment. Gas and electrical appliance testing is completed. The home's fire evacuation procedure is tested, and regular fire evacuation drills take place. All fire equipment is checked on a daily, weekly and monthly basis. This means that the registered manager exercises vigilance in ensuring that the environment is safe for young people and others.

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 looked after children 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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