

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	21/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC051513
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Diane Beckitt
Inspector	Philip Cass

Inspection date	21/03/2017
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. At the time of the last inspection, three young people had left school and were beginning college courses or trainee apprenticeships. Despite careful planning and the best efforts of staff, only one young person remains on their course at the time of this inspection. Even with this setback, staff and managers remain optimistic for the future prospects of all young people. They understand that the progress made by young people is sometimes inconsistent and were prepared for young people to find further education and employment challenging. They have realistic plans in place to support young people back into employment or training. One young person said, 'I know what I need to do.' Staff also understand the reasons why young people did not complete their course or apprenticeship. They recognise, and have plans to deliver, the additional support that young people need. They are supporting one young person to apply for other jobs and have arranged a Prince's Trust course for the other young person in order to boost his resilience and confidence. Staff have implemented fixed routines for young people who are not in education, employment or training. Structured independent living programmes and household chores ensure that significant periods of the day are spent in purposeful activity or learning new skills. The third young person is thriving in further education. He attends full time and has realistic employment prospects. This is a considerable achievement, given his starting point at admission. He said, 'my life is great at the moment'. He is aspirational and positive about the future. Since the last inspection, one young person has moved on from the home and another has moved in. The home was initially very successful in identifying a school quickly and supporting the new young person, who has a history of non-attendance and poor achievement, to attend. However, this school placement has broken down. Again, the manager and staff have worked hard to overcome this setback, and have arranged home tuition until a new school placement begins. The change in group dynamics following the most recent admission has presented	

staff with additional challenges. The new young person has formed a relationship with an existing resident. Staff quickly recognised that this relationship is potentially damaging to the emotional development of both young people. They have taken steps to help both young people to understand why such a relationship cannot be supported, and are liaising with senior managers to develop additional strategies to help support both young people.

The change in group dynamics and breakdown of educational placements have contributed to a relatively unsettled period in the home. Although staff have displayed considerable resilience to incidents of violent and damaging behaviours, on occasion they have required assistance from the police in order to respond safely. One young person is being prosecuted following an incident in which significant damage was done to staff property and the home. Despite these setbacks, staff continue to work effectively with young people to help them to learn from their mistakes and make better decisions in the future. Despite the recent deterioration, each young person has made progress from their starting point at admission. Staff have a proven track record in helping young people through such difficult periods in their adolescence so that they quickly return to making strong progress. The registered manager said: 'We don't ever want to give up on any child. That is not our way'.

Four requirements and three recommendations were set at the last inspection. These have all been met in full. As a result, the following improvements have been achieved:

- Systems have been put in place to improve the way that young people who move into the home are managed.
- Care plans and risk assessments are now carefully monitored to ensure that they contain all pertinent information about new and emerging needs, as well as strategies to meet them.
- Internal and external monitoring of the home have been reviewed to ensure greater scrutiny of decision-making.
- The home's statement of purpose is now updated and sent to Ofsted as required by regulation.
- An independent return-home interview is now provided on the rare occasions that young people go missing.
- A recruitment checklist has been created so that managers are better able to assure themselves that all necessary vetting has been undertaken on agency staff working in the home.
- Record-keeping in relation to sanctions and complaints is now better. Records now provide clear evidence that such matters have been reviewed and evaluated by managers.

Information about this children's home

The home is run by a local authority and provides care for up to four young people who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties or learning disabilities.

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

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. Whenever 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 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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