

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	27/08/2015
Unique reference number	SC065730
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Derby City Council
Registered person address	Treasurers Department, Council House, Corporation Street, DERBY, DE1 2FE

Responsible individual	Rodney Jones
Registered manager	Elizabeth Gaskin
Inspector	Ros Chapman

Inspection date	27/08/2015
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 are consulted regularly about their care, and their wishes and feelings are taken seriously. This is despite the fact that most of the children and young people are non-verbal in their communication and have very complex medical needs.
- Children and young people enjoy coming to the home for their short stay. They are happy, have fun and they make friends and have new experiences. The home provides a good range of outdoor and indoor facilities and opportunities to access the wider community, to enhance their short break.
- Transitions are well planned. Parents and other involved professionals are fully involved in care planning, and the resulting care plans, behaviour management plans, risk assessments and health care plans are of a good quality to enable all staff to deliver the highly complex care consistently.
- Parents express a high level of satisfaction with the care and support. Staff are approachable, listen to their views and try to find solutions to any difficulties or concerns. They describe the staff as 'brilliant'.
- The home provides a flexible and responsive service. It adapts what it can offer to enable the child, young person and family to receive the care and support required.
- Stakeholders speak highly of the service. The communication is good and the care and support delivered are consistent with that provided by the family and other professionals.
- Managers and staff are child-focused and committed to providing the best possible service. They are continually thinking of ways to improve and develop.
- Shortfalls have been identified in relation to staff training and supervision. Staff supervision, for some members of staff, is not as regular as it should be. A small number of staff have not yet commenced the qualification which is now required for all staff who care for children. Although mandatory training is up to date, more specialist training, for example, in relation to autism, would be of benefit as that reflects the needs of some of the children and young people using the service.

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

Statutory Requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person/s meets 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 with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
ensure that all employees undertake appropriate continuing professional development, with reference to training in autism (Regulation 33(4)(a))	02/11/2015
ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience (Regulation 33(4)(b))	02/11/2015
ensure that anyone working in a care role has the appropriate qualification by the relevant date. (Regulation 32(4))	01/04/2016

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home which provides short breaks for up to 10 children and young people with sensory impairment, learning disabilities and physical disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
30/10/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
18/12/2013	CH - 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 benefit from high quality care, based on comprehensive care planning, which meets their individual needs. This enables them to make consistent progress, as care planning takes full account of the views of parents and other professionals involved in their life. Parents say, 'we work as a team', and, 'it mirrors what we do at home'. This enables children and young people to settle as they are used to their routines. Children and young people enjoy their short breaks and have good relationships with the staff. They also have opportunities to make friends and socialise and this is taken into account when planning the short breaks. Friendships are supported. One child said what he liked best was 'playing' and 'his friends'. Children and young people access the community during their short breaks. They have new experiences such as using public transport. Because of their complex needs, some parents may struggle to take them to the park, the cinema or shopping. These are all experiences they have at this home and which they enjoy. This adds value to their lives. The facilities are very good throughout and the décor is as homely as possible. There is a wide range of types of bed and other equipment so that various needs can be fully accommodated. New equipment has been recently purchased to enhance this. The indoor space has been improved in one of the units to make it larger. As this unit has children and young people who are more physically dependent, this has enhanced their experiences. Some use particular beds which can now be brought into the living area, thus ensuring they are included at all times while having their need for physical comfort fully met. There is a new flat screen television with a film channel, and lots of sensory equipment. This promotes their relaxation as well as stimulation, depending on what and how it is used. Children and young people enjoy the outdoor space which the home provides, which includes a vegetable garden that they water and where they pick vegetables. They also enjoy the outdoor play equipment, some of which, because of its size, could not be available at home. Children and young people have targets which are identified and monitored at reviews. These may be to improve self-care skills so they become more independent. For some, the target is to have a good quality of life while having a short break. Some steps are small yet significant. All achievements are celebrated and there are plenty of photographs around the home to remind children and young people of the experiences they have had.	

All the children and young people have full-time school places. Parents retain responsibility for their child's educational needs but staff work cooperatively to support educational progress, for example, by attending meetings. Similarly, parents retain responsibility for their child's health, and because of their complex needs, children and young people may have a variety of health professionals involved in their care. The nursing and care staff work with all professionals to provide consistent care. Children and young people benefit from at least one qualified nurse being in the home at all times so any crises are responded to promptly. This also contributes to safe medication practices.

Most children and young people are non-verbal. Staff place a high premium on eliciting their views. They do this by observation of expressions, body language and sounds, and because they get to know them well, staff are able to understand what they want and if they are happy.

Transitions are well planned. Admissions are very thorough. The staff take time to get to know the child and their family, and visits to the home are progressed at the child's pace. A parent commented, 'I am impressed; the introductions are fantastic', and said how friendly, efficient and accommodating the staff have been. When young people move on to adult services, staff work well with the young person, all professionals and the family to make this a smooth process.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Children and young people are protected from harm because staff take a positive and proactive approach to safeguarding. The children and young people who access this service do not misuse alcohol or illegal substances, nor do they go missing from care. However, their vulnerabilities bring different risks. Staff demonstrate a robust awareness of the need to consider non-verbal cues and changes in behaviour in their assessments. They know it is vitally important to get to know the children and young people well so they can spot any changes which may be significant. Effective working relationships with children's social workers promote prompt responses to any concerns. There has been learning from previous incidents to ensure there is no delay in reporting. Staff have had recent safeguarding training and this learning has been reinforced in team meetings. There is a strong emphasis on wishes and feelings, and staff respond if children or young people appear unhappy. For example, if a child or young person seems distressed during overnight stays, this is reassessed in consultation with parents, carers and social workers to see how adjustments can be made. This may result in	

more frequent evening or day visits. Children's and young people's care needs and vulnerabilities are also assessed during the planning of short breaks, to ensure the right mix of staff can meet those needs, and that the children and young people are appropriately placed together. This promotes safe care.

Risk is very well assessed and documented so that staff are fully aware of how to respond, and do this consistently. This may include the advice of other disciplines, such as the complex behaviour service. Behaviour management plans form part of this process. Because this is managed well, restraints and sanctions have not been used, other than restraints such as gaiters to prevent self-harm, as highlighted in multidisciplinary care management plans.

Staff are recruited following robust procedures so that children and young people are protected from unsuitable people having contact with them. There are effective procedures for checking and monitoring any visitors to the premises. Children's and young people's safety is further promoted by the environment being safe and secure. Regular health and safety checks are carried out and equipment is serviced at the appropriate regularity. Individual personal evacuation plans, rather than more generic unit evacuation plans, are being developed to further promote fire safety as the manager has identified this as an area of improvement.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The home is well managed by an appropriately qualified and experienced registered manager. She is due to leave the service shortly, but the provider has acted promptly to fill the post. A new manager is due to start at the end of September, and in the intervening period, the two experienced assistant managers will manage the home. This is an appropriate short-term arrangement. The home is appropriately staffed, and particular attention is given when planning the rota to reflect the healthcare and other needs of the children and young people, including friendship groups. The staff team is long standing and there are very few vacancies. However, a small number of staff do not have the required qualification to care for children, which they need to attain by April 2016, and are not currently booked on a course. This has not had an impact on the care, due to their other relevant experience but is now a legal requirement. Leaders and managers have good systems for monitoring. The external monitoring is carried out regularly and provides challenge and advice to improve the quality of care. Since the last full inspection the manager has sent out a questionnaire to all parents and stakeholders to obtain feedback. There has also been a small	

consultation group for the more cognitively able children and young people. This, in addition to the manager's internal monitoring, is also used to improve services and inform a development plan for the home.

Leaders, managers and staff are child-focused, passionate and committed to providing a service of high quality. The manager has a good undertaking of how children and young people are progressing, but more formal systematic monitoring of this is an area she has identified could be improved. As a result, a new system is due to be implemented. The manager demonstrates that she is aspirational for the service to improve. The requirement made from the previous inspection has been addressed through the safeguarding training and team discussion. She arranged to visit other children's homes to see what she could learn from their practice and is implementing some ideas. Memory books for leavers is another area where she has developed the service for the benefit of young people so they are provided with a pictorial record of their time at this home.

Partnership working is a real strength of this home. Social workers are complimentary about the good communication, the flexibility and the responsiveness. For example, when a family was in crisis, they were able to offer more days at short notice. They altered the environment to continue to support another young person, and they tailored the service to meet the needs of another child and the family. Staff and managers work closely with schools to ensure they work consistently, and they always attend meetings, along with the parents. The home has nursing staff on duty all the time to support the very complex health needs of some of the children and young people. They also work with other health partners such as the complex behaviour service.

Parents and carers are effusive in their praise. They feel staff are friendly, approachable, listen to them and take their views into account. Comments include: 'it's fantastic'; 'I can't fault it'; 'staff are on the ball'; 'I have nothing but praise'; 'it's a great facility with a good mix of indoor and outdoor activities'; 'staff work well as a team and there is good continuity of care'; and, 'I give them 125%.' Most importantly, one parent said, 'my child is very happy here', which is echoed by others, and they know their children are safe and well cared for.

Although staff feel supported, not all staff have had regular supervision in the last few months. They have therefore not had the formal opportunity to reflect on their practice. Although staff have up-to-date mandatory training, more specialist training may provide new ideas to further improve the service. However, as the staff team is long standing and experienced, these shortfalls have not had an impact on the care and support the children and young people have received.

The children's guide has been improved since the last inspection. There are now two versions, both in symbolic form, to reflect children's and young people's differing levels of understanding. The statement of purpose has been reviewed recently to take account of the new standards and regulations. It reflects the

service offered, which is a home from home, and a place where children and young people have enjoyment and new experiences.

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 looked after children 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 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 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 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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