

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	28/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC039676
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Susan Sewell
Inspector	Charlie Bamber

Inspection date	28/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection This home was judged outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Young people at this home benefit from a stable and well-qualified team of staff who know them well and can meet their needs to a high standard. Young people are supported to progress and develop during their short breaks. They are helped to undertake simple tasks and learn to be more independent, for example by taking their own plate from the table or brushing their teeth. Achievable targets are set for them and they are rewarded when they reach their goals. The use of individualised certificates lets young people know that their good behaviour is noticed, and they take copies of these home to show their parents. Each young person has a 'journey file' showing their progression from the start of their placement in photographic form. Young people have access to a wide range of activities. The home makes use of the on-site well-equipped school playground and adjacent field to ensure that young people can be active. They also go further afield on trips, for example to ice-hockey matches and the theatre. Because of the skills and experience of the staff, young people have opportunities to engage in activities that they would not always otherwise be able to. Although the home is a large and ageing prefabricated building which does not lend itself to personalisation, staff have made every effort to make the communal spaces warm and inviting. Young people's photographs and certificates are on display, as well as some lovely, colourful artwork that they have helped to create. Each young person has their picture on their bedroom door when they attend for a short break. One young person has been discharged since the last full inspection due to becoming an adult. The home worked in partnership with transition and adult services to ensure a smooth transition to adult provision. This includes transition workers visiting the home to gather information about and observe young people in order to inform plans. The home has developed transition passports for young people to help to share useful information about the young person's personal care and preferences.	

One young person has been admitted to the home. Managers at the home can confidently articulate the matching process and explain how young people are assessed to identify whether the home can meet their needs. No written record is kept of the matching information considered, nor of an impact assessment of the young person and the other young people whom they may be placed with. This is identified as an area in which the home could improve practice.

Young people have high levels of supervision and there are clear plans in place about how to keep young people safe and how to best manage their behaviour. Very few safeguarding incidents take place. There have been no missing from home incidents, no physical interventions and no complaints made since the last inspection. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, the home works well with social workers to support child protection enquiries, for example by accompanying a young person to the hospital for a medical examination. An individualised evacuation plan is completed each night to ensure that all young people would be evacuated in the event of the fire. This is specific to the young people resident on any one night and the staff on shift, and it clearly identifies each member of staff's role. This is highlighted as a particular safeguarding strength of the home.

Some young people have highly complex behaviours, and staff are skilled in understanding and communicating with young people in order to ensure that they are settled and to manage any challenging behaviour. Staff are resilient in dealing with challenging behaviour, and concentrate on de-escalation techniques rather than resorting to physical intervention. The service is responsive to young people's needs and is adaptable to ensure that all young people are kept safe. One example is an additional male member of staff coming on shift at very short notice due to a young person being in crisis.

Some young people accessing short breaks at the home have complex medication regimes. Although staff have attended training in administering medication, there have been two errors in the dose administered to young people. This issue had been addressed by the time of the inspection but, due to its serious nature and the lack of recorded information about one incident, a requirement is made. A new procedure is now in place and has been cascaded to staff via a team meeting.

The home makes good use of monitoring systems. External monitoring takes place monthly, with feedback and reports that are considered helpful by managers in maintaining high standards. Some elements of internal monitoring are delegated to the assistant manager who has, for example, a detailed tracking system in place to ensure that all staff have completed mandatory training and to identify when refresher training is due.

A recommendation was made at the last inspection in respect of supervision of staff. Staff spoken to at this inspection reported good levels of satisfaction with the frequency and quality of supervision. The supervision matrix confirms that most staff have had two supervision sessions since the last inspection, and all have had at least one. Additionally, they reported that managers were available at the home

for informal supervision when required.

Managers frequently come to the home early to work alongside care staff, getting children up and ready for school, and also stay late some evenings to assist with young people's evening routines. This ensures that the manager has oversight of the welfare of the young people and enables management oversight of staff provision of care. The home is in regular communication with young people's families through a booklet giving feedback about the young person's stay which can also be used as a message book by parents, ensuring two-way communication.

Information about this children's home

This is a short-break children's home operated by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to 10 young people who may have physical and/or learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

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

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
The registered person must ensure that medicine which is prescribed for a child is administered as prescribed to the child for whom it is prescribed and a record is kept of administration of medication to each child. (Regulation 23(2)(b)(c))	28/04/2017

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should only accept placements for children where they are satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the child's assessed needs as recorded in the child's relevant plans and where they have fully considered the impact that the placement will have on the existing group of children. The Statement of Purpose is an important document in the process of care planning as it sets out the needs of children the home is set up and equipped to care for. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 56, paragraph 11.4)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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