

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	10/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC408369
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Stoke on Trent City Council
Registered person address	City of Stoke-on-Trent, Civic Centre, Glebe Street, Stoke-On-Trent ST4 1HH

Responsible individual	Susan Hammersley
Registered manager	Dean Wilton
Inspector	Matt Hedges

Inspection date	10/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. The registered manager is highly effective. He is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses and takes action to improve the service offered to young people. He has addressed all of the shortfalls raised at the last inspection. This includes development of the home's quality assurance processes. The effectiveness of the independent person's monitoring has also significantly improved. Reports following these visits are now of a good quality. However, the registered manager does not always receive these in a timely way. This does not allow him to make best use of the information provided. Young people make progress because of the support they receive from staff. Progress in education is particularly significant. Young people engage well, their attendance increases and consequently their attainment. An education professional confirms this explaining, 'the young person's progress has been phenomenal since being at the home...they feel nurtured and have boundaries. As a result, they are making academic progress...their attendance is 99.5%, this is a significant increase.' Another young person recently won an 'outstanding achievement' award because of her success. Young people's self-confidence increases. They engage in a range of positive activities, which support this. Particular favourites include cadets, taekwondo, and horse riding. One young person explained they are now so good at trotting, they are learning to canter – so they can go faster! Staff support young people to develop their independence skills. This helps to prepare young people as they approach adulthood. Planning to help young people move on is generally robust and ensures they will continue to receive appropriate support from staff. This helps to reassure young people at a stressful time. Young people are positive about their relationships with staff and the support they receive. Positive behaviour is celebrated. 'Consequences' are used in response to negative behaviour. These are not always restorative in nature. As a result, they do not help young people to recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves,	

or others. In addition, records of these incidents do not include an analysis of the effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. Due to this, staff fail to review their use and cannot identify when a change of approach may be required.

For some young people, incidents of self-harm occur on a regular basis. The registered manager ensures that, on the vast majority of occasions, staff respond consistently. He engages effectively with a range of agencies and ensures the same approach in other environments. Other professionals talk positively about this. A social worker highlights, 'excellent communication'. A teacher describes the approach as, 'a genuine partnership'. This helps young people to feel secure, reduces their anxiety and limits the severity of the incidents. On one occasion, staff did not respond appropriately. They failed to assess the potential seriousness of the young person's actions and did not address the concern in a timely way. This failed to promote the young person's welfare. The registered manager is in the process of addressing this. This isolated incident is not representative of the otherwise positive response from staff.

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to 2 children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. The home is operated by a Local Authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/08/2015	CH - Full	Good
18/03/2015	CH - Interim	Declined effectiveness
23/10/2014	CH - Full	Good
18/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory progress

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
6. The quality and purpose of care standard In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard with particular reference to the environment the registered provider must ensure that staff:- (2)(b)(ii) protect and promote each child's welfare.	08/04/2016
The registered person must 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 effectiveness and any consequences of the use of the measure. (Regulation 35 (3) (a) (vii))	08/04/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that any sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature, to help children recognise the impact of their behaviour on themselves, other children, the staff caring for them and the wider community. In some cases it will be important for children to make reparation in some form to anyone hurt by their behaviour and the staff in the home should be skilled to support the child to understand this and carry it out. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 46 paragraph 9.38)
- Ensure that the registered person actively seeks independent scrutiny of the home and makes best use of information from independent monitoring (including under regulation 44). (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 55, paragraph 10.24)

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 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 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*.

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