

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	19/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC043732
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Deborah Bond
Inspector	Tracy Murty

Inspection date	19/09/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC043732

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- From their starting points, young people make good progress in all areas of their lives and have positive experiences. They form positive relationships with the staff team and each other and increase in confidence.
- Staff and managers work closely and proactively with a wide range of agencies and professionals, to ensure the holistic needs of young people are known and met at all times.
- Young people enjoy a wide range of fun and stimulating activities during their time living in this home and learn new skills. This assists them in preparation for their eventual move to adult service provisions.
- Staff work hard to elicit the wishes, views and feelings of young people and do so in imaginative ways. An independent advocate visits the home each month, providing further opportunities for young people to express their views and feelings.
- Parents and carers feel welcome and fully included in the care and support provided to their children and enjoy regular contact. Staff support contact arrangements and also provide high levels of emotional support to parents and carers. Communication is seen as positive and appropriate by parents, carers and all involved agencies.
- Education is in place for all young people, with records reflecting their attendance and achievements. Close working relationships between the home's staff and teaching staff promotes consistency of care and support on a daily basis.
- Young people are kept safe from harm both within the home and outside of it. Staff display a detailed awareness and understanding of the highly complex needs of each young person and have clear risk assessments and plans in place to meet identified needs.
- Staff supervision records do not present as clear or reflecting the expected frequency for all staff members. Training in relation to safeguarding children is not up-to-date for all staff. Further minor shortfalls have been identified in relation to children's records, delegated authority and management reviews of development plans and location risk assessments. No shortfalls were identified at the previous inspection.

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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response, and the outcome of any investigation (Regulation 39(3))	01/11/2016
ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development. (Regulation 33(4)(a))	01/11/2016

Recommendations

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

- ensure that systems are in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- ensure that the review of the quality of care identifies areas of strength and possible weakness in the home's care, which will be captured in the written report. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 65, paragraph 15.4)
- review the appropriateness of and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- ensure that all children's case records are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- ensure each child's placement plan sets out the permissions that their placing authority has delegated to the registered person. This should provide clarity on the home's ability to give permission for school trips, sleep-overs or the child's involvement in sporting, leisure and cultural activities. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 31, paragraph 6.2)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This local authority owned and run children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for 7 children and young people with physical and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/01/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
27/08/2015	Full	Good
06/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/09/2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people make good progress in all areas of their lives during their time living in this home. Staff provide them with very consistent and competent care, which supports them to develop skills and confidence. Placement stability is very positive, with a number of young people having lived at this home for several years. One parent said: 'It will be a very sad day when my children move from here, they have been here for many years and are happy and settled.' Young people have their health needs met to an excellent level. Staff understand the complex physical and emotional needs of all young people placed. They work very closely and proactively with a wide range of health agencies to ensure needs are met. This includes working with dietitians, occupational therapists and child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) locally. One CAMHS nurse commented: 'They are a fantastic staff team. They work very closely with me and the consultants to share information and ensure young people's needs are known and met. I cannot praise them enough for the work they do.' Young people enjoy regular and positive contact with family members and significant others. Parents visit their children at the home, or have planned contact at their own homes with them. Those parents met during this inspection were consistently positive about the care and support provided to their children by the staff team. Parents feel welcome at the home, able to take part in activities with their children and being provided with meals and refreshments. Staff not only support contact arrangements, they also support parents and carers and form very positive and close working relationships with them. An independent reviewing officer for one young person commented: 'The staff have not only supported the young person to make good progress, they have supported the parents over a number of years with their own needs and issues. This reflects the staff team's commitment to ensuring that young people and their families receive support at all times. Education provision is in place for all young people. Most young people attend the local school, with staff working closely and proactively with teaching staff. Young people have very positive routines in place for the school day. Staff show real care and sensitivity in supporting young people to make the transition to their new school, when they move to this home. They work with school staff to ensure that clear and detailed transitions plan are in place. This reduces anxieties and stress for young people and enables them to make a positive transition. During this inspection, staff used very imaginative practices to support a young person to attend school for the first time. This involved identifying other pupils they already	

knew and ensuring that a clear plan was in place to support the young person to attend with confidence. Education information held on each young person provides a clear sense of their attendance and attainment. Staff at the home also include educationally set targets in young people's monthly aims and objectives. This enables young people to continue to work on their targets when not in education.

Regular young people's meetings take place within the home. Staff support young people in very imaginative ways to consider and share their feelings on a range of issues relevant to them. Clear recording of the meetings includes photos of the young people engaged in activities, designed to encourage them to make choices and express their views. As several of the young people are non-verbal, staff work hard to ensure that they consider their feelings and use picture boards, photos and recording of how the voice of each young person has been elicited. Managers consider such observations and feedback from staff to inform their monitoring of the progress made by each young person. The placing authority has not ensured that there is clear delegated authority in place for all young people. This would provide staff with a clearer sense and understanding of the decisions they can take with and for young people in relation to planned activities and other routine matters.

Young people take part in a range of social activities with staff, both within the home and in the local and wider community. This has included trips to the seaside, walks in local parks, shopping trips and art and craft sessions. The home employs the services of a local charity, who come to the home and undertake fun and stimulating activities with the young people. These include music and arts sessions and bringing in small animals for young people to interact with. This provides young people with opportunities, which they may not previously have had.

A key strength of the home is in how well it plans and manages transitions for young people. This is in relation to both planned moves for young people to the home and for those moving to adult services and accommodation. Staff work very closely with all relevant agencies to ensure a smooth and successful transition for young people. An example of this relates to a young person who recently moved to this home from another residential provision. Managers and staff identified a member of staff who the young person could relate to positively. This member of staff then spent considerable time at the previous placement, forming a relationship with the young person, prior to their move to this home. Managers ensured that this member of staff was on duty on the day the young person moved in, and was the first person the young person saw on arrival. Such attention to detail leads to very positive and smooth transitions for young people. Adult service providers have visited the home to observe the care and support provided to one young person recently, in preparation for their move. Information folders have been created to share all relevant information between the home and the new provider. Such attention to detail and forward planning and joint working leads to very successful transitions to adult services for young people.

The home is decorated and furnished to a good standard. Young people have ample space internally to be able to spend time alone or engage in activities with others. Bedrooms reflect the specific interests and likes of each young person. There is currently major building works being done outside, for new purpose built accommodation to be provided next year. This has restricted the amount of outside space for young people to use, but there is still sufficient and safe spaces for them. Colourful art work has been completed by young people from another local residential setting, to make the outside areas present as more welcoming and child-friendly.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people benefit from high staffing levels in this home, providing close supervision and support for them at all times. Staff work in key teams to support each young person and regularly consider their current and changing needs. Staff consider and review all documentation relating to each young person and ensure that plans and risk assessments reflect their needs. Staff work closely with all involved agencies and parents/carers to ensure that any concerns are shared and responded to for young people. There have been no missing from care incidents reported for young people living at this home. This reflects the high staffing ratios, internal and external security measures in place and diligence of staff at all times. Young people live in a home which provides high levels of security and support. The manager has fully taken into consideration the current building works being done on the site and has put in place a range of risk assessments and protocols. This provides both young people and staff with a safe and supportive environment to live and work in. Young people learn to manage their concerning or risk-taking behaviours with staff support. For some young people, there has been a noticeable improvement and reduction in concerning behaviours since they moved to this home. An independent reviewing officer for one young person commented: 'In the two years he has lived at this home, there are significant improvements in relation to his concerning behaviours. He presents as calmer and more able to manage his emotions now, which is really positive.' Young people present as happy and confident with staff, with staff demonstrating a commendable understanding of their needs. For those young people who are non-verbal, staff have the skills necessary to respond to visual or physical responses from young people. They have skills in de-escalating and distracting young people	

from actual or potentially risky situations. Staff also communicate very well with each other, using staff hand-over meetings each day to share any concerns or issues for young people, which may place them at risk.

Risk assessments reflect the relevant issues for each young person. Staff regularly review and update risk assessments, personal evacuation and other plans. This ensures that all young people receive the care and support they need and promotes their safety and well-being. Staff are extremely diligent in relation to visitors to the home, ensuring that identification checks are made and that visitors are accompanied at all times during their visit.

The recruitment and selection of staff at the home is robust and clear. It prevents unsuitable people from having the opportunity to harm young people living there. Checks for any agency or relief staff are also very detailed and robust, providing further safety for young people. Wherever possible, managers use the same agency or relief staff to cover shifts. This enables young people to form meaningful and trusting relationships and increases their sense of safety and security.

There have been no reported allegations against any member of staff working in this home since the last inspection. Procedures are in place to respond to any potential concerns and staff demonstrate a clear and detailed awareness and understanding of how such matters would be responded to. Parents and carers spoken with during this inspection reported high levels of confidence in the safety and care afforded to their children at all times.

The physical environment of the home is safe and secure and protects them from harm. The home employs the services of a maintenance person, who considers all aspects of the internal and external areas of the home regularly and makes any necessary adjustments. This promotes a safe and welcoming environment for young people, staff and visitors at all times.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has the necessary skills, qualifications and experience of managing residential care provisions for children and young people with disabilities. She has been in post at this home for over a year now and is highly regarded by staff, young people and parents/carers. The manager places the needs of young people at the centre of her practice, as does the deputy manager and all members of the staff team. They support and actively encourage young people to make progress in all areas of their lives from	

their starting points. Staff take great pride in the progress made by young people. As a nurse involved with the home stated: 'Sometimes, it is only little steps the young people make but we all work together to achieve those small steps and to celebrate them with young people.'

Systems in place to plan and record the supervision provided to staff members is currently unclear. It does not reflect the expected frequency for all members of staff, including agency, relief and domestic staff. Staff themselves report satisfaction at the formal and informal support and supervision they receive. There is a need for managers to have a more robust system in place to ensure that all staff have regular formal supervision and that there is a clearer sense of the expected frequency of supervision for all staff.

Staff have access to a wide range of training and development opportunities. This provides them with the skills and competence to support young people in relation to their complex needs. A number of staff have not completed recent safeguarding children and young people training. Records held in relation to training do not consistently provide details of when staff have previously completed such training. There is a need for managers to ensure that all staff have completed this mandatory training as a priority.

A small number of complaints have been received by the manager since the last inspection. Clear systems and structures are in place to respond and all have been dealt with by the manager in a timely manner. Records reflect the actions taken by the manager in relation to any concerns raised, but do not provide a clear indication of how the complainant has been advised of the outcome of the manager's investigations.

Young people's files and records are well laid out, with clear sections and information contained. Some minor shortfalls have been identified following this inspection in relation to records needing to be kept up to date. Not all young people have up-to-date local authority care and placements plans on file. Regular case file audits of young people's files are undertaken, but it is not clear who has carried them out and actions set are not routinely recorded as having been completed.

The manager has devised and implemented a detailed development plan for the home. This sets out the aims and objectives for the home, and the care and support to be provided to young people. The plan is in need of review, as several actions set have not been reviewed or updated for several months now. Where completion or review dates have been set in the plan, there is a need for these to be considered by managers on a more regular basis to ensure progress is being made.

The manager has put in place a detailed location risk assessment for the home and surrounding areas. Recent changes to the immediate areas surrounding the home,

including major building works and the development of a residential housing estate nearby have not been included in the assessment. This would provide further consideration of any actual or potential risks and strategies for managing them.

No shortfalls were identified at the previous inspection and the home continues to provide very good levels of care and support to young people.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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