

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	14/02/2017
Unique reference number	SC044880
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Brighton & Hove City Council
Registered person address	Kings House, Grand Avenue, Hove, East Sussex BN3 2LS

Responsible individual	Naomi Cox
Registered manager	Karen Rusbridge
	Victoria Witham
Lead inspector	Lucy Chapman
Team inspector	Sarah Olliver

Inspection date	14/02/2017
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 declined in effectiveness. The registered manager of the home is working hard to ensure that children receive a high standard of care that meets their needs. For the majority of children, this is the case; they thrive in the home and make good progress. There is evidence of innovative practice to meet children's individual needs. For example, all children were able to take part in a summer camping activity, with staff undertaking careful planning to enable each child's participation. A child resistant to haircare receives support from a specialist hairdresser who visits the home. Staff recognise and support children's interests. For example, one child undertakes regular trips designed to explore his interest in buses. New outside play-equipment offers all children the opportunity to have fun, while undertaking healthy and safe activity. For a minority of children however, limitations of the built environment of the home and organisational constraints diminish their experience of care. One young person said that he does not enjoy living alongside his peers. The challenging behaviour of his peers intimidates him and he wants companionship from children who communicate verbally. The managers are aware of his views, but are unable to organise the way that care is provided to meet his needs. The home's previous good links with advocacy services have ceased. The registered provider no longer resources an advocacy service for this home. Children in the home have complex and challenging behaviours that require specialised care planning. Some staff describe a lack of knowledge and confidence in meeting the needs of some children. One member of staff said, 'We need someone to help us, with qualifications, who knows what they are doing.' A reduction in the availability of specialist advice means that staff have less access to consultation and guidance to underpin care for the children with the most complex and challenging needs. Staff raised concerns about their own safety and that of children. One member of staff said, 'There is concern about the safety and welfare of children; everyone is concerned about it. It is not physically or emotionally safe.' Incidents causing injuries to staff are prevalent in the home, including one severe staff injury that occurred recently. Careful staffing has prevented injury to children. However, some	

staff remain concerned about this risk.

Current physical intervention training fails to equip the staff with the breakaway technique skills that they require to care safely for children. Managers are exploring new training options, but plans are not finalised. Children's behaviour management plans are lengthy and do not provide the staff with easily accessible guidance. In addition, some physical intervention records lack detail, making management review of effectiveness difficult.

Risk assessments are, in some cases, unclear. The updating of one risk assessment was not in line with a child's newly developed behaviour that presented risk. Risk assessments also fail to guide staff appropriately in the use of protective equipment. For example, one risk assessment guided staff to use protective headwear at all times; however, staff practice was to use this optionally.

Managers have fulfilled all requirements and recommendations from the previous inspection effectively. There has been improved notification of serious events to HMCI. The skills of staff facilitating supervision are improved with the provision of specialist supervision training. Staff feel positive about the supervision they receive. One member of staff said, 'It's a safe space to offload and talk about what is happening with the young people and team.'

The introduction of mandatory training for all staff in online safety and around extremism builds staff knowledge and awareness in safeguarding children.

Information about this children's home

A local authority runs the home. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to eight children who have learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/07/2016	Full	Good
24/02/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
11/08/2015	Full	Good
16/02/2015	Interim	Sustained 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) 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
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that: 12(2)(b) the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and protect each child effectively from harm.	30/04/17
7: The children's views, wishes and feelings standard In order to meet the children's wishes and feelings standard, the registered person must ensure that staff: 7(1)(c) take children's views, wishes and feelings into account in relation to matters affecting the children's care and welfare and their lives.	30/04/17
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must: 13(2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child, particularly in respect of physical intervention and breakaway techniques.	30/04/17
13: The leadership and management standard In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must: 13(2)(f) understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development of the quality of care provided in the home, using specialists to provide expert advice and guidance to inform care practice as required.	30/04/17

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that children have access to appropriate advocacy support. Children looked after are entitled to an independent advocate to ensure that they have the support needed to express their views, wishes and feelings about their care and lives. Homes caring for children not looked after should ensure that children can access advocacy support and should also consider the use of an independent advocate where necessary. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 23, paragraphs 4.16 and 4.18)
- Ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks relating to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) In particular, ensure that risk assessments are up to date and followed.
- Ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

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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