

SC066651

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home. It is registered to provide short breaks for children and young people who have complex needs.

Inspection dates: 3 to 4 October 2017

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 8 March 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: improved effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is outstanding because:

- The children and young people enjoy their stays. They have the opportunity to gain new experiences and form friendships that are highly positive and

rewarding.

- The children and young people gain new skills as they are supported to work towards achievable goals.
- The children and young people's visits to the home are carefully planned. This helps them to form friendships and participate in shared interests, while maintaining their safety.
- The children and young people receive individualised care, which is planned in partnership with parents, carers and professionals.
- The children and young people receive high quality care from a staff team that has vast levels of knowledge and experience.

The children's home's areas for development:

- As part of the monitoring of the home, the manager needs to ensure that he responds effectively to all monitoring processes. This will ensure that interested parties receive pertinent information about the home, and the manager's future plans for development.
- The staff team should receive regular supervision in line with the home's procedures.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
29/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/10/2015	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- The processes the registered person puts in place to enable a review to take place, should allow for a report to be generated at least once every six months. The generated report should be sent to Ofsted and the placing local authority of all children in the home who are looked-after children. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.3). This is with particular reference to the manager forwarding the completed report for the review of the quality of care to Ofsted.
- The information set out in the Statement of Purpose is an essential part of the process of agreement between the registered person and placing authority that a placement in that home is the right one for that child, and that the home will be able to respond effectively to the child's assessed needs. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.6). This is with particular reference to the manager ensuring that any updated copy of the home's Statement of Purpose is sent to Ofsted.
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2). This is with particular reference to the manager ensuring that all members of the staff team receive regular supervision.
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4). This is with particular reference to the manager ensuring that they have timely oversight of the recording on the children and young people's records, to maintain their accuracy and provide an opportunity to reflect on practice.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

The children and young people thoroughly enjoy their time during their short breaks. The staff plan the stays effectively, to ensure that the children and young people are carefully matched. Crucially, this provides them with the opportunity to relax, make friendships and have fun. The staff help the children and young people to be involved in

activities and events that are not available for them in their family homes. For example, the children and young people enjoy meals out at local restaurants and safely playing in the garden. One parent said: 'My son really enjoys his time during his breaks. He comes home and tells us all about his stay.'

Irrespective of their complex needs, the children and young people are routinely encouraged and helped by the staff to develop their independence. This includes working towards goals that have been created for them. For example, one child is now able to sit for longer at the dining table, and this is helping him to achieve a prolonged period of time eating, which in turn is helping to address the health concerns about his low weight. A parent said: 'My son's independence skills around meal preparation and self-help skills are improving significantly.'

The children and young people's communication abilities are well understood, and the staff respond consistently to the children and young people, ensuring that their needs and wishes are met. Members of the staff team are being trained in 'Makaton', and they are clearly utilising this for specific children. A staff member reported: 'I have attended 'Makaton' training. It was really good and I am implementing this into practice. It is really useful for the children and young people in the home.' In addition, for one child who also speaks Hindi, the staff have a glossary sheet of terms and phrases that he might use in addition to his English vocal wording. The staff were observed to sing to the children and young people when it is identified that this is enjoyed and a positive response is gained.

The children and young people are helped by a staff team whose knowledge and understanding of their needs is exceptional, and this is enabling the children and young people's presenting needs and behaviours to be managed effectively. The staff ensure that all needs are met while maintaining the children and young people's dignity and providing the children and young people with a sense of control over the care that is being given to them. This has a multitude of benefits, as it enables the children and young people to have their needs met, even though they might not be able to vocalise exactly what those needs are.

The children and young people enjoy a healthy and balanced array of foods. The staff team quickly implements the requests from family members to address any dietary needs of the children and young people. For example, the manager implemented a gluten-free menu to accommodate the needs of one child, and in addition the staff ensure that there are options of vegetarian, halal, and beef-free meals to respect the cultural beliefs of the children and young people.

The home is welcoming, and affords the children and young people good space and comfort in which they can enjoy their short breaks. There are developed areas in the home to provide children and young people with a variety of spaces for activities and relaxation. A staff member reported: 'The environment helps the children and young people get some social interaction that they might not normally get. Their stay provides an opportunity for the children and young people to experience sleepovers. It is like a little social hub.'

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

The children and young people are safely looked after during their short breaks. The staff routinely supervise the children and young people, both in the home and the community. With these levels of supervision, alongside effective procedures, the risk of incidents of missing, and the danger of exploitation of this vulnerable group, are minimised. Importantly, the children and young people can safely enjoy time in the garden and run independently, as the grounds of the home are secure and therefore facilitate this degree of freedom.

The children and young people are also protected by the effective administration of medication. The manager has further developed the medication recording procedures, to build on staff practices that have benefited from lessons learned from previous medication errors.

The staff confidently raise potential safeguarding concerns to professionals if they identify that the children, young people and their families are getting to a point of crisis. For example, the home is currently supporting a family who have reached a crisis point by accommodating their child for consecutive days. The staff team fully understands the needs of this child, and the risk that he poses to others. The staff are consistent in their approach and strategies to reduce the risk of harm to themselves or others. One staff member talked about changes to staff clothing to reduce the possibility of them being bitten, as the child likes the sound that bitten flesh makes.

The manager has taken immediate action to review admissions during this time. This is maintaining the safety of all the children and young people, and ensures that they enjoy their stay. This child's parent said: 'It has been a really good help to us. The staff have been brilliant. They have adapted to meet our son's needs and this supports us as a family. Our son does enjoy being there and I would definitely recommend it to anyone that needs a service.'

The children and young people are cared for with dignity and respect. The staff correctly communicate with the children and young people before and while they perform any personal care tasks. The staff routinely provide reasoning, reassurance and opportunity for the children and young people to take control of their personal care, including independent toileting. In addition, the staff are quick to respond to the children who choose to undress themselves in the company of others in the home.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is qualified, and comes with vast experience that enables him to continue to develop the service for the children and young people who attend for short breaks. A staff member stated: 'I have a lot of respect for my manager. He is very hands on. He is both knowledgeable and approachable. He gets stuck in and he is not just someone who oversees the running of the home.' This was echoed by another member of staff who

said: 'We have a good manager who we can talk to.'

The manager's hands-on approach and sound monitoring arrangements continue to ensure that the children and young people enjoy a good standard of care. The manager has identified deficits in practice and has quickly implemented change, for example in the home's medication procedures. However, although the registered manager clearly reviews the needs of the home, he needs to ensure that the staff practices are frequently reviewed as part of the supervision. The staff report that when they have supervision it is useful. One staff member said: 'Supervision is a good way of bringing in new ideas, while reinforcing strengths and developments in practice.'

The manager is supported by a highly skilled and experienced team of staff who provide a consistently high standard of care to the children and young people. Although there are currently staff vacancies, the manager is protecting the home from the recruitment of mediocre staff, and strives to maintain the impeccable standards of care. This will ensure that the needs of the children and young people are met to the highest standard. A parent said: 'The staff are really friendly and amazing at engaging [name] in things that spark his interest. They are really geared to his needs and he comes home and eagerly talks about his breaks.'

Partnership working is a strength, and the manager and his team have regular communication with parents, carers and professionals. The manager has implemented plans and developed practice based on consultation with others. In addition, the manager advocates for the children and young people, and actively challenges professionals when there is a delay in their needs being met. A parent said: 'Communication is really good and they always make contact before and after my child's visit.'

The manager has clear expectations of his team regarding their practice, and together they ensure that continuous reflection and discussions take place about the children and young people. The manager is able to learn from the staff practices, and clearly discusses these practices with the team to ensure that the best care is provided to the children and young people. In addition, the manager has clearly reviewed the needs of the home to evaluate where the service requires development. However, this needs further development to evidence an action plan.

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: SC066651

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Sheffield City Council,

Registered provider address: Town Hall, Pinstone Street, Sheffield S1 2HH

Responsible individual: Post Vacant

Registered manager: Garry Levesley

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, social care inspector

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