

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC040491
Inspector	Paula Lahey
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Cornwall Council
Registered person address	County Hall TRURO Cornwall TR1 3AY

Responsible individual	Katherine Margaret Brown
Registered manager	Deborah Kate Moses
Date of last inspection	22/05/2014

Inspection date	05/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

Since the previous inspection in May 2014 the effectiveness of this home has improved. This is due to attention taken by the management and staff team to develop the service provided to children and young people.

The requirement and three recommendations raised previously have been fully met. Despite an initial slow start, the home is now regularly inspected by a suitably experienced independent visitor. The impact of the independent visitor's monitoring is positive. Good attention is given by the visitor to consulting with children and young people, their families and external stakeholders. As such, she is developing a sound understanding of the views of these people about their experiences with the home. The independent visitor's written reports demonstrate the feedback gained so far is very positive. One professional who was consulted said, 'this home encourages the child to do lots of things for herself that the parent is unable to do, such as shower and wash and dry her own hair'. Parents feedback includes: 'I would give this home 10 stars, my child seems to love it there, he is always happy to go' and, 'this home is brilliant my child loves it, she has lots of routines and the staff are great, they manage her really well'.

During the inspection, children and young people were very positive about their visit to the home. There were lots of smiles, 'thumbs up' and comments about how much they liked visiting the home. It was evident that staff and the young people get on well together and relationships were positive. Staff use alternative communication aids to good effect, resulting in children and young people confidently expressing their views and choices. Staff try hard to communicate with children and young people to find out what they like and how their visits can be improved. As a result of one young person's feedback activities for her next visit were amended. As such, she enjoyed a positive visit with a support dog.

Children and young people benefit from the stability now provided by the staff team. Since the previous inspection a new group of permanent staff have been appointed. This has resulted in a notable reduction in the use of agency staff. The new staff team have been provided with a good induction, training and support. As such, they are confident in their new role and are properly supported to care for the young people.

The Registered Manager and/or deputy now make certain that references for new staff are verified. In addition, safer recruitment checks are now always sought for agency staff. This means the team have a better understanding of the vetting of staff who they employ to care for children and young people. This in turn, improves safeguards for children and young people.

Children and young people are now supported by staff who have the necessary skills and training to meet their needs. Since the previous inspection staff have undertaken training in epilepsy, safe handling of medication, manual handling, behaviour management and autism awareness. Staff understand children and young people's individual needs and this training helps them to develop necessary skills to support these needs.

The children and young people have been involved in helping to redecorate the home. They have helped to choose paint colours and have chosen their own bedding and curtains for the bedrooms. New games and toys have been purchased and provide young people with a wide range of sensory activities for them to enjoy during their stay. Young people have also continued to enjoy activities in the local community. All activities provided to children and young people are purposefully planned. Staff use these activities to help develop young people's communication, social, safety and life skills. Children and young people have particularly enjoyed visiting local shops to purchase items for the evening meals. It is evident from records that young people's outcomes have developed because of these positive opportunities.

There has been good learning and changing of practice in response to a recent medication error. Senior managers properly investigate incidents and effective action is taken to improve practice. The team is currently undergoing a formal review of the medication systems by a suitable experienced and qualified health professional. The deputy manager is responding promptly to the recommendations raised and is currently producing a comprehensive list of medications that are commonly used in the home. This will enable staff to have a better understanding of the medications the children and young people take and any contra indications.

The team notifies authorities, families and external professionals of significant incidents that occur in the home. However, informing Ofsted of such incidents is reliant on the Registered Manager's availability. This means that on two occasions since the previous inspection, notifications have not been made to Ofsted 'without delay'.

Managers have undertaken a risk assessment of the locality of the home. Some consideration about the local area crime statistics and liaison with the local police team has taken place. Attempts to consult with the local exploitation and/or missing from home teams have not yet resulted in feedback to assist the managers to consider these issues within the overall risk assessment.

Information about this children's home

The home is operated by a local authority and provides short-break care for up to six children and young people with a learning disability or a combined learning and physical disability. The home operates for five nights each week, spanning Wednesday through to Monday morning, with a maximum of six places per night.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/05/2014	Full	good
02/10/2013	Interim	inadequate progress
04/04/2013	Full	good
27/09/2012	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
31 (2001)	ensure that when conducting a review of the location of the children's home, the registered person shall consult, and take into account the views of, such local bodies or persons considered appropriate. (Regulation 31 (1B))	01/05/2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that there is a system in place to notify within 24 hours the persons and appropriate authorities of the occurrence of significant events in

accordance with Regulation 30. The system includes ensuring notifications can still be made when the Registered Manager is not on duty. (NMS 24.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.