

SC040191

Registered provider: Break

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a registered charity. The home provides long-term placements for up to four children who have traumatic backgrounds and may have experienced neglect and/or emotional abuse.

The manager of the home was registered in October 2016.

Inspection dates: 30 September to 1 October 2019

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: 11 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2018	Full	Good
04/12/2017	Full	Good
21/03/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/11/2016	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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 leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	30/11/2019
The registered person must ensure that all employees— have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(c))	13/12/2019

Recommendations

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. Where there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day to day basis. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)
- Children must feel safe and be safe. Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. Staff should help children to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)

In particular, this relates to clear use of the internet and following the home's policy.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children are making very good progress at the home. The manager gives careful consideration to new admissions. This supports a settled and stable home.

The staff provide a high level of care which meets the children's individual needs very well. One parent described the change in the child since he has been at the home as 'amazing'.

The manager and the staff help the children to have a positive experience of moving into and out of the home. The admission planning for one child's move was detailed and well thought through. This has helped him to settle into the home well. The staff supported another child to successfully move back to his family.

Children make educational progress because of the support that they get from the staff. For some children, the progress is small, but given their starting points this is significant. Other children make dramatic progress. A senior member of staff from a child's school said that the child was doing 'absolutely brilliantly'.

The manager and the staff help the children to improve their physical and emotional health. One child has made notable progress in his emotional health. His independent reviewing officer recorded 'just how much [the child] has benefited from a safe, structured and contained home environment'.

The home is well decorated and furnished. It is a nice, homely environment. A vegetable patch encourages the children to eat vegetables. The bordering flower beds include sunflowers and pumpkins that the children will decorate for Halloween.

The staff help the children to keep in touch with their families and friends. This sustains good relationships, if this is what the children and their families want. This helps the children to maintain their family identity and have enjoyable times with the people who are important to them.

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

The staff team ensures that the children are safe. One child said that they feel safe. The staff very rarely use physical intervention to manage the children's behaviour. Children do not go missing from the home.

The staff and the children have benefited from specialist conflict management training. This is an area that is managed very well. A youth offending team worker said that one child had 'very much settled down' since moving to the home. They described a real change in the child's behaviour and said that the staff had supported the child's engagement with the youth offending team.

The staff help the children to take appropriate risks. This gives them opportunities to have similar experiences to other children, and to learn to keep themselves safe. For one child, this has involved using public transport and spending time in the community with his friends. This indicates progress for this child and will help with his planned return home to his family.

The staff address potential bullying concerns clearly and effectively. This helps the children to feel safe and relaxed at the home.

The staff have a sound knowledge of the risks to the children and how they can be managed. However, the records can fail to include up-to-date information. One review referred to a concern about a child taking drugs into school, but this has not been incorporated in his risk assessment. Although there is no other evidence that this is an issue for the child, the lack of response limits the effectiveness of the system.

Children have access to the internet, which helps them to have the same experiences as their peers. There is a policy on using the internet, but this policy is not followed in practice. There is no evidence that the children are using the internet unsafely. However, a lack of clarity regarding children's internet use and the related expectations and safeguards could lead to potential internet risks.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager provides strong leadership and management. This support and guidance is appreciated by the staff team. The manager and the staff are appropriately experienced and qualified. This helps to make sure that the children are cared for by competent people.

The manager and senior staff provide regular and effective supervision for the staff. They identify areas of concern or development areas and follow these through. The annual staff appraisals do not routinely take place. One is eight months overdue. This delay prevents the regular oversight and review of the ongoing capability of staff.

The manager and the staff work very well with the children's parents and their supporting professionals. This collaborative approach makes sure that the children's needs are met and that they receive consistent care. A youth offending worker, a senior member of school staff and a parent all spoke about how good this is.

The staff help the children to understand about equality and to respect other people irrespective of their backgrounds or gender. This helps the children to learn how to live in the community and get on with others.

The registered manager and the staff encourage children to take an active role in the home. Children take part in the staff recruitment process. One child showed potential new staff around the home and asked them his own questions.

The registered manager has addressed the issues identified at the previous inspection to help the service improve. This included some improvements to record-keeping. Despite this, some records have not been regularly reviewed and others lack detail. This has not been identified by the managerial monitoring and does not provide clear information for children if they wish to see their records.

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 differences 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: SC040191

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

Registered provider address: Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Annriette Mynhardt

Registered manager: Lee Roberts

Inspector

Clive Lucas, social care inspector

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