

SC422464

Registered provider: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This local authority children's home provides short breaks for up to eight young people who have learning disabilities and physical disabilities, and some of whom may have challenging behaviour.

Inspection dates: 13 to 14 June 2017

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: 22 February 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection

None

Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children and young people enjoy new experiences that are highly positive and rewarding.
- Children and young people gain new skills as they are supported to work towards achievable goals.
- Children and young people's visits to the home are carefully planned. This helps them to form friendships and participate in shared interests.
- Children and young people receive individualised care, which is planned in partnership with parents, carers and professionals.

The children's home's areas for development:

- The manager needs to have clear oversight of the records to ensure that they reflect the practice within the home.
- Staff need to update risk assessments and other documents in line with their procedures and guidance.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
18/10/2016	Full	Good
08/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
21/07/2015	Full	Good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person must take to meet 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 must comply within 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; (Regulation 35 (3)(b)(i)(ii))	17/07/2017

Recommendations

- It is good practice for a note of the content and/or outcomes of supervision sessions to be kept and to ensure that both the person giving the supervision and staff member have a copy of the record. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards' page 61, paragraph 13.4) This is with particular reference to staff signing to confirm that they have received a copy of their supervision notes.
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risk to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5) This is with particular reference to the registered manager ensuring that the staff team completes and reviews the children and young people's risk assessments to reflect their current levels of risk.
- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective, and clear recording. Staff should record information on individual children in a non-stigmatising way that distinguishes between fact, opinion and third party information. Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4) This is with particular reference to ensuring that the children and young people's healthcare plans are reviewed in line with any agreed review date, in order to ensure that current health needs are understood and met.
- As set out in regulation 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1) This is with particular reference to staff receiving the required training as identified within their annual performance reviews.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people enjoy a range of social and recreational opportunities during their short breaks. This includes activities in the local community, within the home and after-school activities. For example, children and young people enjoy going to the local park and interacting with other children and going to the shops and the cinema. In addition, children and young people are helped to attend their school social events. For some, this is the first opportunity they have had to enjoy these social experiences.

Children and young people are helped to try new things. For example, a young person was helped to have a bath for the first time, as historically he had only used a shower. The result was that he loved stretching his legs out in the warm water.

Children and young people experience well-planned admissions, with clear consideration given to their different demands and complex needs. This planning enables children and young people to experience a safe and enjoyable stay with their friends. For example, two brothers who have different needs and abilities enjoy their short break separate from each other. This enables them to extend their friendship groups. One young person reported: 'Coming to the home is like having a sleepover with friends.'

Children and young people have a thorough introduction to the home, which includes a number of teatime visits. This enables them to become familiar and comfortable in this new environment and with the care afforded by staff in preparation for their planned overnight stays.

Children and young people are helped to be as independent as they can. These achievements may be small but are nevertheless significant. For example, one child is now able to get a cup when they want a drink; another has slept with his bedroom door closed for the first time. One carer commented: 'Staff really understand my child and it is important that they see my child as an individual.'

Children and young people's communication needs and techniques are understood by staff. This ensures that the voice of children and young people is heard and that they can make their choices and preferences known.

Children and young people's changing care needs are fully understood and reflected within their care plans. Staff implement strategies to ensure that the needs of children and young people are continually met during their stay. For example, when a child had a new diagnosis of epilepsy, their care plan changed to reflect the increased level of monitoring and management of the condition. However, children and young people's healthcare plans are not all routinely updated to reflect their current or changing needs.

Children and young people's behaviour is managed well and they experience lots of positive praise and rewards. Staff work with children and young people to capture their comments about the rewards achieved. One child was congratulated for walking away from an incident when they had been hit. The child said: 'Thanks for helping me, and thanks for letting me go out of the way and talking to me to help me feel better.' A professional commented: 'The staff go above and beyond to meet the needs of young people, and this commitment is maintained during challenging periods.'

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

Children and young people receive high levels of care and supervision during their short breaks, which ensures their safety. With these levels of supervision and effective procedures, the risk of 'missing from home' incidents and exploitation of this vulnerable group is minimised.

Staff understand children and young people's particular vulnerabilities and the way in which their complex needs may pose a risk to themselves or others. When these are identified, staff take action to make sure that all children and young people are safe. For example, staff were quick to respond to one young person's aggressive outburst and his short-break stay was changed in order to prevent harm to those with more complex needs. However, risk assessments do not always include all of the risks that children and young people present.

Children and young people are cared for with dignity and respect. For example, staff are quick to respond to children who choose to undress themselves in the company of others within the home. In addition, where possible children and young people are supported and encouraged by staff to manage their own personal care.

Children and young people are helped to understand the risks connected with social media. Staff understand the risks associated with the internet and have developed strategies to promote safety.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager is very experienced and suitably qualified to manage the home. She is described as very supportive and 'hands on'. With the support of her team, she maintains the home's ethos, which is to give children and young people choice while being cared for with dignity and respect.

Children and young people are cared for by a stable staff team. The staff are experienced and practice in a way which empowers and develops the skills of the children and young people. The staff are patient and give time to the children and young people to complete tasks for themselves. For example, one young person was able to peel themselves an egg to then make egg mayonnaise. This gave the young person a real sense of achievement.

Children and young people receive consistent and safe care through the strong effective relationships that staff have with other professionals, parents and carers. Parents in particular feel very well supported, reporting that they can contact the home at any time. The parents and carers have strengthened their support group and continue to advocate for the home. One parent reports: 'The service is brilliant, it is fantastic.'

The manager is continually looking at how she can strengthen the service, and there is a clear improvement plan to ensure that the needs of children who have disabilities and complex needs are met. The staff enthusiastically promote the home at community event days to showcase what the home offers to children and young people.

The manager has a good oversight of staff practice, including the completion of supervisions, team meetings and appraisals. Staff are supported to explore their personal and practice development through their annual reviews. However, the actions created are not followed through and staff do not get the training identified to meet their needs. In addition, staff do not sign their supervision notes to confirm that they understand the discussions that have taken place and any actions raised.

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: SC422464

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Town Hall,
Church Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2TA

Responsible individual: Jonathan Banwell

Registered manager: Diane Wharton

Inspector

Jennifer Fenlon, social care inspector

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