

SC036240

Registered provider: Derby City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. One of the places is in a self-contained house, situated adjacent to the main building.

Inspection dates: 17 July 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 20 December 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- From their starting points, young people make positive progress in all areas of their lives.

- Staff and managers prepare young people well for their eventual move to independent living. They undertake detailed independence work with them and fully support their transitions from this home.
- Young people feel listened to and influence how the home is run. Their wishes, views and feelings are valued by staff and managers.
- Staff and managers support young people to try new things. They encourage them to take age-appropriate risks and to develop new interests and hobbies.
- Young people report feeling safe and that staff have a genuine interest in their welfare. Family members and involved agencies also report confidence in how staff and managers support young people to make progress.

The children's home's areas for development:

- There is a need for managers and staff to ensure that risk assessments for young people more clearly reflect areas of risk and actions to be taken.
- The manager needs to ensure that all relevant incidents and events are notified to Ofsted.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/12/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/07/2016	Full	Good
14/12/2015	Interim	Not judged
30/09/2015	Interim	Not judged

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- Ensure that Ofsted are notified if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)–(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Young people make positive progress in all areas of their lives during their time living in this home. Staff clearly care about young people and support them to achieve to the best of their abilities. Staff use imaginative practices to encourage young people to succeed. For example, creative use of incentives and rewards has led to significantly improved education attendance for one young person.

Young people feel well supported and feel that staff genuinely care about them. This is summed up by one young person, who said: 'They are good at listening and helping. They know when to give me space and when to give me time. They just know me. It feels a very safe place to live. I can tell the staff anything. I can trust them.'

Staff speak with real passion and commitment about each young person. They clearly know them well and want them to have positive experiences. Staff have supported young people to learn new skills. This includes each young person having their own vegetable plot in the garden. Young people have grown their own choice of vegetables this year. One of the young people is particularly talented artistically. Her artwork is on prominent display around the home. Such achievements reflect how settled young people feel. They form positive attachments to staff and make good progress. They grow in confidence and self-esteem.

A key strength of the staff team is in how well it prepares young people for their eventual move to independence. Staff have supported one young person, who is preparing to leave, to decorate and furnish their new home. Staff will continue to provide outreach support to the young person after he has moved out of this home. Staff fully understand how stressful such moves can be and want to make sure that young people can turn to them for ongoing support and advice. This promotes positive transitions.

Staff support young people to take age-appropriate risks. For one young person, this has involved learning how to use public transport to visit family and go to the local library. Staff and managers want young people to be well prepared for the outside world. As the registered manager states: 'We cannot wrap them up in cotton wool forever, but need to support them to learn how to do things which will help them as young adults.'

Staff ensure that young people have their health needs met well. Young people feel supported to consider and meet their own general health needs, as well as being provided with more specialist support if necessary. Records reflect how staff support young people to attend routine health appointments.

Each young person has a placement plan, which they fully contribute to. They work with staff to set meaningful targets. Young people are rewarded for meeting their agreed targets and goals. This assists them to make progress over time. One young person said: 'Living here is far better than I thought it would be. I have learned how to use a washing machine.'

Education is promoted well by the staff team. Other professionals are consistently positive about the progress made by young people in this area. Staff work closely and proactively with education colleagues to promote educational attainment. An independent reviewing officer for one young person stated: 'The young person has made good progress educationally. He was not going to school before. Staff worked well with education to get him back into school. He now attends and staff push him to do better.'

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff and managers know and understand the complex needs of each young person well. They work with young people, family members and involved agencies to reduce risks and concerns over time. Young people report feeling safe and that staff genuinely care about their welfare.

For those young people who go missing, staff follow procedures and protocols diligently. One young person stated: 'It feels a safe place to live. The staff make me feel safe. When I am away, they are phoning me 24/7. That's because they care.' Young people report being made to feel welcome when they return. Over time, they begin to open up more to staff and discuss their feelings. This enables them to begin to make safer and less risky decisions about their lives.

Young people stated that the rules in the home are fair. A worker from a local sexual exploitation project praised the staff and managers for the support they provide young people. They stated: 'The staff do everything they can to keep young people safe. They go looking for them and have strategies in place to prevent them from going missing. For example, lots of positive activities to divert them.'

Young people also stated that any concerns they may have about bullying are dealt with quickly by staff and managers. One said: 'They do not tolerate any bullying. This is a house rule.'

Young people respond well to the clear boundaries put in place for them. They appreciate the rules and understand the reasons for them. The use of physical restraint is minimal. This reflects the skills of staff in supporting young people to manage their own emotions.

A range of risk assessments are in place for each young person. Staff review and update them following any significant incidents. Records presented as somewhat confusing in relation to areas of risk, and what actions staff should take to reduce risks. It is not always clear what updates or changes have been made to individual risk assessments. A recommendation has been made to address this shortfall.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is experienced, skilled and highly thought of by her staff team. She has high expectations of all young people and staff. She demonstrates a detailed understanding of the progress made by young people in her care.

She speaks with passion about the young people and how staff meet their complex needs. Involved agencies and professionals also see her as a strong and effective manager. Comments about the manager and staff include: 'The key strength of the home is consistent, supportive, experienced staff. There is nothing they do not do well and the manager is awesome.'

Staff and managers are able to describe the progress made by each young person. They celebrate any and all successes made, no matter how small. They consider what works well and will make changes if they feel that a young person is not making progress. Involved agencies report that staff have very positive relationships with the young people and handle their difficulties really well.

Staff and managers ensure that family members and involved agencies feel very much part of the plans to support young people. They keep others informed of progress or issues and attend all relevant meetings. They act as strong and positive advocates and role models for young people.

The statement of purpose for the home is clear and detailed. Staff and managers work to ensure that they meet the aims and objectives set within it. The manager has a detailed development plan in place to reflect the current and future goals for the home. Managers monitor all aspects of the home on a regular basis. As a result, they have plans to address any shortfalls or areas for improvement.

Staff receive regular, good-quality supervision. They have a range of training and development opportunities. Managers ensure that the staff team has the necessary skills and competencies to support young people. Staff speak very positively of the managers in this home. They feel enabled and valued at all times.

A recent serious incident in which a young person presented at hospital following an

alleged assault was not notified to Ofsted. A further incident of a young person going missing from care for a prolonged period, with police involvement, was also not notified to Ofsted. Staff and managers took all necessary action to support the young people and followed all necessary procedures. The failure to notify Ofsted prevents the regulator from having oversight of all relevant incidents.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC036240

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Treasurers Department, Council House, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FE

Responsible individual: Sharon Green

Registered manager: Patricia Topliss

Inspectors

Tracy Murty, social care inspector

Rachel Griffiths, social care inspector

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