

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC387148
Inspector	Michelle Edge
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Steven Anthony Gibson
Date of last inspection	14/01/2015

Inspection date	04/03/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **sustained effectiveness**.

Since the last inspection the Statement of Purpose has been updated and now contains all the relevant detail about the running of the home. Some work has been done to improve written information about young people's lives, but the records still lack detailed information and care plans, placement plans and health records are not up to date and do not identify all of their current needs. The physical environment remains in need of attention to ensure young people live in comfortable place.

Staff are caring, motivated and have positive relationships with young people. One young person said 'the staff are fun, kind and help me make cookies.' A key strength of the home is the commitment and dedication of staff, who build good working relationships with young people, their families and the professionals involved in their lives This ensures that they have effective support that enables them to develop socially and emotionally. One parent said 'the staff always keep us updated about any issues as they arise, that's important to us as a family.'

Some young people's individualised plans identify risks they may face and outlined strategies to ensure their welfare is promoted and protected. The plans for young people are often put into practice and address their needs and circumstances. Staff are knowledgeable about young people's particular vulnerabilities relating to their age, understanding and disability. They are proactive in accessing opportunities for young people to positively engage and enjoy social experiences, for example; one girl attends a local Zumba class and likes to play football. Staff support her to attend and play an active role. Another young person likes to attend the science museum and take part in the interactive exhibitions. These opportunities have developed the young people's confidence, self-esteem and social skills.

The use of sanctions and restraints in the home are minimal. For young people living at the home, sanctions have little meaning due to their level of functioning. Staff use

distraction and other techniques to diffuse difficult situations. They are creative and have an awareness of working with young people without impeding on their liberty. For example, the staff became aware of a young person becoming distressed in the dining room with other young people, they diverted her attention into the living room and the situation quickly subsided. Staff present as positive role models and implement the home's behaviour management policy and effectively promote positive behaviour for young people.

While all young people have health plans, some records failed to contain all relevant information. For example, they do not identify clearly young people's specific medical conditions and any medical aids they require. Therefore not all staff are fully aware of the health needs of young people and how these can be best met. Medication records have improved and these now contain all relevant information including the dosage to be given and the appropriate times of day. All records are now checked and verified by another staff member to confirm young people have taken the correct medication. This ensures the health and well-being of young people.

Some staff have opportunities to regularly reflect on their practice, performance and development, although supervision does not consistently take across the team. Staff have developed their knowledge and skills from a comprehensive training plan, including training on safeguarding, medication and working with young people with autism. Staff feel better equipped to carry out their role, and are developing ideas about how to apply what they have learnt in their practice. For example, one staff member said 'I have a better understanding of autism now and the training provided an opportunity to discuss the young people and how we can meet their needs.' Team meetings are held on a regular basis and provide a time for reflective practice and development. The staff team said that they feel supported by the current management team and said 'he is approachable, supportive and fair.'

The external and internal monitoring systems are not sufficiently robust because they have not identified the issues found during this inspection. The Registered Manager understands the strengths and areas of improvement for the home, but has yet to fully develop a clearer monitoring system of the records so they can measure the impact the service is having. Once embedded this should ensure that any themes or practice issues are identified and managed appropriately. This should support young people to maintain important relationships and help ensure their welfare is safeguarded.

Information about this children's home

This home is a purpose-built property which provides residential care, shared care and respite care for up to five young people with autism, learning disabilities, and physical disabilities. The home is run by a private company.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/01/2015	Full	good
14/02/2014	Interim	good progress
31/10/2013	Full	good
04/02/2013	Interim	good progress

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

Recommendations

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

- ensure there is an effective system in place to monitor the quality and adequacy of record keeping and take action when needed, with particular regards to risk assessments, care plans, the homes development plan, all records are correctly dated (NMS 22.1)
- ensure the home provides a comfortable homely environment and is well maintained and decorated, in particular avoidable hazards are removed or minimised and remedial work is finished to a good standard (NMS 10.3)
- ensure reports by the Registered Manager and the independent person into the records kept by the home identify any concerns about specific incidents patterns and trends and the action taken to address these issues (NMS 21.2)
- ensure young people's health is promoted in accordance with their placement plan and in particular that health care plans are sufficiently detailed with regards to young people's specific medical conditions and medical aids they require. (6.5)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.