

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	21/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC422464
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council
Registered person address	Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council, Town Hall, Church Street, BARNSLEY, South Yorkshire, S70 2TA

Responsible individual	Mrs Diane Drury
Registered manager	Mrs Diane Wharton
Inspector	Ms Hussain

Inspection date	21/07/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Outstanding
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC422464

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children have positive experiences and enjoy their short breaks. Their safety and wellbeing is a priority with children kept safe at all times.
- Children take part in a range of activities and are well stimulated. They have fun during their stay here.
- Children make good progress in many aspects of their development. They make new friendships and develop trusting relationships with staff making their stay more enjoyable.
- The staff team are committed to children. They work closely with parents and carers to ensure children's care is personalised and meaningful.
- The staff team are highly experienced and knowledgeable about children's disabilities. They know the children individually and have a good understanding of their likes and dislikes.
- Children's personal care needs are thoughtfully managed. Staff are respectful and treat children with dignity and respect. Parents are happy with the good quality care their children receive.
- Staff are well supported, supervised and trained ensuring they are focused, committed and able to manage the complex needs of children experiencing short breaks at the home.

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- (a) 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- (iv) a description of the measure and its duration and;(viii) a description of any injury to the child or any other person, and any medical treatment administered, as a result of the measure (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iv)(viii))	31 Aug 2015
The registered person must maintain records for each child which are signed and dated by the author of each entry (Regulation 36 (1)(c))	31 Aug 2015

Full report

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
12/02/2015	Interim	Improved Effectiveness
10/12/2014	Full	Adequate
27/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress
18/12/2013	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
Children build supportive and trusting relationships with the adults that offer them care. They thrive through stability and consistency in care and routines. The staff team know the children well. They invest time in them and listen to their concerns. Children's views are incorporated in the ethos and running of the home helping to make their short breaks a comfortable and enjoyable time. One child states, 'I think my One Direction bedding is good.' Another child says, 'I asked for Dr Who bedding and they got it for me.' Regardless of children's ability, staff ensure they participate in a variety of activities. They go out for walks to the shops and local parks. Staff take them out for drives to look at animals. One child in particular likes to look at electricity pylons. He does this regularly. Older children love to attend the local youth club while younger children benefit from ice cream and other treats. Children love to play outdoors on the slide and climbing frame. Some children like to put on a musical show with lots of singing and dancing. Children have fun and make positive comments about their stay saying, 'I like going outside and playing board games and cards. Staff take me places like McDonalds.' Children attend school and benefit from good attendance. The school transport and escort work closely with staff to consistently promote attendance and minimise potential for disruption. One child was often anxious and distressed on hearing the doorbell in the morning. The school escort now uses a side door with no doorbell. This enables a smoother transition from the home to school. The child's carer states, 'Staff are more effective at getting him on the bus. Since using the side door he has been more responsive. He doesn't get as anxious now' Children make good progress in terms of their health, social and emotional wellbeing. They make new friendships and benefit from improved speech and language skills. This increases their confidence and communication skills. Children make progress in managing their personal care; they cooperate with taking medication and often clear up after themselves. Whatever their achievements, they are given high levels of praise and benefit from a variety of rewards. These include a toy from the 'treasure chest', or having their name printed on a leaf, which goes on the 'kindness tree'. Sometimes a simple round of applause from staff and other children makes their day leaving them feeling special and appreciated. Staff facilitate children's development of self-care and independence skills. They support children to dress themselves and manage their own personal care. Staff	

utilise visual aids to assist children in their routines. One child benefitted from this being displayed in the bathroom showing him which body parts to wash during bath time. The aid was so successful his mother asked for a copy to use at home.

Staff respond to children's personal care needs with high levels of dignity and respect. This leaves children and families feeling comfortable and confident with the good quality of care they receive. One parents states, 'It is a lovely service given by lovely people. They genuinely care. It's not put on.'

Medication practices are thorough and appropriate. Staff log medication on every admission ensuring any changes to children's prescriptions are immediately recognised. This ensures there is little room for error and keeps children in familiar routines.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	outstanding
Children are safe in the secure home environment where they enjoy their short breaks. Building security ensures visitors wait at the entrance until staff verify their identity. Building repairs and decoration work takes place during term time while children are away from the home. This ensures children are not exposed to unfamiliar people. The competent staff team safeguard children from accidents, injuries and bullying behaviours. Children learn to respect each other and show tolerance of each other's behaviours. Conflict is resolved swiftly reducing the risk of harm to children. There is little risk relating to children going missing. There are no concerns regarding substance misusing behaviours and risk of sexual exploitation. Actual risk of harm is well understood and minimised by the highly knowledgeable staff team. Regular discussion about internet safety and stranger danger particularly prior to outings sensitively reminds children of the risks in the community. Outings are individually risk assessed and good staffing levels mitigate any potential dangers. A parent states, 'They have gradually built up my child's outings. I was concerned initially as he can just run off. He has no awareness of dangers. However, the staff have managed this well.' Individual risk assessments are highly personalised identifying the likely dangers to children. The child-focused staff team are extremely proactive in taking action to minimise these. Children's safety and wellbeing is their utmost priority. There are very few incidents involving injury. Parents and carers are reassured of any incidents keeping them informed of their child's safety.	

Careful planning takes place for all new admissions. Staff learn about children's health and medical needs from their primary caretakers and through 'Taking good care' documents. Children contribute to their records by completing 'All about me' questionnaires identifying their likes and dislikes. This information assists the staff team in making careful arrangements for their stay. They look at children's individual needs and behaviours and consider how to best group them with other children. Such thoughtful planning helps children make new friendships and enjoy a positive experience.

Families that are new to the home are encouraged to contact the unit at any time to ease their anxieties. One parent states, 'The nights have been a massive deal for me but staff told me to phone at any time. They even phoned me twice last time to put my mind at ease. They knew how anxious I was. I really appreciated this'

Staff effectively use a variety of strategies to distract children during escalating situations. This has led to a significant reduction of physical interventions. During the occasions where physical intervention is necessary, records provide an account of children's behaviours leading to the restraint. However, some logs do not identify the type of intervention used and whether any injuries or medical assistance is required. This shortfall in record keeping has no impact on children and does not affect the quality of care they receive.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
The home benefits from a permanent, experienced Registered Manager who has been in post at the short breaks unit since its opening in 2011. The manager has several years' of management experience in other local authority children's homes and has relevant qualifications for the position. Children benefit from effective management arrangements and an experienced, knowledgeable and committed staff team. Good staffing levels and stability within the team ensures children's complex and challenging needs are managed. The staff team are suitably trained, supported and supervised to effectively carryout their responsibilities. They offer high quality care and nurturing responses to children. Monitoring of records and quality of care takes place through the independent visitors external monthly auditing. This is further enhanced through the managers own monthly auditing process. Collectively they identify any shortfalls and respond swiftly, mitigating any negative impact on children.	

Children accessing short breaks have been involved in designing the 'Introduction to the home' and 'All about me' questionnaire. They take part in children's meetings where they plan their menus and activities. They identify their bedroom and bedding of choice and consider other ways to personalise their room during their stay. Children feel included in the running of the home and have no complaints. Some children, based on their ability know how to make a complaint.

The staff team work closely with other agencies and professionals. They have developed effective long-term relationships with schools, health practitioners and social workers. Furthermore, they have positive relationships with parents and carers ensuring effective communication and good outcomes for children. A school assistant states, 'We have no issues communicating with the home. Either we pick up the phone or they do. We use a home/school book that we all fill in to ensure we are consistent in responding to children. It works really well.'

Care plans and placement plans are comprehensive and clearly identify children's health and care needs. Records of progress acknowledge children's experiences, outcomes and goals. Plans are reviewed in line with young people's changing needs as staff attend all meetings and reviews. This keeps them up to date with decisions and children's changing needs. Some care plans and records, although are up to date, they are not signed or dated making actions and progress difficult to clarify.

Children integrate in their community through regular visits to local parks, shops and events. A recent local event gave a special mention to the service with the youth football team wearing a strip saying 'supporting children with disabilities.' Such actions raise the profile of disabled children making integration in the community a positive experience.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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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