

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	09/02/2016
Unique reference number	SC067753
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	West Sussex County Council
Registered person address	West Sussex County Council, Director of Social Services, County Hall, Tower Street, CHICHESTER, West Sussex, PO19 1QT

Responsible individual	Annie MacIver
Registered manager	Dominic Riches
Inspector	Paul Taylor

Inspection date	09/02/2016
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	Requires improvement

SC067753

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people enjoy warm and supportive relationships with staff who evidently care for them.
- Members of staff work very hard to ensure that young people have access to a variety of activities and are active members of their local community.
- Staff are aware of each young person's vulnerabilities and work closely with them to make sure they are safe and protected.
- Excellent health care is underpinned by having a nurse available on site who provides high quality advice and assistance.
- Detailed care plans guide members of staff in providing nurture and good quality support.
- The management of transitions is very well thought through and planned.
- Provision of supervisions and appraisals has not been consistent to members of staff at a time when morale has been low in the staff team.
- Some recording, such as completions of records of physical restraints and recording of how complaints have been resolved, is not clear.

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
13. The leadership and management standard. In order to meet the leadership and management standard, with specific reference to ensuring the quality of recording is maintained and staff receive the support they need, the registered person must: 13 (2) (h) use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided by the home	31/03/2016
Ensure that all employees receive practice related supervision by a person with appropriate experience have their performance and fitness to perform their roles appraised at least once every year. (Regulation 33 (3) & 33 (4) (b) (c))	31/03/2016
Ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the details required. (Regulation 35 (3) (a))	31/03/2016
Ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of any investigation. (Regulation 39 (3))	31/03/2016

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

Ensure staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. With particular reference to ensuring that members of staff make accurate recordings of incidents and physical restraints. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62 paragraph 14.4)

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Full report

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides care and support for a maximum of 16 children. The home can accommodate children with both physical and learning disabilities. The home provides permanent placements or short breaks.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
01/09/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
14/11/2014	Full	Good
12/02/2014	Interim	Good progress

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
It is clear that young people develop trusting and caring relationships with staff who care for them. Nurturing support and detailed care plans ensures that staff know what each young person needs in order to feel safe and secure. Young people have a minimum of one member of staff allocated each shift to support them. As a result, young people have adults caring for them who can invest energy and time in promoting their well-being and progress. Staff know how each young person prefers to communicate. Many young people use augmented communication methods such as sign language and Picture Exchange Communication Scheme (PECS) while others have developed their own adaptations and idiosyncratic ways of communicating. Members of staff ascertain how each young person communicates prior to their admission and information from parents is key in understanding this process. This ensures that members of staff have a good insight and understanding of each young person's ability and methods of communication. While most young people who use the service may not understand the concept of what constitutes a formal complaint, staff understand how each young person makes their displeasure known. Young people are made aware of who they can talk to if they are unhappy and who is available for them; this information is made available in formats which they can understand. All young people who use this service have full time education placements. Staff support them to attend and maintain close liaison with teachers via daily handovers, reviews and the use of home/school books. As a result of this effective joint working, young people make good progress, especially when bearing in mind their disabilities and starting points. There is a drive and determination by staff to enable young people to access activities and interests in the local community. The young people's disabilities are not seen as a bar and staff provide the assistance and support they need in order to do this. Activities include bowling, cinema, swimming and trips to parks and the shops. As a result, young people are not isolated within the home and enjoy enriching and stimulating interests and activities. Young people benefit from excellent health arrangements. There is a nurse based in the home who provides staff with expertise and oversight. This is especially effective when planning and providing care for young people with complex health	

needs. The nurse maintains close liaison with external health services and this ensures that all necessary advice and treatment is made available. Staff training is provided in areas such as infection control and supporting young people with specific feeding regimes and processes such as percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy feeding. These levels of skills are supported by a robust system for administering and auditing medication.

Careful transitions for admission to the home and for moving on are in place. There is an attention to detail which means that these processes are paced at a rate commensurate with each young person's needs and their ability to cope with change. Transition plans are detailed, sensitive and very well thought through. Subsequently, young people's anxieties and worries are managed to an excellent standard.

Most young people living at the home do so for short periods of respite care. Some young people live at the home permanently and are in need of close support when they have contact with their families. This support is well structured and there are clear arrangements in place so that contact for these young people is a positive experience.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
The structure and support provided to the young people ensures that their safety is promoted to a good standard. Staff are acutely aware of each young person's vulnerabilities and provide close nurturing support to them. Consultation with young people, which is presented in a format they understand, confirms that young people feel safe and like living at or visiting the home. All staff are trained in safeguarding and child protection; they know what to do and who to inform if there are concerns about a young person's welfare. The home liaises promptly with safeguarding agencies if concerns are raised. This approach further protects young people and ensures that action plans with protection and support strategies can be put in place to safeguard young people and support parents. Risk assessments are updated regularly to ensure that all staff are aware of each young person's vulnerability in different situations. For example, what levels of support and supervision they need when they are on outings or are near traffic. Young people's safety is further supported by careful consideration of the mix of young people who are using the service. This means that inappropriate mixes of	

young people are avoided.

Individual behaviour management plans, which are developed using multi-disciplinary knowledge and expertise, outline how each young person prefers to be supported and cared for. They contain, in detail, the strategies to be used to encourage positive behaviour and the support needed if they become distressed or anxious. As a result of this high quality planning, young people make good progress and incidents of challenging behaviour reduce drastically.

Sanctions are not used in the home due to the young people's cognitive abilities and understanding. On occasions young people have to be physically controlled to prevent injury to themselves or others. The use of physical restraint is low and its use appropriate. Recording of these incidents is not consistently achieved and on occasion lacks detail or has not been sufficiently completed within 24 hours of the incident. While this has not affected young people's safety, it does make prompt and accurate assessment of the incidents problematic.

Recruitment of staff is robust and all necessary background checks, including a check by the disclosure and barring service, are carried out prior to adults working in the home. This ensures that only adults with safe working histories are employed to work with these vulnerable young people.

The home is suitably secure and safe for the young people. All areas are well maintained and all necessary safety checks for equipment and fire systems carried out regularly. Additionally, each young person has a personal emergency evacuation plan in place which outlines the level of support they require in the event of an emergency evacuation.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Requires improvement
The home has an experienced and qualified Registered Manager who has been in post for over three years. He has over 17 years of experience of working with young people and has achieved Level 4 in Management and Working with Young People. There have been high levels of sickness in the staff team. This, combined with a recent roster change, has had an impact on the stability and morale of staff. Gaps in rotas have been covered by staff working overtime and by the use of agency staff. Agency staff used are from an established group and this enables consistent care to be provided for the young people. However, despite their quality and commitment, the stability of the staff team is not supported by the continuous use	

of temporary staff and the high rates of sickness.

As a result of these shortages, supervision and appraisals of staff has been piecemeal. This means that some staff have had significant periods when they have not received formal supervision at a time when morale is low. Additionally, monitoring of the quality of some records has not been robust and has led to shortfalls. Although these shortfalls have not impacted upon young people's safety, they undermine the professionalism and thoroughness of recording. For example, poor recording of an incident has not been addressed in supervision despite this being identified as an action by a manager.

All staff attend regular training which keeps them up to date with their skills and knowledge and ensures that they can undertake their roles effectively.

Complaints made by carers are investigated and action plans put in place. However, records do not consistently show whether the complainant is happy that the matter has been resolved or that they are satisfied with the outcome.

Good liaison is maintained with partner agencies, such as education placements and social workers. This ensures that all relevant information is shared for the benefit of the young people. For example, the sharing of young people's behaviours or medical issues to ensure that care is consistently achieved whoever is looking after each young person.

Significant events are shared with relevant agencies, such as Ofsted, placing social workers and the local safeguarding children board. The effective liaison with these agencies ensures that practice is monitored and that transparency and collaboration is achieved.

Parents report that there is good contact with members of staff in the home. Telephone calls and emails between key workers and parents occur regularly and written communication is also maintained through the completion of home/school books. These provide carers with daily diaries and updates on how each young person has been.

Carefully planned admissions and a very good knowledge of each young person's needs ensures that mixes of young people during periods of respite care are appropriate. Careful consideration of each young person's behaviour and impact on their peers is given prior to a service being provided. As a result, young people are kept safe and staff are able to offer the support and care they need.

Individual care plans are detailed and are monitored by senior members of staff to ensure they are up to date and relevant. The information they contain enables members of staff to have the information they need in order to provide good care for the young people.

There is a clear and up to date statement of purpose which accurately reflects the service provided. As a result, parents and other stakeholders, such as social workers, are clear as to what the service aims to provide to families and children.

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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