

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	05/10/2016
Unique reference number	SC424351
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Nottingham City Council
Registered provider address	Loxley House, Station Street, Nottingham NG2 3NG

Responsible individual	Kay Sutt
Registered manager	Emma Read
Inspector	Amanda Ellis

Inspection date	05/10/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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	Good
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC424351

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The knowledgeable and skilled registered manager leads a committed staff team.
- The operation of the home replicates that of a family environment. This provides a comfortable and nurturing home for children and young people.
- Despite staff shortages, the core staff team is dedicated to providing consistently high standards of care for all children and young people.
- Staff support young people to attend educational provision, improve their attendance record and strive to achieve their academic potential.
- Good partnership working with a wide range of healthcare providers means that young people have their physical, emotional and psychological health needs met very well.
- All aspects of safeguarding are very well considered. Consequently, safeguarding issues are infrequent.
- Strategies to minimise risk when young people are missing from care are robust, therefore ensuring protection from potential harm.
- Positive behaviours are encouraged through incentives and rewards. This is highly effective. There has been one incident of physical intervention since the last inspection and very low levels of sanctions.
- An area of improvement identified in this inspection is to ensure that all staff have up-to-date training. This is with specific regard to training to counter self-harm and suicide.

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

Recommendations

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

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in the training and development of staff in the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.11)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This is a local authority children's home which provides care for up to two children and young people who have emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
08/12/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/07/2015	Full	Good
27/01/2015	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
10/06/2014	Full	Good

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
This home provides care for children and young people who have a wide variety of complex emotional and behavioural needs. Since the last inspection, the staff team has provided care for several children and young people. The good quality of individualised care has resulted in all young people progressing in education, health and social engagement. Additionally, all children and young people have demonstrated a reduction in risk-taking and harmful behaviours. Social workers report that young people say that they are happy, living at this home. One social worker said that a young person had described the home as: 'It feels like a home – happy and safe'. Another social worker said that the young person no longer wanted to leave the home and expressed that he wanted to remain living there. These views indicate that young people feel settled, safe and comfortable. Since the last inspection, the home has experienced disruption through staffing shortages. This was due to unforeseen and unavoidable circumstances, such as ill health. However, this issue is now resolved with the recruitment of additional full-time, experienced, core staff members. Changes in staffing have not had an impact on the progress of children and young people. Understandably, children and young people have missed staff members who are significant to them. The core of staff has been consistent, with children and young people receiving care from staff whom they know. Staff have provided continued levels of individualised care. They dedicate time to spend with children and young people, listening to their day-to-day experiences, participating in activities and supporting them with their emotional needs. Staff have been effective in promoting the education and training needs of all children and young people. Education plans are personalised to the needs, interests and abilities of each child or young person. This has meant that attendance and engagement have been very good, with all children and young people achieving good levels of attendance. Children and young people access the healthcare services necessary to meet their physical, psychological and emotional needs. Staff ensure that children and young people attend routine appointments and provide prompt medical attention when they are ill or have accidents. Referrals to appropriate mental health services enable young people to have their emotional and psychological well-being monitored and assessed. Consequently, children and young people benefit from comprehensive healthcare that promotes good health.	

Staff have key responsibility for the domestic tasks within the home. They ensure that children and young people have nourishing, well-balanced meals, clean and ironed clothes, and a comfortable home. Children and young people benefit from positive role modelling in observing these routines and are encouraged to take part in practising chores. Young people begin formalised independence planning, according to their age, needs and personal circumstances. This means that, over time, young people will acquire a range of skills to prepare them for their future independence.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Arrangements for safeguarding children and young people are highly effective. Over time, children and young people improve significantly and reduce their risk-taking and challenging behaviours. This leads to them becoming increasingly safe. Social care professionals echo this view and confirm that staff keep children and young people safe from potential harm. The management and staff team demonstrate clear knowledge and understanding of a range of safeguarding issues. They have undertaken training on topics including safeguarding, child sexual exploitation, missing from care, radicalisation and self-harm. However, there is a minor shortfall in relation to one casual member of staff who has not undertaken training to counter self-harm. Children and young people admitted to this home are vulnerable and have known risk-taking behaviours. When safeguarding issues arise, staff implement up-to-date policies and procedures relating to child protection issues. This means that they can provide safe and effective care for a wide range of behaviours. Behaviour management is very good. A team member is the principal physical intervention trainer for the local authority. All staff have up-to-date physical intervention training, and there has been one physical intervention since the last inspection. The use of sanctions is minimal, yet proportionate. Children and young people respond positively to the use of incentives and work diligently to achieve their personal goals. Staff have a good knowledge of how to manage incidents of children or young people being away from the home without authorisation or missing from care. In such circumstances, staff take prompt action to minimise risks and quickly identify the whereabouts of children or young people. Upon return to the home, staff always offer 'return interviews' with an independent person or the social worker. Adherence to missing from care policy and protocols and staff vigilance mean that safeguarding practice is effective.	

The registered manager acts upon safeguarding issues in a robust and timely manner, including notifying relevant bodies. Consequently, this assures transparency across the multidisciplinary team that offers support to young people, and ensures that they are effectively protected.

The health and safety of children and young people, staff and visitors within the home is assured through routine checks and servicing. Detailed and regularly reviewed generic and specific risk assessments cover all aspects of daily living. The local authority maintenance team ensures timely repair and remedial work. Health and safety checks, including on fire equipment, are up to date and environmental risks assessments are in place. Regular fire drills ensure that children, young people and staff understand the dangers of fire and safe evacuation from the home.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The quality of the leadership and management of the home is good. The registered manager has substantial relevant experience of residential childcare and has suitable qualifications to provide good leadership for this home. The responsible individual supervises and provides senior management support to the registered manager. Consequently, a strong and well-qualified management team leads the home. Since the last inspection in December 2015, the registered manager has made demonstrable improvements to the provision of education for young people and proactively worked with a range of education providers. This means that the registered manager has met the shortfall identified at the last inspection. The registered manager is pivotal to the good operation of this home. All social care professionals highlight her child-centred practice, combined with steadfast leadership. She works proactively with the multidisciplinary teams to advocate and ensure that children's and young people's best interests are met. She is well liked and sought out by the children and young people. She knows their individual needs in minute detail. This means that children and young people have their needs fully understood and prioritised. The operation of the children's home is a true and accurate reflection as set out in the home's statement of purpose. This means that social workers, commissioning teams, parents and carers gain an accurate view of care provision. Staff say that they feel supported to improve their own professional skills and knowledge. Records show that they receive consistent and regular supervision. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are organised through the	

provision of a mandatory and additional training. All staff hold a recognised qualification, or are working towards one. This means that children and young people receive care and support from a highly competent staff team.

The monitoring of the home is through a variety of means. One of these is a monthly monitoring visit by an independent visitor. The registered manager also undertakes monthly internal audits, which are then summarised into a quality assurance report every six months. Additionally, the registered manager implements the home's development plan. The manager's report and development plans demonstrate that she understands the strengths and weaknesses of the home, and has plans in place to address deficits. These combined quality assurance systems also track the progress of children and young people, and promote the improvement of the service.

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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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
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