

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	17/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC042994
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Theresa Clarke
Inspector	Tracy Murty

Inspection date	17/02/2017
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 judges that it has sustained effectiveness. Children and young people continue to have positive experiences during their short-break stays at this home. They enjoy a wide range of social activities and opportunities, some of which they may not be able to experience at their own home. Staff display a commendable commitment to their roles and in making each stay as enjoyable as possible. Staff constantly strive to think of ways to make the stay for each child positive and enjoyable. An example of this relates to one member of staff researching light boxes and sourcing materials for use in the home. Children and young people have used this inexpensive piece of equipment regularly and photos seen during this inspection clearly show the enjoyment that they gain from it. This reflects a staff team that demonstrates resourcefulness and a keenness to ensure that children and young people have a wide range of fun experiences. Some staff have also been involved in revising the parent information pack. This provides useful information for parents and carers when children and young people start using the service. The children's guide has been updated and is very child-friendly. There are plans for a DVD guide to be produced as well. Staff have also devised a bullying guide, which will be included in the pack. Staff have often undertaken such pieces of work outside of their contracted hours. This again reflects their commitment to their roles and in supporting families. The home has recently undergone some major repair works. This required the home to close for a number of weeks to allow contractors full access to the building. The works have now been completed to a high standard. The home presents as well-furnished and decorated and presents a welcoming and safe environment for children and young people. Some staff have recently completed training in social pedagogy. Research-informed methods of working with children and young people who have disabilities has now commenced in the home. This is a positive development and reflects a learning ethos within the management and staff team. Staff set clear targets for each child during their stays, some linked to their educational targets and plans. This increases each child's potential to learn new skills and to improve their self-confidence.	

A number of shortfalls were identified as a result of the last inspection. These have all been satisfactorily addressed. Managers have implemented new systems for ensuring that case records are kept up to date. Medication records now clearly state when medication is administered by school and not residential staff. All care plans reflect the current needs of children and young people, and have been reviewed and updated. Managers now have robust systems in place to oversee case files and recordings. Records are clear and detailed.

Improvements have been made to the consideration of, and response to, any safeguarding concerns. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and shared with all staff. Records considered during this inspection were clear and detailed. Management oversight is more robust to ensure the safety and well-being of children and young people.

There has been one complaint since the last inspection. This was appropriately investigated and has been fully considered and responded to by the manager. Managers continue to try to resolve any concerns raised by parents or carers informally whenever possible.

An independent advocate visits the home each month and spends time with children and young people. The advocate now provides feedback for managers to consider and act on.

Staff have all undertaken online safeguarding training since the last inspection. Managers have systems in place to ensure that all staff have completed relevant training and to monitor any additional training needs.

Following the last inspection, managers have allocated responsibility to staff members for arranging social activities and events for children and young people during their stays. There is now much clearer evidence that activities are planned and undertaken.

The registered manager now has full access to the supervision records for those staff she does not directly supervise. This will enable her to have better management oversight of the entire staff team and to access all records.

One shortfall has been identified as a result of this inspection. This relates to the need for managers to ensure that children and young people's privacy is promoted and that they have unrestricted access to communal areas of the home, when appropriate. When it is necessary to protect young people by restricting their access to certain areas of the home, this should be regularly reviewed to ensure that any limitations are for the shortest period of time possible.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide short breaks for up to six children and young people at any one time. It is owned and run by the local authority. The home provides short breaks for children and young people who have learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/08/2016	Full	Good
12/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/10/2015	Full	Outstanding
28/01/2015	Interim	Improved 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) meet(s) the Care Standards Act 2000, the 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
Ensure that any limitation placed on a child's privacy or access to any area of the home's premises is kept under review and, if necessary, revised; and allows children as much freedom as possible when balanced against the need to protect them and keep them safe. (Regulation 21(c)(iii)(iv))	31/03/2017

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 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 that 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 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.

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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