

SC060034

Registered provider: Break

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A registered charity owns this home, which provides short breaks for up to six children at any one time. The children who use the service have learning disabilities and may also have associated physical disabilities.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since January 2008.

Inspection dates: 11 to 12 February 2020

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 **requires improvement to be good**

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

Date of last inspection: 12 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/12/2018	Full	Good
12/02/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
24/05/2017	Full	Good
22/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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
The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that— helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to— ensure that the home has sufficient staff to provide care for each child; ensure that the home's workforce provides continuity of care to each child; and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(d)(e)(h))	17/04/2020
The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. The registered person may only— employ an individual to work at the children's home; or if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that— full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. (Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(d))	27/03/2020
For the purposes of paragraph (3)(b), an individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained—	22/05/2020

the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare (England) ('the Level 3 Diploma'); or a qualification which the registered person considers to be equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma. The relevant date is— in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016. (Regulation 32(4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b))	
The registered person must ensure that all employees— receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience; and have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33(4)(b)(c))	27/03/2020
The registered person must complete a review of the quality of care provided for children ('a quality of care review') at least once every 6 months. In order to complete a quality of care review, the registered person must establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating— the feedback and opinions of children about the children's home, its facilities and the quality of care they receive in it; and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children. The system referred to in paragraph (2) must provide for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45(1)(2)(b)(5))	31/07/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person in a short-break setting should ensure that the short-break service offers the chance for children to develop friendships, by carefully matching groups and, where possible, by arranging for children to frequently stay with the same group. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 40, paragraph 8.20)

In particular, consider group dynamic risk assessments to support matching processes.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The children's overall experiences are good. The staff provide individualised support that the children and their parents value. The children have established positive relationships with the staff, who are committed to their well-being.

The children enjoy a wide variety of activities. These include roller-skating, swimming, soft play, going to the cinema and visiting the circus. These opportunities provide the children with new experiences that develop their interests. A parent said, 'My child loves the range of activities that he does with the staff on his short break, and it give us the confidence to try new experiences when he is at home.'

The children make meaningful progress from their starting points. The staff support the children to meet their individual goals through a range of adapted techniques and participation in household activities. The effective support results in children developing their communication and independent-living skills.

The staff help the children to attend school. When children are experiencing difficulties, the staff work with the schools and the children's families to try to overcome these barriers.

The home is spacious and decorated to a good standard. There are a variety of child-centred areas such as a well-appointed garden and sensory room. These help to create a stimulating environment that reflects the children's interests and needs.

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

The staff support the children with their social interactions. Staff understand the importance of consistent routines and they implement clear, individualised risk assessments. Consequently, children are safer and benefit from positive experiences during their stay.

The staff work closely with healthcare professionals to address the children's complex needs. Behaviour management plans are concise and current. There is an emphasis on proactive and de-escalation strategies. These approaches help to minimise challenges and support effective behavioural change over time.

Staff have good awareness of the children's individual missing-from-home profiles and procedures. There are high supervision levels and effective security arrangements. As a result, no significant incidents of children going missing from the home have occurred.

The staff have managed the children's transitions into the home successfully. Assessments are detailed and considered. The staff spend time with children prior to their admission. However, there is no formal or structured approach to matching short stays with other children. The lack of matching assessments reduces the potential to identify possible conflicts and risks between children effectively.

The recruitment systems for agency staff fail to reduce the potential for unsuitable people to gain employment. Further monitoring of checks is not effective. This was identified at the last inspection and has still not been addressed sufficiently.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good

The manager is suitably qualified and experienced. A dedicated and child-focused deputy manager is in post.

The home has experienced high staffing turnover. A review of trends and an updated workforce development plan have been undertaken. However, the actions generated have not been consistently effective. The staff shortages have remained, which has resulted in one child's short break having to be rearranged. These staffing shortages do not ensure that consistent care is provided to children by staff who have experience of meeting their individual needs.

The managerial monitoring requires improvement. There is a lack of timely follow-up in the staff's development plans, absence of accurate oversight of health and safety checks and delays in reviewing some incidents at the home. This lack of oversight undermines the opportunity for the manager to identify shortfalls and make continuous improvements efficiently.

Visits by an independent person provide detailed and impartial scrutiny of the running of the home and the resulting reports are of good quality. The manager undertakes an objective internal quality review. However, the internal reviews have not included or considered consultations with families and children. This omission reduces the capacity of the management team to fully understand the strengths and weaknesses of the home.

Staff benefit from regular child-centred staff meetings. Staff receive supervisions and appraisals. However, some appraisals are not undertaken in a timely way. Despite agency staff working at the home, they do not receive the same level of support as permanent staff. This does not ensure that all the staff have suitable time to reflect on their practice consistently.

The staff access a range of training courses to equip them with the skills to meet the children's individual needs. A high proportion of staff have a required level 3 qualification. However, two staff who should have achieved this have yet to do so. This does not ensure that these staff have the necessary knowledge and skills for their roles.

The staff and management team have sustained good relationships with parents and professionals, who provided positive feedback about the quality of care and effectiveness of communication.

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 differences 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 whom 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: SC060034

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

Registered provider address: Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Anna Mynhardt

Registered manager: Melanie Julier

Inspectors

Mark Anderton, social care inspector

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