

Children's home – Interim inspection

Inspection date	24/01/2017
Unique reference number	SC066916
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Elaine Cooke
Inspector	Elaine Allison

Inspection date	24/01/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained effectiveness
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 last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness. The registered manager has the appropriate level of qualification and is very experienced in residential settings. She is passionate about the care of young people, highly motivated and a driving force for positive change. Young people are happy and safe in this home. They have positive relationships with staff, who know them well and understand their needs. Consequently, young people continue to benefit from living here. A parent commented, 'I know he is safe living there because he has come on [in] leaps and bounds. The staff really care and make sure he is safe.' Young people make good progress, especially in their education and engagement in activities. Young people benefit from education packages that meet their individual needs. For all, this has meant an increase in attendance to 100%, which is related to their improved attainment. Some staff have attended training at a young person's school. This enabled them to gain a clearer insight and understanding of the young person's learning needs, identifying strategies to further support his future studies at home. This means that staff can help the young person with additional schoolwork and has resulted in the young person surpassing his predicted levels. A parent commented, 'They are doing an incredible job. My son is back in school and has just passed his exams. I am so happy that he is living there with people that care about him and who encourage him.' A teacher said, 'We have noticed a positive change in his communication and confidence.' Staff are proud and celebrate the young people's achievements, For example, five members of the staff team nominated a young person for a 'celebrating success' award for his educational attainment. This level of pride and passion for young people shows that staff are fully committed to the young people and really want them to achieve and succeed. When young people go missing, staff are very proactive in their response. They actively search for missing young people and are fully aware of their vulnerabilities while out in the community. They respond appropriately and according to risk. They work well with the police and other professionals to ensure that young people are as safe as they can be. Staff spend time talking to young people about where they have been and whom they are associating with, helping young people to understand why they are worried or concerned. This helps to improve young	

people's safety over time. A social work manager commented, 'The manager in particular has been exceptionally proactive in advocating for the young man I have placed in her care and she has demonstrated her willingness to go the extra mile in an attempt to secure the best possible outcome for him.'

Training opportunities for staff and managers, alongside detailed discussion about policies and procedures, improve staff knowledge of safeguarding practice, ensuring that young people are afforded better protection. When staff have attended training, they complete an evaluation, which includes how they will make use of the learning in their day-to-day work with young people. This helps to ensure that the training is meaningful and focused on how staff can work together to secure better outcomes for the young people who live in the home.

Young people engage in a range of activities that keep them active, healthy and engaged. These include fishing, bowling and membership of a local cadet group. This engagement deflects them constructively from becoming involved in negative behaviour and provides fun and new experiences.

Feedback from professionals in respect of the efforts of staff to engage with and help and support young people is very good. One social worker summed up the views of others. He said that staff demonstrate 'a flexibility and commitment to promoting the welfare and positive development of the young people in their care.'

The supportive environment that staff create provides young people with the stability and security that they need and deserve.

The manager has good oversight of the home. She monitors placement plans and actions plans on a regular basis. Her oversight is evident in the comments that she makes about how they can be improved. Daily handovers, regular team meetings, supervision and discussions with young people also provide additional avenues through which the staff group is supported to improve its practice. The registered manager knows where improvements need to be made and has plans to address these.

The registered manager continues to provide strong leadership to the home. Since the last inspection, she has addressed one requirement and two recommendations, which has had a positive impact. Specifically, recording and management oversight in relation to behaviour management have improved, young people now have access to a computer and all reportable incidents are now notified to Ofsted as required.

There are two areas of improvement resulting in this inspection. On the day of the inspection, the workmen who were working in the home carrying out the refurbishment had not entered their full names in the visitors' book. The entries stated 'joiner'. This does not identify the workers. A further area for development includes ensuring that the home continues to reflect the warm, nurturing environment that staff create. In particular, carpets that are damaged or worn need to be replaced. These issues were discussed with the registered manager, who started to take action to address them.

Information about this children's home

This private children's home provides care and accommodation for up to four young people, who have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
02/06/2015	Full	Good
23/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
23/09/2014	Full	Good

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 staff provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming and supportive, and provides appropriate boundaries in relation to children's behaviour. Homes must also meet children's basic day-to-day needs and physical necessities. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7) In particular, ensure that all carpets are clean and free of cigarette burns.
- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's home regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) Specifically, staff should ensure that all records with regard to visitors to the home include the full names of visitors.

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 whom 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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance, 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted,' which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017