

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. The children may also have associated physical disabilities. The manager is qualified and has been registered since 25 January 2008.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 December 2018

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 February 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

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

22/03/2017

Interim

Improved effectiveness

24/11/2016

Full

Requires improvement

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 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)) This is with particular regard to agency staff.	31/12/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role that they play in the training and development of staff at the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)
- In particular, provide professional development opportunities for experienced senior staff.
- The registered person should monitor and review the patterns and trends of turnover of staff, whether agency or directly employed, and be able to understand and, when possible, address any negative trends. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 54, paragraph 10.19)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

This is a good, flexible and child-centred service that is valued by families, carers and professionals, and enjoyed by children.

Knowledgeable staff work with specialist support services to enable children to receive the care that they need. Exceptional work has taken place to support one child who experienced a bereavement.

Parents said that their children enjoy a range of activities. Professionals spoke of children engaging in activities that they would not otherwise be able to experience. A parent said, 'The boys really enjoy it. They get to do lots of things that I would struggle to do with them. They get to do things that I could not arrange to do with them. They get looked after really well.'

The staff work hard to manage transitions in and out of the service flexibly. When moves to adult provisions do not progress as planned, the service is adaptable, allowing for children to stay longer to enable smooth transitions to occur.

The staff maintain appropriate links with children who have moved on. A professional said, '[The staff] were amazing with a very challenging child who they still keep a relationship with, and this is so important to her. It would break [the child's] heart if she could not phone them.'

The staff support the children to attend school. When children are struggling to attend, the staff work with the school staff and the children's families to try to overcome this.

The staff know the children well. This knowledge enables the staff to interpret behaviour to inform their understanding of children's feelings. A social worker said, 'The staff really know him inside out. Even the slightest thing that he does, they know what it means for him.'

The children make progress in a range of areas. The staff work with families and school staff to identify goals and support the children to meet these.

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

Parents and staff reported that children feel safe. The staff are able to explain how the children's behaviour supports these assertions. A parent said, 'We greatly trust them [the staff].'

Risk assessments offer a clear overview of the children. They give staff the information

that they need to support children. The assessments are reviewed after incidents take place, to ensure that information is current and reflects children's emerging needs.

The staff work well with health professionals to meet the needs of children whose behaviour can be difficult to manage. A health professional said, '[The staff] manage the children with the most challenging behaviour, and work collaboratively with us as health service. They are really flexible.'

The staff manage children's behaviour without recourse to restraint. The staff use their knowledge of the children's triggers to minimise the potential for incidents and maximise the effectiveness of de-escalation strategies when incidents do occur. Incidents are reviewed and reflected on.

The staff have had training in safeguarding disabled children. They understand the increased risk of abuse for disabled children.

The management team refers concerns to safeguarding professionals as necessary.

The home uses agency staff. However, staffing records frequently omit specific safe-recruitment information regarding previous employment. As a result, the management team does not have the information required regarding agency staff.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The management team is stable, with significant experience of working with disabled children and their families. The manager has been registered for almost 11 years. The deputy manager has been in post for seven years. One senior staff member has been in post for over five years. This provides the staff, the children and their families with a significant amount of experienced support.

The management team has a good understanding of the children. Children's plans are clear and concise. They contain the information that staff need to meet children's needs.

The management team understands the home's strengths and areas for development. Managers seek feedback and undertake consultations with families. An independent person visits the home each month. Their reports offer challenge and identify areas for improvement.

Parents spoke highly of the quality of the service. They feel that the staff know the children well and look after them well. Parents have confidence in the service.

Professionals spoke with enthusiasm about the approach that the home has. A social worker said, 'It is such a valuable service. The staff are so good at supporting. They are so accommodating. The children do so well there. For me, they are a resource that I and the parents value highly.'

The management team challenges placing authorities appropriately when they are not acting in a timely way. This is particularly clear in the challenge that staff have made in respect of the transition arrangements for one child.

The home has experienced staffing difficulties recently, with staff leaving and attempts to replace them proving unsuccessful. The management team has managed this without compromising the number of permanent experienced staff on shift. Although there is some understanding of why individual staff have left, no overarching review has taken place. Therefore, although the problem has been recognised and the immediate impact is being managed, opportunities to identify underlying causes are being restricted.

The staff have access to training opportunities that enable them to meet the needs of the children. However, opportunities for senior experienced staff to develop are currently limited.

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, Spar Road, Norwich NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Catherine Kenney

Registered manager: Melanie Julier

Inspector

Ashley Hinson: social care inspector

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