

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	08/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC422464
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Town Hall, Church Street, BARNSELY, South Yorkshire, S70 2TA

Responsible individual	Helen Smith
Registered manager	Diane Wharton
Inspector	Simon Morley

Inspection date	08/03/2016
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 sustained effectiveness. Children continue to have positive experiences and enjoy their short breaks. The strong partnership working with families and schools helps contribute towards their development and progress. Safeguarding of children remains a priority and staff practice is effective at keeping them safe. Improved outcomes and experiences include; more settled behaviour, taking medication whole, moving to a solid food diet and reducing tube feeding, better sleep patterns and developing social skills and independence. The increase in confidence and maturity helps young people complete household tasks, shop independently, cook for peers and in one case pass the driving theory test. Staff are very thoughtful and considerate in following children's care plans. They are skilled and competent so that children have their very specific needs met, such as, personal care, communication, socialisation, and health. Parents who completed consultation surveys and were spoken to during the inspection made comments such as, 'The home is amazing, I can't think of any improvements', 'She loves coming, we know she is safe' and 'I would recommend this home to other parents.' One parent did raise concerns about laundry and mixed up clothing that was promptly addressed by staff. Another raised the issue of children with complex needs getting out and about more. There is a people carrier that staff use to take more able children out. However, staff also use other means such as pushing children in wheelchairs and accessing public transport, buses and trains. This ensures all children regardless of their needs enjoy a wide and stimulating variety of activities. Partnership working with parents is developing with coffee mornings and fundraising activities to raise money for a new minibus. The home has plenty of books, toys, DVDs, games consoles, pool tables and a sensory room. The garden has play equipment for children with a range of needs. Children enjoy the chance to see their friends and develop social relationships with each other. They also enjoy cooking, shopping, trips out, social events and using local leisure facilities. Staff have produced a new activity file, which is full of photographs of children enjoying their activities.	

Staff ensure the home is ready for the group of children who come for each short break. For example, bedrooms are prepared for the individual child with their personal likes and dislikes. There are separate areas in the home, designed to meet a range of different needs and abilities. Careful attention is given to co-ordinating the mix of children who come for each short break. Such effective organisation of short breaks helps promote their welfare and safety.

The flexibility in this short break service helps keep children living at home with their families. When needed, children can come for longer stays or on a shared care arrangement. For example when parents or carers are away or too ill to look after them. Staff also play a key role in monitoring the welfare and safety of vulnerable, disabled children who spend most of their time at their family home. Staff support parents emotionally, offer advice about effective parenting skills and help when there are difficulties with making and attending children's appointments.

Good staffing levels ensure that children are appropriately supervised at all times. This reduces the likelihood of them going missing from home and staff are able to intervene quickly and de-escalate any challenging behaviour. Good relationships with children mean that physical intervention is used rarely. Any incidents are reviewed and signed off by the manager, which helps ensure good and safe practice. The requirement at the last inspection about the quality of physical intervention records has been met. However when the manager has been directly involved in using physical intervention the registered provider needs to ensure this is reviewed by someone else authorised to do so.

The second requirement about making sure staff sign and date all records is also met. There is regular external scrutiny of the service by independent reviewing officers (IROs) employed by the registered provider. The monthly reports completed by the IROs do not meet regulatory requirements. They fail to include their specific opinion about children's wellbeing and effectiveness of safeguarding measures. The impact of this is limited by the quality of the manager's own monitoring and the open, transparent approach to working with parents and other agencies.

Information about this children's home

The home is a local authority children's home and is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to ten children with physical and learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/07/2015	Full	Good
12/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/12/2014	Full	Adequate
27/03/2014	Interim	Good 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
The registered person must ensure that- within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ("the authorised person")- has spoken to the user about the measure; and has signed the record to confirm it is accurate; and within 5 days of the use of the measure, the registered person or the authorised person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35 (3) (b)(i)(ii)(c))	30/04/2016
The independent person must produce a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether- children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (4)(a)(b))	30/04/2016

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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