

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	07/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC040631
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Terence Brooks
Inspector	Kevin Whatley

Inspection date	07/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness. The Registered Manager and his management team have taken actions and addressed the previous requirement and recommendation. Staff follow agreed protocols when young people leave the home without permission. Of the few incidents that have taken place staff were vigilant, actively looked for young people and reported them to police when required. A new process for assessing and monitoring emotional well-being helps young people to consider their own starting points. This enables them to score themselves on different perceptions such as what young people see as personal achievement. This reflective approach allows staff to work alongside young people in determining insight and self-evaluation. This creative initiative will need more time before its full impact can be determined. Young people live in a home that has seen improvements made to the environment. New bathrooms and showers provide them with significantly better facilities that are modern and homely. Most areas are benefitting from redecoration with new light fittings enhancing the décor. A young person said, 'I love the lights...it feels much nicer now.' A vast majority of young people continue to make good progress. They benefit from adults who understand their needs and provide appropriate boundaries, routines and nurture. This has enabled them to reduce their challenging behaviours, learn better coping mechanisms and talk openly to staff when they feel stressed, angry or frustrated. With seven or more young people living together there are inevitable clashes of personality. Staff are very aware of the group dynamics and work very hard to bring young people together following periods of disagreement or conflict. This helps to resolve differences and encourage young people to live with tolerance of others. As a consequence the home enjoys a predominantly settled atmosphere. On occasion a few young people have struggled to continue the progress they have made and revert to dealing with their feelings in negative ways, for example by self-harming. Staff are skilled at working with such behaviours and provide constant reassurance that they are always there for young people. Some instances	

of self-harm have led to young people needing to attend hospital. The home ensure all agencies are engaged to offer joint packages of care and intervention, including mental health and educational services. This results in cohesive strategies being adopted that take account of the holistic needs of young people.

Most young people are stable in their placements. This has helped them to engage well in their learning, education and employment. A number of young people have obtained and sustained part time employment in the local community. This has allowed one young person to pursue her career in hair and beauty, develop skills and improve their self-esteem and employability. As a result she has been accepted on an apprenticeship once her statutory education finishes in the summer. This is an excellent development and one which highlights the support young people receive to embrace learning and lead productive lives.

Young people speak positively of their experiences. Comments including, 'staff are brilliant' and 'the adults are the best thing' were typical of their views. A social worker noted, 'staff are doing a great job...they have a great commitment to young people...when needed extra resources are put in place to help (name of young person) to stay safe.' The atmosphere is one of a homely feel within an environment offering a suitable balance between structure, supervision and choice.

Young people say they feel safe within an environment where their well-being is of paramount concern. A robust safeguarding approach ensures the swift identification and referral of concerns. This includes closely liaising with local police and safeguarding teams. Staff know young people well and recognise changes in their behaviour, attitudes or mood. The skills of the staff team ensure a sensitive and cohesive approach prevails where young people improve their ability to stay safe and make progress in recognising their own vulnerabilities. This means young people who were vulnerable to exploitation have significantly reduced their risk. The same young people are able to reflect on their progress, one said, 'I have grown up here and no longer need to do the things I used to.'

The home promotes an ethos of learning and with a strong emphasis on education. All young people maintain high levels of attendance in their schools with a number doing particularly well in their development. Daily routines revolve around supporting and engaging young people in their learning. Young people were positive about their education and clearly see this as important.

The Registered Manager runs the home with efficiency and a focus on placing young people first. He leads a stable team of motivated and committed staff who ensure young people have their specific and complex needs met to high standards. Staff speak positively of the support they receive and, while acknowledging the challenges of working with complex young people, display enthusiasm and care for the work they do. The energy, focus and skills of staff allow young people continued opportunities to explore their difficult issues in a safe and supportive way. This results in a home where young people build meaningful relationships and use them effectively to become safer.

Information about this children's home

This home is run and managed by the local authority. The home offers care and accommodation for up to eight young people who have emotional and, or behavioural issues.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
23/11/2015	CH - Full	Good
20/02/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
13/08/2014	CH - Full	Good
11/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress

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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