

SC060034

Registered provider: Break

Interim 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 a learning disability and/or a social and/or communication disability. The children may also have associated physical disabilities.

Inspection date: 12 February 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 24 May 2017

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 last full inspection.
At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The management team has addressed the shortfalls that were identified at the last inspection, resulting in the following improvements:

- The staff follow the home's safeguarding procedures to report incidents when the children raise concerns.
- The medication policy has been updated to ensure safe handling of emergency medication for children who are prescribed it, particularly when out on activities.
- The children have access to information about local advocacy services should

they wish for the support of an advocate.

- The home is made safe for children whose associated behaviours may place them at risk due to environmental factors.
- Training is provided for staff in safeguarding children who have disabilities. This means that the staff are better equipped to recognise and respond to safeguarding concerns with this particularly vulnerable group of children.

The home provides a child-centred and flexible short-break service that the children and their families benefit from. However, the children's views about the care that they receive at the home are not regularly obtained and recorded. For many children, their cognitive abilities mean that they are not in a position to provide their views, and would be reliant on others to do so. Capturing children's views can be difficult; the management team accepts that this is an area for development.

There have been very few physical interventions, and those that have been necessary relate to two children. Managers do not consistently follow-up and record the child's views and concerns about physical interventions in a way that is appropriate to their understanding. This means that children's views and opinions are not always thoroughly explored.

Although there is no formal system for matching children during their stays at the home, managers do this based on their knowledge of each child. This means that when children stay at the home, they are usually with other children with whom they get along.

The staff provide a range of opportunities for the children, which they may not otherwise have. One parent said, 'They take [my child] to places that I am unable to take her by myself. I don't think that they can do any better.'

The internal and external monitoring is effective, and considers the views of parents and professionals. Monitoring visits by an independent person are sufficiently thorough and challenge the service. The range of monitoring systems provide a comprehensive review and assessment of the home and the care provided. This monitoring has the potential to drive further improvement, leading to a higher standard of care for children.

Feedback from the children's families and external professionals is positive. The staff engage with a range of professionals and advocate on behalf of the children. A social worker team manager spoke positively about the staff, in particular, how they manage children's behaviour and the positive relationships between the staff and the children. This team manager said, 'The children we have placed there [at the home] enjoy it there and look forward to going.'

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/05/2017	Full	Good
22/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
24/11/2016	Full	Requires improvement
21/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Due consideration should be given to the child's cognitive ability in the development and implementation of any consultation processes. Children should be able to see the results of their views being listened to and acted on. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
This is with particular relation to how children's wishes, views and feelings about their care are obtained, and responded to, by the home.
- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. In some cases children may need longer to work through their feelings, so a record that the child has talked about their feelings should be made no longer than 5 days after the incident of restraint (regulation 35(3)(c)). Children should be encouraged to add their views and comments to the record of restraint. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)
In particular, make clear when it is not appropriate to try to seek a child's views and comments of a restraint due the child's communication difficulties and level of understanding.

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.

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.

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: Break, Spar Road, Norwich NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Hilary Richards

Registered manager: Melanie Julier

Inspector

Ricky D'Arcy, social care inspector

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