

SC063814

Registered provider: Break

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is owned by a registered charity. It provides care for up to four children aged between seven and 17 who have experienced neglect, abuse and trauma, along with family and placement breakdowns. The manager has been registered since May 2007.

Inspection dates: 20 to 21 August 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	Good
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
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The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 18 September 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/09/2018	Full	Good
13/12/2017	Full	Good
15/12/2016	Full	Good
21/03/2016	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— use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided in the home. (Regulation 13(1)(a)(b)(2)(h))	31/10/2019

Recommendations

- Provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7)
- In particular, ensure that the communal areas and the garden are maintained to a good standard.
- A record of supervision should be kept for staff, including the manager. The record should provide evidence that supervision is being delivered in line with regulation 33(4)(b). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.3)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children genuinely appreciate the staff and value the strong relationships that they have with them. One child said, 'The staff here are like my family and they mean a huge amount to me.' These positive attachments help the children to build emotional resilience.

Children all attend school. They have aspirations for further education and think about their career goals. The staff work in close partnership with schools. Children who have

had long periods of time out of education benefit from consistent attendance, peer friendship groups and structured time. This has improved their self-worth and confidence.

The staff recognise the children's skills and strengths. Some children have part-time jobs and others have regular hobbies. They take an active role in the day-to-day running of the home, such as the cooking and shopping. One child organises fundraising projects and helps to plan celebration events. This gives children a purposeful direction.

Generally, children are active and healthy. For children who smoke, cessation work and anti-smoking guidance is provided. The children are included in making food choices and meal preparation. Physical activities include playing football goals in the garden and using a large trampoline, and walking is encouraged by the staff.

Children enjoy lots of fun and active time with the staff. Colourful scrapbooks provide a visual childhood memory of living at the home.

The home is a detached residence on the edge of a town. There are some areas of the house that would benefit from new decor, in particular the carpets and paintwork. The garden also requires work. The patio is uneven and the grass is long. A trellis has fallen from the wall and there are areas that are overgrown with weeds. This does not provide a consistently good standard for children.

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

Children have become much safer since they moved to the home. Good levels of supervision from the staff help to reduce risk-taking behaviours. The children recognise this and benefit from the security and stability that the home provides.

There have been several allegations about the staff. These have all been referred to the designated officer and investigations have taken place. Steps to protect the children and the staff are in place. However, in one case, the procedures were not followed through. The potential risks were fully acknowledged, and the allegation was not substantiated. The management of this allegation has been investigated by the organisation. The learning outcomes from this and actions to ensure that the safeguarding procedures work better in the future have been implemented.

The staff work collaboratively with the children and regularly use compromise. The staff rarely impose behavioural consequences. However, when they do, the records of these are unclear. This could result in inconsistent staff responses.

There are few bullying incidents and the children rarely leave the home without prior agreement. Reasons and triggers for children who go missing are explored in return interviews. The staff provide time to encourage the children to think about their actions, discuss these and reflect. This has helped to reduce incidents.

There is an improved proforma to ensure that agency staff are checked fully for their suitability. These checks are recorded by the manager. This helps to ensure that children are protected.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The established, experienced manager holds a relevant level 5 qualification. She leads an enthusiastic and dynamic team of staff. The staff are nurturing and compassionate in their approach to the children's care. They fully embrace and reflect the ethos of the organisation.

The previous shortfalls have been addressed in full. There have been several changes to the staff team, and emerging vacancies have been recruited to. The manager no longer uses agency staff. The deployment of staff from other homes and regular bank staff provide the children with better continuity of care.

There are some aspects of managerial monitoring that could improve. However, these do not detract from the children achieving good outcomes. The monitoring and oversight of some records is poor. Risk assessment documents are unwieldy and fail to highlight current risks concisely enough. Bullying incidents are not tracked to assess the impact on individuals. Despite this, the staff are aware of the dynamics and supervise the children closely. This protects the children.

Staff meetings are regular and there is a clear focus on each child's progress. The staff feel supported and have supervision, but there are gaps in the records to evidence this. This omission fails to provide a record of staff performance or the areas in which the staff excel or need to improve.

Children are actively involved in the home and develop a strong sense of belonging and family. They feel empowered and are actively involved in staff recruitment and household chores.

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: SC063814

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

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

Responsible individual: Annriette Mynhardt

Registered manager: Janet North

Inspector

Deirdra Keating, social care inspector

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