

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	13/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC039038
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Ranjit Bains
Inspector	Joanne Vyas

Inspection date	13/12/2016
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 exceeds 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	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC039038

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- This home has a child-focussed pedagogical ethos that is embedded throughout all practice. It is a warm and friendly family-like home where children and young people are challenged to learn new skills and extend their knowledge and experiences.
- Children and young people make exceptional progress in all aspects of their life. They are happy and thrive.
- Staff continually strive to improve the way they communicate with children and young people. They provide excellent opportunities for children and young people to contribute towards their care planning and the running of the home.
- Staff work in partnership with external professionals and parents really well.
- Creative and innovative practice helps to keep children and young people safe.
- The registered manager provides strong, supportive and inclusive leadership. The highly effective management team continually strive to improve the service. They have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the service and have robust plans to address any shortfalls.
- Staff are qualified, highly experienced and motivated to provide a high standard of care and support to children and young people.
- Two minor shortfalls were identified with regards to the garden and routine restriction of communal areas at night time.

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):

- Just as in a family home, children should be able to access all shared areas of their home unless there are specific reasons why this would not meet a child's needs. Limits on privacy and access may only be put in place to safeguard each child in the home. Any decisions to limit a child's access to any area of the home must only be made where this is intended to safeguard the child's welfare. All decisions should be informed by a rigorous assessment of that individual child's needs, be properly recorded and be kept under regular review. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.10)
- Homes must also meet children's basic day to day needs and physical necessities by ensuring the garden is well maintained to meet the needs of the children accommodated. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.7)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a local authority and registered to provide care to seven children and young people who have learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/07/2015	Full	Outstanding
24/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
12/11/2014	Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Staff embrace a pedagogical approach to caring for children and young people, which sees them very much as living in a family home. Staff form very caring and supportive relationships with children and young people but also challenge them to learn new skills and extend their knowledge and experiences. A young person said: 'I do like living here. It's good.' Children and young people make significant progress with their health, behaviour, education, independence and social skills. For example, a child who was a wheelchair user before moving to the home, now walks everywhere, even in the community. A social worker said: 'He is thriving at this home. He was on a restricted diet but now eats a range of food.' Children and young people have excellent attendance at their schools. One young person attends a local school and often walks there. A social worker said that since living at this home a young person, 'has excellent attendance at school, who have stated that he is more willing to participate in class activities and isolates himself less and he manages transitions better.' Staff work closely with school staff to ensure a consistent approach for children and young people. Careful targeted intervention has ensured one young person is able to get on and off transport to and from school much quicker and therefore, ensure she has less time feeling distressed and more time in the classroom or at home. Staff attend all meetings, such as planning meetings, but also ensure a number of staff go to children's school productions. For example, staff have just enjoyed watching one child's school Christmas nativity play. The physical and emotional health of children and young people is highly promoted. Staff have strong links with healthcare professionals, including mental health services. A mental health worker regularly visits the home to help the children and young people to get to know her before she carries out any therapeutic work. She also provides training for staff in therapeutic approaches. This helps staff to have a good understanding of the emotional health needs of the children and young people. Children and young people with complex health conditions such as epilepsy, diabetes and pica are looked after by well trained staff who carefully monitor and report on these conditions to healthcare professionals. Medication is safely managed and reviewed regularly to ensure children and young people are not having medication they no longer need. Staff know and understand the children and young people very well. They have warm and nurturing relationships with them. A young person said: 'The staff look	

after me. They're kind, sweet and respectful.' Staff value the views, wishes and feelings of children and young people. They actively seek to communicate with them. Communication is always under review with staff challenging themselves to have an improved understanding of how the children and young people communicate. An interactive and sensory screen has recently been purchased to aid communication. Staff regularly practice signing and ensuring they know what signs individual young people know. Staff consult with children and young people at every opportunity offering choices and supporting them to make decisions. A member of staff said: 'Young people's meetings are lively, innovative and the young people all participate. We talk to the young people every day about issues they have and encourage choices at every turn.' A recent young people's meeting took place at the local park where they danced to Bollywood music!

Children and young people benefit from positive contact with their parents, siblings and friends. Staff work hard to build positive relationships with parents and support them to see their child. Where contact arrangements are supervised, staff go out of their way to make this a positive experience for both the child and the family. For one parent, staff support the child in a seaside caravan with the parent to enable the parent to have overnight contact with his son. He said: 'I have been to the caravan - it was brilliant!' Staff helped a young person to rekindle a lost friendship and now facilitate outings together. A social worker said: 'They always go above and beyond with contact arrangements.'

Children and young people are supported to follow their religious and cultural needs. A young person said: 'I get to pray. The Muslim staff help me to pray. I go to Islamic classes every Thursday and Friday.' Staff sourced an appropriate venue for this young person, and funded their attendance from the home's budget. Children and young people have experiences of a range of cultures for example, they travelled to Birmingham to the German market where they sampled German cuisine and then had a meal in China Town. They have also been to an American theme park in Paris.

Children and young people enjoy a range of activities from holidays abroad and in this country to swimming, walks, and arts and crafts. A parent said, when asked about their child engaging in activities, 'Of course he does, he has a better social life than I do.' During the inspection, children and young people were treated to Santa and his helpers coming to the home to give them presents. They thoroughly enjoyed this experience and Santa got them exactly what they wanted. This had clearly been well planned with staff who know what the children and young people enjoy the most.

Children and young people make significant progress with learning new independent living skills, including personal hygiene. They learn skills such as eating and drinking independently, using the toilet, travelling on public transport and shopping. A member of staff said: 'When teaching a child or young person independence skills we take into account their age and understanding to see

whether they are able and ready to take that next step.'

Staff make the environment as homely as possible. It is well maintained and clean. Christmas decorations adorn the rooms and a lovely Christmas tree stands in the lounge that one of the children chose. A social worker said: 'They do emulate a family setting.' A parent said of the home that it is: 'Homely, warm, welcoming.' Children and young people have highly personalised ensuite bedrooms. Some of the older young people are enjoying new double beds and as a result are settling much quicker than before.

In the garden are large sheds housing a sensory suite and a ball pool. These areas and the garden are looking a little neglected. The registered manager said that funding has been agreed for these areas to be more child-friendly. Currently communal areas downstairs are routinely locked overnight to ensure the safety of the children and young people. This practice is not risk assessed or reviewed for some time. Recommendations have been made to address these two issues.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Creative and innovative practice that is often research-based supports children and young people to learn to regulate their behaviour better. For example, transport staff were struggling with one young person to and from school. These staff were invited into the home to receive training about how to meet the needs of the young person. This has meant a much safer and calmer trip to and from school. A social worker said: 'There has been significant improvement in all aspects of his life, for example he is much more settled now. Much calmer and fewer incidents of physical intervention. This has also been the same at his school. He manages transitions much better than he's ever done before. Previous to moving to this home his behaviour was so much more challenging on a daily basis.' Children and young people are encouraged and supported to take carefully managed risks that provide them with good opportunities and experiences as well as increasing confidence and resilience. For example, a child enjoys going out into the community with a member of staff for bike rides. He wears all the safety gear and has travelled some distances. Furthermore, a young person who has regular epileptic seizures is taken swimming as he loves to be in the water. Staff can only take children and young people swimming if they have had a competency assessment in the pool to ensure they are strong swimmers and can bring a child back to the pool edge if required. Furthermore, all children and young people who go in the pool have one to one support from staff.	

Staff have a good understanding of the home's safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures. These are appropriately implemented. Children and young people are safer as a result. They do not go missing from this home. However, staff receive training in this area so would be competent in managing a situation where a child went missing. A member of staff said: 'If any child or young person goes missing or is at risk of child sexual exploitation then I would be confident that the home will respond appropriately to the situation and quickly to make sure that the safety of the child or young person is the highest priority.' Young people are made aware of stranger danger and safe sex, where appropriate, and other issues that may affect them.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding
The registered manager is very experienced and appropriately qualified. He and his assistant managers provide strong and supportive leadership. They are a highly effective team who have a strong understanding of the strengths and needs of the service. They have a robust development plan to address shortfalls and move the service forward. They have a very good understanding of recent research and reports about social care and strive to put this into practice where relevant. They provide a child-focussed service that seeks to provide the best possible care for children and young people to ensure they have the best life chances. A social worker said: 'They are always striving forward and thinking about trying to improve things for him and working in partnership with myself and dad.' Staff are qualified, passionate, committed and highly motivated to provide children and young people with a family life where they are able to relax and thrive. A social worker said: 'All the keyworkers are very passionate about the children.' Staff work consistently with all the children and young people. A member of staff said: 'Everyone feels they are part of the team.' Staff feel very well supported by each other and the management team, with one staff member saying: 'My line manager has been so supportive and shows belief in me. They have given me room to develop my skills.' Staff meetings and supervision sessions are not only supportive but also help to develop staff. A member of staff said: 'We have team meetings and supervisions where we are encouraged to freely speak about the needs of the young people, with healthy agreements and disagreements.' Staff receive a good range of training that supports them to meet the health and wellbeing needs of the children and young people effectively. Staff work in partnership with other agencies and parents well, where this is appropriate and possible. They facilitate coffee mornings to help parents feel welcome and keep them up to date about their child. Parents feel valued and	

listened to. A parent said: 'Staff always listen to me.' External professionals attend regular progress meetings for each child. This ensures planning and strategies are carefully explored, agreed and monitored, ensuring a multi-agency approach which results in improved outcomes for children and young people.

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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