

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	30/09/2015
Unique reference number	SC051513
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Nottinghamshire County Council
Registered person address	Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

Responsible individual	Vonny Sengoles
Registered manager	Diane Beckitt
Inspector	Cathey Moriarty

Inspection date	30/09/2015
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

SC051513

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people in this children's home experience consistently good care in a stable, structured environment. They benefit from trusted and secure relationships with skilled, committed staff.
- Young people have made good progress from their starting points. They are attending education and training placements and they are developing confidence in their abilities. Staff work closely with education and training providers to support young people to remain engaged and to achieve.
- There are personalised risk assessments and effective behaviour management plans that are agreed with young people. As a result, missing from home episodes reduce. Over time, young people have fewer incidents of self-harming and substance misuse. There are ongoing assessments that include new information and emerging concerns. Young people are safer because they live in this home.
- Young people report that they have opportunities to share their views and wishes and are listened to. Consequently, they are influencing their day-to-day care and their care plans.
- Managers ensure that staff are continuously learning and developing their knowledge, skills and practice. The staff group is aspirational for the young people in their care. They celebrate young people's progress and achievements, encouraging confidence and resilience. One young person said: 'There is nothing the staff could do better or differently.'
- There is a recommendation to strengthen practice, to ensure that there is consistent recording of changes to young people's medication. There is also a recommendation regarding a need to refurbish and redecorate some areas of the home, to enhance the environment for young people.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Recommendations

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

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of the children, they will in most cases be homely, domestic environments. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Records must be kept of the administration of all medication, which includes occasions when prescribed medication is refused. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 35, paragraph 7.15)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home, which is a local authority provision, provides accommodation for four young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2015	Interim	Improved Effectiveness
23/07/2014	Full	Good
03/02/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
There are carefully planned admissions to this home. Young people are visited by staff and they visit the home. Staff ensure that their histories and needs are well known and well understood. Young people contribute to their placement plan and their preferences and views are listened to. In this way, they have a good start and they respond positively to their care and their environment. Staff agree placement objectives with the young person, involved agencies and family. Targets are regularly reviewed and progress and achievements are celebrated. Keyworker sessions are used effectively to support young people to meet their goals. Staff also implement a constructive behaviour support approach, promoting positive behaviours using rewards rather than sanctions. As a result, young people have reduced challenging behaviours. There have been no physical restraints and a sanction has been used on only one occasion since the last Inspection. If there are setbacks with their behaviours, staff are non-judgmental and resilient in their response. Young people are receptive to this and are building trusting, nurturing relationships with staff. One young person said: 'I like living here. I can speak to all of the staff and even if I am having a bad day, staff listen to me.' All of the young people have education and training packages in place. Some of them have previously had poor experiences within education settings and engaging with professionals. Two young people had not been attending an education setting or receiving education input when they came to this home. Staff ensure that they have good routines in place. They liaise effectively with partner agencies to support young people to overcome any barriers to attendance or achievement. In this way young people are developing confidence, their attendance improves and they are making good progress from their starting points. One professional said: 'The difference in this young person is remarkable. Since he has lived in this home he is more confident, he looks smarter, more alert and happier.' Staff consult with young people about preferences and ensure that they have the opportunity to participate in a range of physical and social activities. For example, one young person has guitar lessons while others enjoy cycling and baking. Young people are encouraged to contribute to and influence decisions about their home and their care. They have residents meetings, a complaints process, and a more informal 'niggles' process. The independent visitor, independent reviewing	

officers, and advocates consult with them. This means that young people feel able to raise concerns and they always receive a response. Young people benefit from a generally pleasant and homely environment. However, There are areas of the home that require some refurbishment and redecorating.

Young people benefit from robust and detailed health plans. Goals are identified for a healthier lifestyle and they are encouraged to attend preventative health appointments. In keyworker sessions, staff support young people to improve their understanding and awareness of health issues such as substance misuse and poor diet. Consequently, young people begin to make healthier choices. Medication administration processes are generally robust. However, when there are changes to a young person's medication, records are not always updated promptly. This has the potential to lead to administration errors.

Integral to their care experience is contact with family and friends. Staff promote and support contact arrangements. For some young people relationships have been repaired and improved. One parent said: 'Staff are always available to talk to and they have supported me to get my confidence back as a parent.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
Young people have become safer whilst living in this home. They benefit from positive parenting and respond to structure and boundaries. As a result, they grow in emotional resilience. The culture of the home is to support and empathise. There are no physical interventions and a very low number of sanctions. All Staff are trained in de-escalating, changing behaviours, and supporting young people if they are distressed. There is a quarterly multi-agency risk management meeting involving all relevant professionals from the young person's network. This meeting considers changes to each resident's risk assessment, and evaluates emerging concerns. This enables protective strategies to be designed and implemented quickly in response to changing need. The forum also provides an opportunity to regularly assess group dynamics and ensure that each placement is suitable. Staff have received training in a range of safeguarding policies, procedures and practice. Staff are experienced in responding to self-harming behaviours, missing incidents, substance misuse, and aggressive behaviours. Staff work with relevant specialist services and agencies to ensure that there are detailed risk assessments in place. Young people and staff work together to review risk assessments and	

ensure that they are effective in managing and reducing risks. A specialist worker said: 'Staff are always willing to consider different perspectives, to understand behaviours, to consider how they can make this placement work for each young person. They are interested in their individual needs and want to problem solve.'

Where there have been missing from home episodes, staff have followed procedures, liaising with police and social workers to ensure young people are safe. Staff are proactive in looking for them and contacting them. Staff welcome young people back and ensure that they are seen by relevant professionals. This means that young people feel cared for and that information is gathered to prevent further missing episodes.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The registered manager has 23 years' experience working with children and young people in residential care. She has a range of qualifications including the level 5 diploma in Leadership and Management of Residential Services. The assistant manager is also experienced, has the level 4 award in health and social care, and is currently undertaking the level 5 qualification. They are very child focussed and committed to helping young people grow in self-confidence and self-esteem. Staff receive regular supervision and appraisals. They have personal development opportunities and are encouraged to contribute to the development plans of the home. New staff undertake an induction programme that provides the opportunity to learn from experienced colleagues. The management team use practice and research in team meetings and development days. For example, they have recently updated staff on research related to autistic spectrum disorders, child sexual exploitation, and the impact of missing from home. Staff are motivated to learn and improve their practice. As a result, young people are well cared for. There are sufficient staff to meet all young people's needs including experienced waking night staff and support staff. There is a shift leader protocol, which is a range of competencies for shift leaders to achieve. This means that young people benefit from well-planned shifts and staff benefit from career development. Partners report that there is effective joint working and timely sharing of information. A professional said: 'Staff are prepared for meetings, share useful reports, and they proactively encourage young people to participate. In my experience, living in this home makes a positive difference to their lives.'	

There are a range of monitoring and reviewing mechanisms in place to quality assure practice within the home. Managers are aware of the service's strengths and areas for development. The development plan is linked to quality standards and identifies impact to, and outcomes for, young people living in the home.

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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