

SC051513

Registered provider: Nottinghamshire County Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority and provides care for up to four children who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties or hearing impairment.

Inspection dates: 10 to 11 July 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	good
---	-------------

How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
---	------

The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
---	------

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 October 2016

Overall judgement at last inspection: Good

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Staff have a good understanding of children's needs, and provide the right support and nurturing care to meet these needs. As a result, children are making progress in relation to their social communication, behaviour management and general well-being.
- The home is led and managed well. The manager is child focused and she provides strong and effective leadership. Staff feel well supported and they benefit from good communication and regular supervision.
- Staff have embraced a new way of working and have completed additional training to enable them to work with a new child and meet his needs. As a result, the child is making very positive progress.
- Detailed planning for children moving into and out of the home means that transitions have been successful.
- Children are supported to maintain important relationships with their friends and family. They have positive relationships with staff and trust them with their thoughts and worries.
- Children enjoy a variety of activities, both at the home and further afield. This promotes children's emotional well-being and encourages them to be active.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/10/2016	Full	Good
20/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/09/2015	Full	Good
12/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Since the last inspection, three children have moved on from the home and one child has moved in. All transitions have been successfully managed and this is a strength of the home.

Two children moved to semi-independent living. In preparation, staff supported children to gain independent living skills such as budgeting and cooking. In addition, staff recognise the huge emotional impact children can experience in moving out of a children's home, an environment where they receive care all the time, to independence, where there is less support. In response, children are supported for a number of weeks after they move by key members of staff while they adjust to their new living environment. Staff invite them back to the home for some meals, remind them about appointments and given emotional support, much as any other parent would for a child leaving home. As a result, children's transitions have every opportunity to be successful. A child who had recently moved out said, 'It was a brilliant home. The staff helped me so much. They helped me through loads. They couldn't have done much more for me.' Preparation for independence and support during transition are strengths of the home.

There was exceptionally careful planning and preparation for a new child moving into the home. As a result, the transition was smooth and the child has settled quickly. An education provider said, 'They feel secure. They're happy there.' The child is thriving and has made important progress, especially with their behaviour and communication. This is significant as the child has previously struggled to manage their behaviour and frustration. Significantly, the child, who uses British sign language (BSL), has the opportunity to communicate with care staff at all times through a signer or interpreter. Staff are also undertaking training in BSL. This means that the child lives in an environment which can meet their communication needs. This lessens the risk of the child becoming frustrated at not being understood. Although the child is not currently accessing education, there is close working with education and training providers to ensure that clear plans are in place for the start of the school year. Staff and managers recognise the importance of helping the child to understand their own identity and have opportunities to become integrated into the deaf community, such as by attending a local youth club. The child said, 'I'd give this home 10 out of 10.'

The other child who lives in the home told the inspector that they are focusing on their future goals and aspirations. Although the child is currently not in education, employment or training, they are actively seeking employment as well as signing up for a Prince's Trust course. They are considering their transition to independence and where they would like to live. The child has positive and trusting relationships with staff. This allows them to test out their thoughts and ideas for the future, in the knowledge that staff will listen and help them understand which options would be in their best interests.

Overall, the experiences children have and the progress they make are positive. Health needs are met through the provision of access to basic health care and more specialist

services, for example substance use and alcohol support. Managers and staff make good use of consultation sessions with the child and adolescent mental health service (CAMHS) to consider how to best meet children's emotional needs. As a result, children receive nurturing and individualised care which enables them to feel safe and secure. Contact with friends and family is supported. Two children who were in a relationship with each other are supported to maintain contact after one moved out. Staff recognise the importance of this relationship.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

Staff have up-to-date information on the risks children face and act consistently to keep them as safe as they can. Each child has a comprehensive risk management document. This document provides staff with strategies for preventing and responding to any incidents of concern. If new risks emerge or situations alter, risk assessments are added to or amended. This ensures that children become increasingly safer.

Children occasionally have unauthorised absences and go missing for short periods of time, despite the best efforts of staff. There is a clear protocol to follow and this is implemented in practice. Behaviour is well managed. On occasion, children can become unsettled. Staff use a variety of techniques, including de-escalation techniques, to calm situations down. As a result there are few incidents and the home is calm. Physical intervention is used rarely, only once since the last inspection. When it is used, the records are subject to managerial oversight to ensure that it is appropriate.

Staff are trained in safeguarding children and they demonstrate a good understanding of their responsibilities with regard to protecting children from harm, including the home's whistle-blowing policy. Staff are recruited in line with safer recruitment practices to ensure that only suitable people work with children. The environment is physically safe and secure to prevent children from experiencing harm. Fire safety is regularly reviewed, fire evacuations are practised and fire safety equipment is regularly tested.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The home is led by an experienced and committed manager who holds the appropriate qualifications to manage a children's home. She is supported by an experienced deputy manager and dedicated staff members, many of whom have worked at the home for a number of years. This means children receive consistency and continuity in their care, and they can form long-standing relationships with staff.

Staff have access to different types of online and face-to-face training. There is a system for identifying gaps in training knowledge so that they can be addressed. In preparation for a new child coming to live at the home, staff and managers undertook intensive training in BSL. Staff have embraced this challenge and, although there were some initial anxieties, they are now successfully using this on a day-to-day basis for the benefit of the child.

Partnership working is effective in promoting consistent care and support to meet children's needs. A social worker and an independent reviewing officer, consulted as part of the inspection, confirmed that there is good and regular communication, including written reports. Other stakeholders, such as education professionals, commented positively about how staff support their intervention with the children at the home. The manager will challenge other professionals if there are deficits in service provision. For example, when viewing a potential semi-independence provision, the manager and staff gave the provider clear expectations about the cleanliness and the quality of furnishings. These were subsequently improved. This meant that a child moved on into a good-quality environment. The child saw staff advocate on his behalf, demonstrating the high regard they have for the children in their care.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC051513

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall,
Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

Responsible individual: Vonny Senogles

Registered manager: Diane Beckitt

Inspector

Catherine Honey: social care inspector

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, further education and skills, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence>, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <http://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

© Crown copyright 2017