

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC415400
Inspector	David Kidner
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Gloucestershire County Council
Registered person address	Shire Hall Westgate Street GLOUCESTER GL1 2TG
Responsible individual	Amanda Henderson
Registered manager	Adrienne Jonquill Elliott
Date of last inspection	16/12/2013

Inspection date	19/08/2014
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Previous inspection	good progress
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection	
Overall effectiveness	good
Outcomes for children and young people	good
Quality of care	good
Keeping children and young people safe	good
Leadership and management	good

Overall effectiveness

Judgement outcome	good
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Care planning at this short break service is highly personalised to meet the individual needs of the young people. There are comprehensive placement plans and risk assessments to guide staff in how the agreed care is to be delivered. The home collaborates with parents and social workers to ensure that the placement plans are updated in order to reflect their current needs. Parents and social workers speak highly of the care that is provided at the home.

Young people are safe and parents consider that their child is safe when accessing the service.

Young people make good progress and learn new skills that promote their independence. Parents and social workers are very complimentary as to the support that is given to young people in learning and developing new skills. Some young people have made significant progress in accessing community based facilities and others have made good progress in their communication and eating and drinking skills.

A strength of the home is the care and support it provides to young people with complex needs and how the home seeks the views and opinions from young people regardless of their communication needs. The home has developed systems to

demonstrate how young people are offered choices, contribute to the running of the home and

Leadership and management is strong. The Registered Manager is experienced and understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home and has a detailed development plan in place. As a result of this inspection shortfalls have been identified in the recording of restraint and sanctions. However, this does not impact negatively on the welfare or safety of young people. In addition, areas for further improvement include more details relating to young people's cultural needs being included in their placement plan and the displaying of young people's targets and objectives.

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children and young people of either gender with physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities. The children and young people's placements are made under short break arrangements and the service is delivered and managed by a county council.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/12/2013	Interim	good progress
04/06/2013	Full	good
11/12/2012	Interim	good progress
08/08/2012	Full	adequate

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

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 Regulations 2001 and the National Minimum Standards. The registered person(s) must comply with the given timescales.

Reg.	Requirement	Due date
17B (2001)	ensure that within 24 hours of the use of any measure of control, restraint or discipline in a children's home, a written record is made kept for that purpose (Regulation 17B (3))	30/09/2014
33 (2001)	ensure that the independent person, when carrying out a visit shall interview with their consent and in private, such of the children accommodated there, their parents or relatives (Regulation 33 (8) (a))	31/10/2014
34 (2001)	ensure that the registered person shall supply to HMCI a report in respect of any review conducted by him at least once in every three months	31/10/2014

	(Regulation 34 (2)).	
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Recommendations

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

- ensure that children receive personalised care that promotes all aspects of their identity, in particular more detail as regards to their cultural and religious needs (NMS 2.1)
- ensure that sanctions and rewards for behaviour are clear, reasonable and fair and are understood by all staff and children (NMS 3.8)
- ensure where any sanctions, disciplinary measures or restraint are used, children are encouraged to have their views recorded in the records kept by the home (NMS 3.18)
- ensure information about children is kept confidential and only shared with those who have a legitimate need to know the information. In particular, the displaying of children's SMART targets (NMS 22.3).

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people are making measurable progress in their development and are acquiring new skills as a result of accessing a short break at this service. Parents and social workers consider this to be a strength of the home.

Young people enjoy and are actively involved and encouraged to take part in activities in the local and wider community, and from a wide choice of activities in the home. This means that some young people experience new activities and opportunities when staying at the home.

Regardless of their communication needs young people are actively involved in day to day matters that affect them and are fully supported to make their voice heard. Young people have personalised activity records and minutes to individual meetings that demonstrate how they have been involved in making choices and giving their views and opinions.

Young people benefit from good communication between parents, social workers and school that promotes continuity and consistency of their care and support.

Quality of care **good**

Young people are supported by a dedicated, committed and caring staff team that provide them with very individualised care and support. Young people enjoy warm and positive relationships with staff.

Young people are cared for in line with their placement plan. Placement plans are comprehensive and clearly identify young people's individual needs and provide staff with guidance on how to meet their needs. The placement plans contain detailed information in respect of their likes and dislikes, eating and drinking needs, mobility needs, communication needs, behavioural support and their medical needs. However, not all placement plans clearly identify matters relating to young people's cultural or religious needs. A wide range and detailed risk assessments are completed and measures to reduce risk are clearly identified. Parents and carers sign the placement plans to demonstrate their agreement with the plan of care. This demonstrates how the home collaborates with parents and carers. The placement plans are closely monitored and reviewed to reflect their current needs.

The home sets SMART targets for young people to achieve whilst staying at the home. These include targets to promote independence such as eating and drinking, preparing for night time routines and engaging in social and leisure activities. The

targets demonstrate the home's commitment to encouraging young people to become more independent and to experience new activities and opportunities. Again, parents and carers sign their agreement to the targets. This again demonstrates how well the home collaborates with parents, carers and school. However, information relating to SMART targets are inappropriately displayed. The Registered Manager agreed that these targets could be displayed elsewhere.

Parents and placing authorities speak very well of the care and support that is provided at the home. One parent stated that 'they are very happy with the care provided and they have no concerns'. Another parent stated 'that the home has been invaluable'. A placing authority stated 'the home works in partnership, keeps them up to date and they have no concerns about the quality of care provided at the home'. Parents spoken to stated that they are aware of how to make a complaint if they needed to do so but not had the need to.

A real strength of the home is how it consults with young people who use alternative methods of communication. Staff have the skills and abilities to effectively communicate with the young people. The home uses talking mats, signs, symbols and photographs in order to seek their views and wishes. Individual and group meetings are held with young people in order to seek their views and opinions of the service. The outcomes of the meeting are recorded to evidence young people's responses, with action points for the home to address if needed. Young people have provided comments in respect of the activities that they wish to partake in and choices of foods. Staff demonstrate their awareness in matters relating to equality and diversity

The home provides young people with a wide variety of leisure and social activities based on young people's individual needs. The home maintains activity folders that contain photographs of the activities, leisure trips and social events that they have enjoyed. Parents and placing authorities speak well of the activities that are provided in the home. For some young people accessing the local community has been very challenging. However, staff have supported and encouraged young people to gain confidence in this area and young people have benefited from experiencing new activities and opportunities.

The home provides young people with a homely environment. All areas of the home are well maintained and decorated to a good standard. There are signs, symbols and photographs around the home to assist young people's awareness of where bedrooms, bathing and toilet facilities are located. There are aids and adaptations to meet the individual and collective needs of the young people. All bedrooms have en-suite facilities and wherever possible young people use the same bedroom for their short break stay. However, young people are given a choice of the bedroom that they prefer to occupy if they choose to do so.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Parents and placing authorities spoken to stated that they consider that the young people are safe when they are accessing a short break service. The providers have robust policies and procedures for safeguarding young people. All staff receive training in and safeguarding and staff spoken to demonstrate a good awareness of safeguarding practices and procedures.

The use of restraint in the home is rare and all staff have received training in the home's preferred method of de-escalation and restraint. However, it is noted that the record used to record restraints does not contain all the required documentation. The use of sanctions in the home is minimal and due the complex needs of some young people sanctions are not routinely imposed. However, when restraint and sanctions have been imposed the home's record does not include that young people have been encouraged to have their views recorded. In addition, it is not always clear that sanctions that are imposed are clear, reasonable and fair. These shortfalls do not have a significant impact on the safety and welfare of young people.

The home's placement plans include detailed behaviour support plans that direct staff in how to respond to particular behaviours. Staff set boundaries and promote positive behaviour. Detailed risk assessments are regularly reviewed in order to keep young people safe. Staff are skilled and recognise particular vulnerabilities relating to young people's diverse care needs. The home ensures that when young people are accommodated at the home that they are compatible with their peers. Parents spoken to commented that they have noticed improvements in their child's behaviour. One placing authority stated 'the home manages young people's behaviour very well and they have noticed a decrease in challenging behaviour. For one young person the placing authority stated that 'there's been a huge improvement'.

Parents, carers and staff do not record bullying as an issue and young people have never been missing from the home.

There are robust policies and procedures for the safe recruitment of staff and there is monitoring of all visitors to the home.

The environment is physically safe and appropriately secure taking into account of the needs of the young people. Regular checks are undertaken of the home's utility services. The home places great emphasis on fire safety and ensures regular services are undertaken of the home's fire system and fire fighting facilities. The home has developed personal evacuation plans for all young people in the event of a fire. In addition, the home uses pictorial representation with individual young people to provide them with information in respect of fire safety, and what to do in the event of a fire.

Leadership and management

good

The home is effectively and efficiently managed. The Registered Manager has the experience, knowledge and qualifications to undertake the role. He has held the position for four years. There were no requirements or recommendations made at the last inspection. Ofsted has received extremely positive comments from parents and placing authorities in respect of the quality of care that is provided at the home. Comments include that the home is well managed and works in collaboration with parents, the placing authority and school.

The Registered Manager regularly reviews the quality of care provided at the home and completes the required report every three months. The report is comprehensive and identifies the action that is required to improve the quality of care. However, the most recent report has not been sent to Ofsted. There is regular monitoring of the performance of the home by an independent visitor and these reports are sent to Ofsted. It is noted that the reports do not confirm that interviews have been conducted in private with parents of the young people accommodated at the home, in order to seek their views on the service provided.

The home has a comprehensive development plan that identifies the weaknesses in the service and the action that is to be taken to address them. The plan contains measurable outcomes with target dates set. There is a comprehensive statement of purpose that describes the services that are provided and contains all the required information.

The home monitors the progress that young people make and can demonstrate the difference the home has made. The use of SMART targets and the photographic recording of activities and events at the home demonstrate how young people are participating in new activities and opportunities, and developing their independence skills. Parents and social workers have made positive comments in respect of young people's improvement in these areas and have also made reference to improvements in behaviour and communication.

Young people are supported by a staff team that receives regular support and supervision. Staff state that they consider that they have good levels of staff on duty to meet the individual needs of the young people.

Staff receive good training that enables them to provide good quality care. The home is committed to ensuring a well qualified workforce. 92% of the staff team have the required qualifications and the remainder of the team are undertaking the appropriate qualifications.

What inspection judgements mean

Judgement	Description
Outstanding	A service of exceptional quality that significantly exceeds minimum requirements.
Good	A service of high quality that exceeds minimum requirements.
Adequate	A service that only meets minimum requirements.
Inadequate	A service that does not meet minimum requirements.

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.