

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC424351
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Nottingham City Council
Registered person address	Nottingham City Council, Loxley House Station Street NOTTINGHAM NG2 3NG
Responsible individual	Kay Sylvia Sutt
Registered manager	Matthew Lewis
Date of last inspection	21/01/2014

Inspection date	10/06/2014
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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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This is a good service that provides positive outcomes for young people. Since the home's last full inspection In April 2013, where the home was judged as adequate, there has been a significant improvement. The Registered Manager has been in post for 3 months and was registered with Ofsted in June 2014. The management and operation of the home is now good. Monitoring systems are more effective in tracking outcomes for young people, ensuring that they can make good progress.

The staff appear to genuinely care about young people and are passionate about their work. They are motivated by the progress that young people make and are well supported in their role. Good, on-going support to young people provided by the staff, enables young people to improve their social skills, behaviour, contacts, awareness of risk and develop greater emotional resilience. This prepares them for when they are preparing to move out and be more independent.

Young people say they feel safe and learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff are good at working with young people to improve their safety further. For example, where there are particular safeguarding issues, they are creative in their practice and have very good communication with other professionals such as the police, which promotes safety and welfare.

Young people are encouraged to develop positive and trusting relationships with care staff to enhance the stability and quality of their placement. Regular communication using placement planning and key worker sessions obtains their views, which influence improvements in the physical environment and aspects of the care provided.

There is one requirement made in relation to staff personnel records where proof of identification is not kept on staff personnel files. In addition there is one recommendation made because the staff ratio's allow for lone working at the setting, however the risk assessment has not been reviewed during the last year.

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to two children who may have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is owned by the local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/01/2014	Interim	good progress
09/04/2013	Full	adequate
08/01/2013	Interim	good progress
13/09/2012	Full	inadequate

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
26 (2001)	ensure that full and satisfactory information has been obtained in relation to staff, this is in relation to the matters specified in schedule. (Regulation 26,3(d), Schedule 2.1)	14/07/2014

Recommendations

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

- ensure that where only one member of staff is on duty at any time, a risk

assessment has been carried out and recorded in writing, identifying any likely risks to children, staff and members of the public, this is in relation to the reviewing of such risk assessments. (NMS 17.9)

Inspection judgements

Outcomes for children and young people **good**

Young people have made good progress according to their starting point. Young people have improved attendance which this has risen as a direct result of this placement. Young people sometimes choose not to attend. However, They receive a high level of support and encouragement from staff and therefore know that education is important for their future. As a result, when they attend it is because they want to and therefore they are more likely to achieve well.

Young people receive help to understand the importance of healthy living and respond positively to the help available. They receive support and encouragement to attend all health related appointments and for some young people, they have accessed the support of medical professionals significantly more than they did before coming to this placement. This impacts on their overall health now and encourages good health in their future lives. Also, young people actively involve themselves in the preparation of meals and eat a well-balanced diet, reflecting their own likes and dislikes. They also have access to a wide range of physical activities and are well supported and motivated by staff, some of whom who have a particular interest in physical wellbeing. This has enabled young people to find out what they enjoy and has improved their confidence.

Young people prepare well for moving out of the children's home and to a more independent setting. One young person who recently moved out is extremely positive about the support that he has received. He reported that 'staff have taught me, speak out for me and encouraged me'. This demonstrates that young people receive the support they need to be independent in the future.

Young people have very positive and trusting relationships with staff and therefore feel able to talk to them about their problems and issues. This also enables them to explore their own personal identity because they feel well respected and supported. This support ensures that contacts with friends and family are more positive. This is because young people are assisted by staff to understand their background and current situation.

Young people make a meaningful contribution in the running of the home. The recent changes to some house rules and to young people's bedrooms reflects their recent comments about snacks in the home and their own style and comfort. Young people contribute ideas in their regular meetings and key working sessions, letting staff know what the home could improve upon, alongside choosing activities and meal planning. This allows young people to realise that they can make a positive contribution to society and that they can exercise some autonomy in their own life.

Quality of care**good**

Young people benefit from a very committed staff team, sufficient in number to provide consistent nurturing care and practical support. Relationships between staff and young people are very positive and effective. Because of staff's positive approach, young people's behaviour is improved. This is confirmed by the minimal use of sanctions. In addition, there have been no physical interventions in the home since the last inspection. Staff are encouraged by a strong management team to get to the route of why the behaviour is being displayed and to understand this better. This insight into the reasons why, assists staff in developing a very positive approach, so that young people can make improvements as quickly as possible with their behaviour.

The positive approach from staff and good relationships with young people also promotes improved education attendance. One professional said 'they have done absolutely everything they can' with regard to the school attendance of one young person. This reflects a very pro-active approach in the home to education. Young people know that staff care about their education, safety and wellbeing. For example, one young person said 'they keep wanting me to improve'. The caring and nurturing approach assists young people in other areas of their lives such as health, emotional wellbeing and contacts. This is because they openly talk with staff about personal issues this assists them to develop strategies for further improvement.

The views and opinions of young people significantly influence the operation of the home. Young people are confident about the complaints procedure and feel sufficiently empowered to use this way of expressing their views, this helps them to know about how they can use such procedures in the future. Regular young people's meetings and discussions with staff on a day-to-day basis ensures that issues that arise are dealt with quickly and efficiently before and before they get to the complaint stage. Staff invest a lot of time in ensuring that young people can have their say and understand why decisions have to be made. For example, there are discussions about why there are different approaches for some individuals depending on their needs, safety or age. These discussions teach young people about how to get on with others and about fairness and respect.

Young people are involved in the development of their personal plans, which are very individual. Key worker sessions are planned according to the needs that arise and are well documented. This enables the manager and the staff team to realistically evaluate levels of progress made by young people. This information feeds into regular, in depth evaluations of key areas and forms the review report to reflect the young person's progress and difficulties. Young people are fully involved in this process and contribute in a way that is suitable and meaningful for them, for example through contribution papers and attendance at the review meeting.

Young people live in very comfortable and well presented house. Young people like and respect the house and invest time in their living environment. The building is

very well-maintained, kept clean and well decorated. An effective building maintenance programme ensures the homes upkeep and decoration. Up-to-date records of fire alarm tests, staff training, fire safety equipment checks and fire drills confirm that the house is safe and young people know what to do in an emergency.

Keeping children and young people safe good

Young people feel safe and are safe in this home. The staffing levels, balanced with the ethos of small group home living, prevent any oppressive behaviour or bullying developing. Safeguarding training helps staff to fully understand and implement child protection procedures which keeps young people safe. Staff are very clear about how to formally report any safeguarding concerns about young people to the home's manager, the provider's named Child Protection Officer or the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB). One staff said 'I would have no hesitation' with regard to passing on safeguarding information. This is because they have a culture in the team where they are able to challenge each others practice and where it is safe for them to pass concerns on.

The exchange of information about individuals in the home is good and further promotes safety. For example, handovers and staff meetings are used to ensure that all staff are working with the most up-to-date information concerning young people's welfare. In addition, liaison with other professionals with regard to safeguarding information is good. One professional said 'they really help to break down the barriers,' demonstrating that staff continue to find ways to minimise risk.

Instances of young people being missing are very rare in this home. Staff are vigilant in knowing young people's whereabouts at all times and are consistent in their strong efforts to support them to come home on time. As a result, young people are safe because their welfare is promoted by staff.

Only suitable adults are employed at the home. The recruitment process ensures that all staff are thoroughly vetted before they start work with young people. However, it was not evident that proof of identification had been obtained for one staff because this was not kept on their file as the Regulations require. This has not impacted on young people but has the potential do so in the future and may allow unsuitable people to be employed in the home if it is not put right.

The manager takes the health and safety of young people, staff and visitors very seriously. Effective management of the overall physical safety of the home is on-going and any potential dangers are assessed, which minimises the risk. Most risk assessments are very well reviewed, ensuring that the most up-to-date and key information is clear. The detail is very high so that it is very clear to staff how the risks should be minimised. However, the risk assessment for lone working has not been reviewed in the last year, despite the admission of new young people. This has the potential to impact on young because it is not clear that all the risks have been

fully considered.

Leadership and management

good

Since the last inspection, a new manager has been appointed and has been registered by Ofsted. He has extensive experience in working with young people, in management and holds the National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 in Supervisory Management. He is also near to completion of the Diploma level 5 in Management. He has worked in the home for three months and has already made some significant changes, so that young people continue to benefit as much as possible. For example, he has empowered the staff to come to realise that behaviour can be dependant on young people's past experiences. This has enabled them to develop a more positive approach. In addition, the new development plan ensures that young people's care is well planned, delivered, evidenced and evaluated. This enables a clear picture to be formed so that the manager can continue to create further opportunities for progress. He is also energetic for improvement and continues to have very high expectations from his staff to further improve the lives of young people. He is supported by an effective senior staff member and a committed staff team and together they provide improved consistency, support and security for young people.

The home's Statement of Purpose accurately states the operation, function and staffing numbers employed by the home. Some staffing details have been changed in the document after recent management and staff changes, reflecting that the document is up-to-date and key in setting out how the home intends to provide good outcomes for young people. The monitoring tools in the home have also been improved and the organisation's and manager's own monitoring visits work well to scrutinise the practice in the home.

The staff are fully committed in their work with young people. They have a very positive attitude and show an empathy and understanding which, at times is inspirational to all in the home. Their strong efforts to support young people are driven by a motivation to see young people succeed, develop and be happy. One staff said 'there is nothing I like more than to see a young person smile'. This approach reinforces the trust that young people develop with their carer's. Supervision and observation of staff performance effectively supports staff practice further. The Registered Manager is aware that for some staff, this has not been as regular but evidences that staff are being well managed and supported. In addition there are already plans in place so that all staff are up to date with their formal supervision

The one requirement from the last inspection has been met and the admissions and

discharges register now shows the information required by the Regulation. In addition, the one recommendation about care plans has also been achieved with an overall improvement in the monitoring of care planning in the home

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.