

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	15/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC063814
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Break
Registered provider address	Schofield House, 1 Spar Road, Norwich, England, Norwich NR6 6BX

Responsible individual	Hilary Richards
Registered manager	Janet North
Inspector	Debbie Young

Inspection date	15/03/2017
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. The manager has met two of the three recommendations that were made at the last inspection. Safeguarding notifications to Ofsted are clear and timely. This enables Ofsted to have oversight of incidents or any ongoing issues and to understand the action that the home is taking to manage them. The staff use positive and negative consequences with the children as a part of behaviour management. The records contain sufficient detail to enable the children to understand the reasons for any consequence. This helps them to reflect on their behaviour and to make better choices. However, there is a lack of evidence of management oversight of the consequences. The manager does not systematically sign the records. This does not demonstrate that they are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to ensure that the use of consequences is fair. The records of room searches are made in an amended and more detailed format. However, some of the entries have missing or incorrect information. This does not provide a clear and consistent record and therefore this recommendation is restated. The staff liaise with education professionals to support the children to access education that meets their needs. Clear education plans are in place for each child. Two of the children are attending education and are making progress towards their targets. An education professional said, 'We have a good working relationship. They [staff] really care about her [the child's] interests. There is good communication and they absolutely do their best for her.' The staff use physical intervention when it is needed to keep the children and staff safe. There are debriefs with the children after each intervention and the staff have the opportunity to discuss the incidents with the manager. Detailed incident reports reflect the behaviours leading up to the physical intervention and the type and length of hold. There have been significant concerns in relation to the new children in the home	

and the change in group dynamics. The manager and the staff are clear about the needs of the children and the concerns. They have tried hard to manage the risky behaviour and to keep the children safe.

Some of the behaviours have culminated in damage to the home. Repairs are made as soon as possible. The staff enable the children to explore their feelings in key-working sessions and there is a continuing therapeutic focus to provide emotional support the children. This helps the children who are in crisis to understand that they are able to move forward into a new day with new opportunities.

New admissions to the home are planned carefully. The manager requests relevant information before agreeing to a new admission and she liaises with appropriate professionals to agree a transition plan. The children benefit from tea visits and overnight stays before they move into the home. This gives them the opportunity to get to know the other children and to start to build relationships with the staff. One of the children said, 'I like it here and I like the staff.'

One child has moved on from the home successfully and is now cared for within his family. This move was gradual and well planned. The organisation continues to provide outreach work to the family and the staff keep in touch with the child through text messaging and visits. The nurturing relationships that the child had built with the staff continue and he knows that he can access help and advice if he wishes to.

There is good communication between the staff and other professionals and family members. A parent said, 'The staff keep in touch with me and let me know if there is an incident. They also send me reports. She [my child] is getting on good.' A social worker said of her child, 'I am always well informed. The incident reports are detailed and they [staff] report everything.' This ensures that professionals and family members are included in the child's journey.

Internal and external monitoring is comprehensive and includes the views of parents, professionals and children. The monitoring is effective and demonstrates the challenges and the progress of the service during the recent months.

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a registered charity. It provides care and accommodation for up to four children aged between 7 and 17 years who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/12/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/10/2015	Full	Good
19/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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:

- Ensure that all room searches are appropriately recorded. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 16, paragraph 3.20)

In particular, record the reasons for the search, efforts to seek the child's consent and any risk assessment and management oversight of the decision to undertake the search.

- Ensure that all incidents of control, discipline and restraint are subject to systems of regular scrutiny to make sure that their use is fair. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 46, paragraph 9.36)

In particular, ensure that there is clear management oversight of positive and negative consequences for the children.

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. 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 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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