

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	11/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC065730
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Derby City Council
Registered person address	Treasurer's Department, Council House, Corporation Street, Derby DE1 2FE
Responsible individual	Suanne Lim
Registered manager	Samantha Watts
Inspector	Ros Chapman

Inspection date	11/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC065730

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children and young people enjoy coming to this home and have a positive experience during their short breaks. They have the opportunity to do things that they may not be able to do at home and they socialise with their friends.
- Admissions are well planned. Children and young people only start their breaks once a home visit has been undertaken, full information about their needs and routines has been obtained and they have had a number of tea visits to the home.
- Staff provide good care and support. They know the children and young people well and they are committed to meeting their needs and ensuring that they have a good time. Children and young people who have complex healthcare needs receive good-quality care from qualified nurses.
- Good staffing levels and secure premises keep children and young people safe from harm.
- Behaviour is well managed because staff know the children and young people well and they are able to pre-empt incidents. Consequently, restraint is rarely used and children's and young people's experiences are more positive.
- Relationships with parents are very good. There is good communication, and parents are confident about the quality of the care and support that their children receive.
- Partnership working is good. There is good communication with children's social workers, and the home works well as part of a multi-agency team to provide effective and flexible support.
- The manager is developing the service and has made changes to improve accountability and make the service more integrated with the health professionals.
- Two shortfalls have been identified. The home has had a small number of unplanned emergency placements, which is not consistent with its statement of purpose. The use of 'safe beds' must be underpinned through the education, health and care (EHC) plan or recorded as a restraint, to comply with regulatory requirements.

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person/s meet/s 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 ensure that the home is at all times conducted in a manner that is consistent with its statement of purpose. (Regulation 16(5))	25/11/2016
The registered person must ensure that restraint, which is planned or provided for as a matter of routine, is in the child's EHC plan or statement of special educational needs. (Regulation 35(4))	25/11/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home that provides short breaks for up to 10 children and young people who have sensory impairment, learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The trust that provides the nursing care is registered with the Care Quality Commission and subject to separate inspection.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/01/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/08/2015	Full	Good
27/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/10/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Children and young people receive good-quality care and support during their short breaks. Good systems for obtaining pre-admission information ensure that needs and routines are well known and understood, so that they can be replicated as far as possible to make transitions positive. Parents play a very active part in all arrangements, including introductory visits, so that they can continue to share information about their child's needs. As many of the children and young people have very complex healthcare needs, this information sharing is a vital part of ensuring that good and safe care is provided. Staff are committed to ensuring that children and young people have a positive experience while accessing the service. They are child focused and, although some children and young people do not use verbal communication, staff are attuned to their communication methods, so they can respond to their wishes and feelings in an appropriate way. Interactions between staff, children and young people are warm and caring, and it is evident that staff know them well. Children's and young people's participation has been increased recently. A children's council has been established, so that they have a formal mechanism for sharing their views. They were included in giving their views about the special educational needs (SEN) and disability agenda to the head of service at the last meeting. There is a suggestion box, and their views are canvassed at reviews and during their day-to-day care. As no child or young person spends more than 75 days a year at this home, most of their educational and healthcare needs are met by their parents, who retain overall responsibility. However, each child or young person has a progression target, which is agreed with the family and other agencies involved in the child's life. This is addressed during each short break and monitored at their reviews. Children and young people have made progress in terms of communication, socialisation, personal care, independence skills and behaviour. For example, they may go to the shops to purchase something, so they become better acquainted with money. Importantly, children and young people enjoy their short breaks. One young person said, 'They are like a family to me.' Parents and social workers confirmed that the children and young people are happy accessing the service. One social worker said, 'The children love coming here.' A parent said of his son, 'He comes home happy and relaxed.' Parents and social workers comment about the additional opportunities that the short breaks provide, including trips in the summer. New additions to activities in the home include a music man and drama therapy.	

Children and young people access local facilities, such as the park, and go to the shops, which they may not do at home. There are also good facilities in the home, such as outdoor play equipment, sensory rooms and soft play areas. Children and young people have pamper sessions, play board games and bake, all of which contribute to their enjoyment of life.

Staff make every effort to make sure that short breaks are planned well to take into account friendship groups, as well as the children's and young people's vulnerabilities and the skills of staff. This ensures that children and young people can socialise with their friends and do age- and ability-appropriate activities.

When young people leave the service, the home is involved, along with the parents, to ensure that the adult services are fully informed of the young person's needs and wishes.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Good staffing levels, effective planning and high levels of supervision result in a service that provides safe care. The building provides an appropriate level of security to prevent unauthorised access. Internal security systems ensure that children and young people are safe. Consequently, children and young people do not go missing from this home, although there are individual protocols for staff to follow if this were to happen. Risk is comprehensively assessed and documented. Risk assessments provide staff with clear guidance, and these are updated in the light of emerging needs or changes in circumstances. The children and young people who use this service are not at risk of self-harm, child sexual exploitation or drug and alcohol misuse. However, they are extremely vulnerable as a result of their disabilities. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of this and use their knowledge and skills to keep them safe. Although staff have had training in safeguarding, the manager plans to deliver some more to the whole unit next month, to ensure that all staff are very clear about the procedures to follow. When children or young people are on a child protection plan, staff work well as part of the multi-agency team to provide effective support and protection. They attend reviews and carry out the actions that have been identified for them. A social worker commented, 'They are a vital part of the support.' Behaviour is well managed. The care plans provide written guidance for staff, to	

promote a consistent response to behavioural challenges. The use of nursing staff has recently been introduced on the unit that accommodates the children and young people who have more challenging behaviours, in order to strengthen this. A social worker said, 'They work really well with challenging young people. They see past the behaviour and look at the child.' Staff know the children and young people well and use this knowledge to pre-empt situations that may cause challenges or incidents. The effectiveness of this is demonstrated by the very low numbers of restraints (three) in the last year and no sanctions. Restraints are recorded appropriately and have good managerial oversight. This leads to further discussion in the staff team to bring about any learning for future practice. However, some of the children and young people who use the service sleep in 'safe beds' that replicate their sleeping arrangements at home. This is a form of restraint and must be recorded as necessary in the EHC plan if it is not to be recorded as a restraint each time it is used.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home is managed efficiently and effectively by the registered manager, who has been in post for approximately one year. She has a social work qualification, relevant experience and is currently undertaking the level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare. The management team comprises a lead nurse and two experienced and long-standing deputy managers, who together bring complementary skills and interests to form a strong and effective team. The home is well staffed with qualified nurses and residential childcare workers, all of whom either have the appropriate qualification or are working towards it. There have been some recent staffing shortages that have been covered by agency workers, but, in the main, the staff team is stable, consistent and experienced. Appropriate recruitment is currently taking place to address the deficits in the numbers of permanent staff. Staff are well supported through regular, reflective supervision, unit and team meetings and access to training. The manager has identified training as an area that can be improved to make it more relevant to the needs of the home. This includes more specific and detailed training about autism. The home has a child-focused ethos. It provides short breaks that are well planned, in order to promote the best possible experiences for the children and young people, who have varying needs and abilities. This occurs through careful	

matching, taking into account friendship groups and vulnerabilities, and the skills of staff. However, over the last few months, a small number of children and young people have been admitted as a result of an emergency. These admissions were not planned, due to the circumstances, and although the manager and staff team did all they could to minimise risk to and the impact on the other children and young people, the number of these admissions was not consistent with the statement of purpose, which allows for emergency admissions on 'very rare' occasions. Some short breaks had to be cancelled as a result, which meant that some children and young people did not benefit from their regular experience at this home.

There are good systems for ensuring that leaders and managers understand the impact of the home on children's and young people's experiences, progress and outcomes. These include regular internal and external monitoring, supervision, reviews, progression targets and file audits. The manager has a clear sense of where things can improve and a plan to achieve the changes to bring these improvements about. There is improved integration between health and social care, an area that is ongoing. Systems have been implemented, such as shift leading, to improve accountability, care plans are now integrated and a children's council has been established. A social worker commented positively, saying, 'The manager has got new ideas and new ways of doing things and is pushing the boundaries a bit.'

Partnership working is a real area of strength. There are extremely positive relationships with children's social workers, health professionals and families. The home is co-located with the children's disability team, so access to other professionals is easy and effective. One social worker said, 'They are really good and supportive.' Another professional commented, 'There is good communication and good liaison with the network.' The manager is not afraid to challenge partners, but does this professionally and in the best interests of children and young people. This ensures that all the professionals involved in a child's or young person's life are delivering a consistent service to meet all of the assessed needs. Parents commented that staff go 'above and beyond', and that the service is 'second to none'. One parent said, 'I can't praise it enough. They do an excellent job and are a great team.'

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

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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