

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	15/12/2015
Unique reference number	SC399222
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	Sharlene Vallance
Inspector	Paul Taylor

Inspection date	15/12/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding

SC399222

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Members of staff provide consistent high quality care and support to these very vulnerable young people.
- Close multidisciplinary working ensures that all the needs of the young people are known and met to an excellent standard.
- Safeguarding is at the forefront of practice. Highly effective planning means young people are kept as safe as possible and there is close effective working with safeguarding agencies.
- Leadership and management is of a high calibre. Leaders have high expectations of themselves and of staff. This drive for excellence maintains the highest possible quality of care.
- Young people make excellent progress, especially when bearing in mind their starting points. Staff clearly care passionately about the young people and take delight in their successes.
- One minor administrative shortfall found during this inspection has had no impact on the wellbeing of the young people.

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 recommendation(s):

The registered person is responsible for ensuring that each child's day to day health and well-being needs are met. This is with specific regard to ensuring that all the young people's personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) are consistent with current practice in the home. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 33 paragraph 7.3)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This service is run by the local authority, and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to three children with severe learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/11/2014	Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
Highly committed care from dedicated professionals ensures that young people thrive in this home. Consistent routines and strategies, which have been specifically designed for each young person, enable them to make significant progress especially when bearing in mind their starting points. A comprehensive assessment process is in place to review the needs of young people against their initial care plan. Six weekly reviews allow for a detailed consideration of all aspects of individual need. These reviews involve the whole staff team, parents and other relevant professionals. This enables all contributors to the care plan to review its effectiveness and subsequent progress. Members of staff know the young people they care for extremely well. The attention to detail in their daily care means that the young people learn to trust and experience stability and safety. Each young person's idiosyncratic way of communication is understood by the staff and they use this knowledge to inform their care of the young person. All young people have educational placements. Staff support each young person to attend school or college, this is an embedded part of their routine. Attendance at school is therefore excellent. Additionally the home has a teaching assistant who also works at a nearby school which the young people attend. This ensures seamless communication about the young people's education especially when there are any incidents of note or issues to share. Young people are able to take part in stimulating and fun activities in the home and in the community. The excellent knowledge of each young person's needs, interest and vulnerabilities helps staff support them to take part in identified activities. For example, young people are taken swimming, to parks, youth clubs, shopping, the cinema and zoos. As a result of this support young people are not isolated. They socialise with peers and in the community at a level with which they can cope. Young people have their health needs met to an excellent standard. Specific and complex needs are known. Staff provide high quality care which follows guidance from health professionals, such as the clinical psychologist, and speech and language therapists. Where needed additional training is undertaken by the staff to ensure that they can meet any specific needs, for example, epilepsy.	

There is a thorough and robust medication system used by members of staff. This ensures close monitoring of administration and stringent auditing. As a result, the young people receive all necessary support to take their medication.

Young people are treated with the highest degree of dignity and respect. Staff are astute in meeting personal care needs and this is done with skill and sensitivity.

Members of staff actively provide outreach support to the young people's families. As a result, communication is fluid and open. The staff team provides a key service in supporting young people to live with their families in their own homes as well as caring for them in the children's home. Packages of care are seen as partnerships, with the young person's wellbeing seen as the centre of practice. 'I have nothing but trust and gratitude for May House staff', was a comment from one parent.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
Staff and managers take all possible steps to ensure that young people's safety is promoted to an excellent standard. The complex nature of the young people's needs together with their extreme vulnerabilities means that the staff work diligently to make sure they are nurtured and supported. Any issues which arise are shared with other professionals promptly. This ensures a cohesive response which can use multi-disciplinary expertise to improve young people's safety. For example, periods of challenging behaviour are assessed and analysed using advice from specialists such as the clinical psychologist. This helps staff to develop care plans and strategies which reduce young people's anxieties. No young people have been missing from the home. Their vulnerabilities mean that if they were to be left unattended in the community they would be at extreme risk of harm. Therefore there are explicit individualised risk assessments which outline what levels of supervision and support each young person needs. As a result young people receive the close support needed when out in the community. The nature of the young people's disabilities means that any periods of transition have to be very carefully planned. Each young person has a detailed admission process paced at a rate commensurate with their ability to cope with change. These high quality bespoke plans actively include families and other professionals and underpin the thoroughness of the management of transitions. Detailed and in-depth behaviour management plans ensure that each young person's needs, for support and management of anxieties, are known with	

strategies put in place to reduce these. Behaviour is closely monitored and analysed, this information is shared between professionals such as the clinical psychologist, occupational therapists, speech and language therapists and parents. This enables everyone to work consistently and to develop good plans and strategies.

Any incidents of physical intervention are scrutinised closely. Records are of a good quality and show that restraints are used, on the whole, for very short periods of time and only when necessary. Trends and patterns are assessed and strategies amended to manage these. Attention to detail and constant review ensures practice is strenuously monitored.

All staff are aware of what to do and who to contact if they have concerns about a young person's wellbeing. They have used their training and knowledge effectively to ensure that young people's safety is protected. There are good links with the local safeguarding children board and the local authority designated officer. This ensures swift actions are taken in line with local and national protocols.

There is an effective recruitment process in place which ensures that only adults with appropriate backgrounds work in the home.

The health and safety of young people is treated with utmost importance. Regular fire drills ensure young people know how to evacuate safely. Routine checks and tests of equipment and the living environment means the home is safe to live in.

Each young person has a PEEP which outlines their support needs in the event of an evacuation from the building. These plans do not reflect the current updated practice in the home, especially regarding the routine testing times of fire alarms. Although this has had no impact on the wellbeing of the young people, the plans need to be updated to reflect current practice.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Outstanding.
The management of the home is outstanding. The Registered Manager and her team show a tireless commitment to meeting the complex needs of young people to the highest standards. She is suitably qualified and experienced and holds the required Level 4 Award in Leadership and Management. The management team are tenacious in promoting the individual needs of young people and expect high levels of practice from the staff team and other professionals. This results in a culture where young people come first.	

Close scrutiny of care plans and embedded, routine, multi-disciplinary reviews of young people's progress, ensures that monitoring of care is highly effective. As a result, the team learn from practice. The analysis of any significant issues means that there is no complacency this, combined with a culture which promotes reflection and learning, supports improvements in practice.

Staff work closely with other specialists who are regarded as part of each young person's 'team around the child'. These include a clinical psychologist, speech and language therapist and occupational therapist. As a result, each young person's care is assessed and delivered with specialist insight and a holistic consideration of their needs.

All staff have regular supervision which explores their performance and how they are completing their tasks and roles. Additionally, annual appraisals set targets for staff to achieve in relation to expanding their knowledge and skills. These targets are revisited every supervision session to see how they are developing practice. This approach ensures that staff are actively reflecting on their role and performance and this supports the culture of driving the service forward.

Effective appraisals and supervision are supported by a varied training program which ensures all staff have the knowledge to perform their roles to a high standard.

The home has an appropriate statement of purpose which outlines clearly the aims of the home. This means that parents and professionals are clear as to what to expect when a young person is living there.

The effective multi-disciplinary working achieved by the home ensures that any significant events are notified to the appropriate authorities promptly. The management of the home is open and transparent with input from external professionals welcomed. This ensures accountability and excellent cohesive working.

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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