

SC400901

Registered provider: Break

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is registered for up to six children. During term time it provides six weekly-boarding places for children who attend local schools that cater for complex needs. The home also provides a short-break service for disabled children at weekends and during school holidays. The manager has been registered since 2016.

Inspection dates: 5 to 6 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 9 May 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/05/2017	Full	Good
16/03/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/04/2016	Full	Good
11/02/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- 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)
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

This is with particular regard to ensuring that safeguarding records are clear and accurate.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff are allocated to individual children and consequently develop a strong rapport and a supportive relationship with them. Many children have little verbal expression. Their trust in staff helps children to develop their preferred communication style and enables them to express their views. Staying at the home while attending a local school reduces travel time and improves sleep patterns. Bedtimes are established, helping children to get enough sleep and to manage the school day with fewer incidents.

Children benefit from the large, spacious house, which is located in a residential area of the town. There is plenty of room for communal living and space for privacy and quiet time. The sensory room and second living room mean that children have choices about how and where to spend their time.

Children have the chance to go out and try new experiences with staff. Together they attend traditional celebrations such as fireworks displays and visit theme parks and local attractions. For some children, outings with families are limited. A parent said, about their child, 'It is hard to take him out. Two staff go out with him, meaning that he does more.'

Children's health needs are met. Medication is administered by staff who monitor this and understand that long-term medicines may have side effects such as reduced or increased appetite. The staff have developed an improved focus on healthy eating. Staff support parents and their children with health appointments when needed, reducing children's anxieties.

Three parents and carers were contacted during the inspection and all gave positive feedback. They said that staff know children well. Children enjoy their stays. They are safe, and the communication is good. A parent whose child did not settle at the service said that the staff made every effort to settle the child. The parent emphasised that the failure of the placement was no reflection on the staff. The feedback from parents of children who no longer use the service is also extremely positive.

Transitions to and from the home are planned carefully, which supports children who often find changes to routine very unsettling. The staff spend time in other provisions to gain knowledge about children's routines and preferences and to start to build a rapport with them. This reduces children's anxieties about change.

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

Children feel secure and use the space at the home confidently. They accept one another's differences and respect each other's space. Parents have no safety concerns. A parent said, 'I feel so content that he is well looked after. It is like a second home.'

The children benefit from a calm environment. There are inevitable incidents at the home, although children do not go missing and there are no incidents of bullying. Physical interventions are used for safety reasons. The records of all incidents are reviewed to ensure that the staff have followed the children's risk management plans. The staff apply sanctions at times. These are checked by managers to enable the staff to reflect on their decisions and responses. This scrutiny helps to develop a fair approach that children can understand and learn from.

There have been several allegations against staff and a number of child protection referrals, all of which have been reported promptly to protect children. The staff are tenacious and escalate concerns when they feel that responses from others are not providing good safeguards. The investigations into allegations show that staff are safeguarding children in accordance with the home's policy. However, the records regarding each incident are not ordered well, making auditing and monitoring difficult.

Personal evacuation plans and a location risk assessment ensure that environmental risks are considered. The staff and children practise what to do in an emergency. This prepares children who can be frightened by alarms and changes to their routine.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is established and experienced in residential childcare. She holds a relevant level 7 qualification. The manager leads a dedicated team that wants to improve and enhance children's experiences and life chances through the quality of care that it provides.

The staff team is caring and committed. The staff take pride in their roles. There has been some turnover of staff and some staff sickness, which has been covered by core and permanent relief staff. This has provided continuity of care for children who would

be unsettled by staff who they do not know well.

The manager is accessible to staff and children and is approachable. She is a qualified mental health first aider, encouraging well-being in the work place. Staff supervision is carried out regularly by line managers. Despite this, some supervisions are superficial and practice issues are not always discussed. This does not support staff fully in their roles.

The manager has a realistic view of the areas that are working well and the impact of the changes at the home. This understanding helps her to support staff and parents to adjust to the forthcoming changes. The local authority has changed the service agreement with the home. This has meant changes to the home's statement of purpose and brings change for the staff, and for families who use the service. The management team has embraced the change and is working towards this with energy and enthusiasm.

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: SC400901

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Break

Registered provider address: Spar Road, Norwich NR6 6BX

Responsible individual: Catherine Kenney

Registered manager: Carol Augur

Inspector

Deirdra Keating: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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