

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	03/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC043255
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Cynthia Mountcastle
Inspector	Tracy Murty

Inspection date	03/02/2017
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 improved effectiveness. Young people continue to make excellent progress in all areas of their lives. Since the last inspection, one young person has moved into adult accommodation. Staff ensured that the young person did not move from the home until all necessary support was in place. The young person was able to visit his new property and was fully involved in the transition. This has led to a very successful move, with the young person remaining in regular contact with staff at this home. One new admission has been made since the last inspection. This was extremely well considered and well planned by managers and staff. Visits were made to the young person in their previous placement, as well as to his school. The young person visited the home for tea. Full and relevant information was sought to assist in the formation of risk assessments and plans. In a relatively short period of time, this young person has settled in very well and is making excellent progress in relation to education and the self-regulation of previously concerning behaviours. Staff and managers have also undertaken assessments for some young people in relation to the potential for them to return to live with family members, or move into foster care. Managers work closely with placing authorities to ensure that assessments of current and future needs are implemented. They act as very strong advocates for young people, and seek to secure the best possible long-term outcomes for them. They have particular skills in working with hard-to-reach parents and family members. They build trusting relationships over time and work as a team with young people, their families and the local authority. This leads to young people and their families feeling fully involved in their care and future plans. All young people placed in this home have formal education in place. Staff place a strong and commendable emphasis on the value of education, both formal and informal. The attendance and engagement of all young people is excellent. Outside of their formal education, two young people have actively engaged in Duke of Edinburgh award schemes. They have successfully completed their bronze and silver awards, and are now embarking on their gold awards. Another young person has recently donated some of their hair to a national charity that makes wigs for people undergoing chemotherapy. This reflects the ethos of the home, in	

supporting young people to develop empathy and a desire to help others. Such skills will be of great benefit to young people in later life.

Staff fully support young people to enjoy positive and regular contact with family and significant others. Young people learn independence skills and some now arrange their own contact and transport arrangements. Staff and managers work closely with family members to enhance the quality of the time they have with their children. Parents and other family members report high levels of satisfaction at the support they receive, as well as the support provided to young people.

There have been no reports of young people going missing from care from this home for some considerable time. Risk assessments reflect the current and changing needs of each young person. Staff spend time going through placement plans and other documents with young people, so that they understand the care and support being offered to them. This is also evident in relation to recordings of any physical restraints used by staff. Young people clearly understand the reason for such measures. They read and sign all incident reports, and agree with staff any sanctions necessary. This reflects a staff team who place the needs of young people at the centre of their practice.

There have been no reported complaints from young people or others since the last inspection and for some considerable time. Procedures are clear, and are fully understood by young people. Young people meet with staff regularly to share their wishes, views and feelings. These meetings enable young people to voice any issues they may have and resolve them informally with the staff team.

Research-informed practice continues to be a key strength of this home. Social pedagogy models of support and intervention are fully embedded into the care and support plans for all young people. Activity logs reflect the work done with young people to consider their needs. A member of staff has taken the lead recently in devising and implementing a new system for recording the impact of social pedagogy practice on young people. There is a strong learning ethos within the staff and management team.

Another key strength of this home relates to its excellent multi-agency work. Various staff members have been involved in making presentations to local colleges and universities about the role of residential care and social pedagogy. One member of staff has recently had a social work student placed with them at the home as part of their practice teaching course. Such innovative practice promotes a wider social awareness of children and young people who are looked after.

Two shortfalls were identified at the last inspection. Placement and care plans for each young person now clearly reflect their current placements and needs. The registered manager has ensured that missing documentation in relation to a historic allegation about a member of staff has been sought and placed securely on file. No shortfalls have been identified as a result of this inspection.

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. It is owned and run by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/08/2016	Full	Outstanding
09/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/11/2015	Full	Outstanding
19/01/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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 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 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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