

Children's homes – interim inspection

Inspection date	21/07/2016
Unique reference number	SC040633
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Sharon Newton
Inspector	Maire Atherton

Inspection date	21/07/2016
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 continue to benefit from excellent nurturing care given genuinely, sensitively and enthusiastically by a stable and consistent staff team. They successfully promote the safety and well-being of young people. They are attuned to and purposefully address the individual needs, vulnerabilities and achievable wishes of each. As a result, young people remain happy and settled in the home even during transition times. There have been no changes to the group of young people living in the home since the last inspection. Staff are aware of the impact of all transitions and are creative in how they prepare young people for and support them through these, using transitional objects for example. This includes the smaller changes, such as in day-to-day routines and at the end of a school term, as well as watershed events, for example leaving school, planning for college and thinking about moving to the next placement. The staff team members are attentive and skilled practitioners, engaging very successfully with young people to effect positive change. All staff in post for more than two years have gained an appropriate qualification and are supported to continue their professional development. For example, since the last inspection, four staff have completed training in the use of play as therapy for individuals and groups. Staff have embraced the principles of restorative justice. Through consistent application of these principles, young people are developing a sound understanding of the impact of any negative behaviour. One young person said of restorative justice, 'It helps you work towards making it better.' Since the last inspection, the team has developed a new approach to 'achievements and recognition'. The emphasis is on rewards to celebrate achievements rather than using them as an incentive. Staff are working with young people on expanding their understanding of rewards, for example in not seeing them simply as tangible objects. As a result, staff rarely impose sanctions, although two recently given were not recorded comprehensively. In response to a recommendation from the last inspection, any significant incident is brought to the next staff meeting for discussion and evaluation. Physical intervention is also used infrequently. Young people report	

that staff use it to keep them and others safe and not for any other reason. Specific risk assessments in relation to physical intervention are detailed and are now signed off by the behaviour management trainer to indicate the preferred authorised hold to be used with an individual.

Young people feel safe in the home. Staff are vigilant and are alert to safeguarding concerns. They take action to minimise risks to young people while enabling young people to learn how to keep themselves safe. There have been no instances of a young person going missing, but young people know what staff would do if this were to happen. Young people understand that bullying is not acceptable. One said, 'If there is any staff tackle it well, they quickly move to sort it out.' One young person talked about a 'trusting relationship' with staff. Contracts between individual young people and the staff support the safe use of the internet and social media. One young person outlined a process in which, by agreement, staff do random checks on the young people's devices. If they are concerned about any content, they talk to the young person. If it is a safeguarding issue, young people know that the concerns would be shared with other professionals and action taken; for example, the device might be taken away. The young person said, 'It can be earned back by demonstrating you understand the risks and have learned from it.'

Young people have a voice in the home and feel listened to. Since the last inspection, the management has ensured that each young person has been matched with an independent visitor, which is a significant achievement. Young people are actively involved in developing their placement plans. The format of these has changed. One seen gave a comprehensive picture of not only the young person's needs and how these should be met, but also the hopes, dreams and aspirations of that young person. However, another did not reflect the plan as outlined by the young person and the manager or give a sense of how the young person had contributed to the written plan.

Consistent staffing of the home has been achieved by a dedicated team working additional hours to cover any shortfalls. There have been some new bank staff employed and interviews are planned to recruit to two vacant posts.

The management team has established and implemented excellent internal monitoring systems. The quality of the manager's evaluation is very strong and is used to inform the development plan for the home. This is a live document and is updated regularly. In the light of the one requirement in the last report, the independent visitor's report includes more evaluation. The manager is actively involved in the further development of this so that it provides rigorous challenge to drive continual improvement. There have been no complaints since the last inspection.

The excellent partnership working with professionals continues. Three survey responses from professionals received by Ofsted were highly complimentary. Staff have invited a range of professionals to come to the home to talk to young people about their jobs, what they do and why they do it. Young people have really

engaged in this. This has included a dental professional and a police constable. The engagement of one young person in this enabled a subsequent specific individual conversation with the constable on the possible consequences of aggressive behaviour and ways of managing this. One of the management team liaised with a health professional to ensure that the preferred hold indicated in a young person's behaviour management plan was compatible with their health needs.

Information about this children's home

- This home is owned and managed by a local authority. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2016	Full	Outstanding
26/11/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
15/01/2015	Full	Outstanding

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— within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes— - the name of the child; - details of the child's behaviour leading to the use of the measure; - the date, time and location of the use of the measure; - a description of the measure and its duration; - details of any methods used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure; - the name of the person who used the measure ('the user'), and of any other person present when the measure was used; - the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure; and - a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure; within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')— - has spoken to the user about the measure; and - has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within five days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3) (a)(b)(c))	31 August 2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that all individual placement plans demonstrate the principle of listening to the child and taking their views, wishes and feelings into account when planning and undertaking their care ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards' page 21, paragraph 4.5).

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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