

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	27/07/2015
Unique reference number	SC424351
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 Sutt
Registered manager	Matthew Lewis
Inspector	Caroline Brailsford

Previous inspection judgement	Declined 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	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC424351

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people go missing less frequently and therefore become safer following admission to the home.
- Education has a very high profile and young people's progress is extremely good, from their starting point.
- Young people are very well supported by staff and good relationships have been forged. Young people know that staff care about them and want them to do well in life.
- Young people's confidence and self-esteem vastly improves because there is a very positive approach from staff in all aspects of care.
- Some young people are developing very positive friendships for the first time. Staff actively encourage this, so that young people develop their social skills and emotional resilience. This also means that young people develop good friendships for their future.
- The management of the home is very effective, despite the registered manager being absent from the home. Robust monitoring by the interim manager and the independent visitor ensures that there is a momentum of improvement.
- There are two areas where further improvements should be made. One is in relation to return interviews after periods of missing. Evaluation of the information does not always inform future planning. Also, specific details of e-safety systems, and how young people should be protected from radicalisation are not fully set out in risk assessments.

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):

- ensure that staff continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 42, paragraph 9)
- ensure that there is evaluation of missing incidents, which identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 46, paragraph 9.31)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is registered for two young people. It is owned and managed by a local authority. The home's aim is to provide settled care for young people with emotional and behavioural difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/01/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
10/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
21/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
09/04/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
Young people make good progress. They enjoy considerable stability because they live in a very settled group where there have been no admissions or discharges since the last inspection. Education has a very high profile and young people have made some excellent progress. Some engage in education for the first time after a period of difficulty with attendance. They say that they make a lot of progress in a short time. One young person reported on their education saying, 'it is wonderful'. Staff break down barriers to learning and develop very good links with schools. Joint working maximises achievement. Young people know that staff want them to do well and feel well supported to pursue their chosen education route or career path. Regular and positive joint working with other agencies ensures a high level of support. Very good links are developed and maintained with placing social workers, and health professionals. Local community groups attend the home regularly. For example, a local self-help group has recently come to the home to inform young people about the risks of drug taking. The high level of support, and variety of agencies involved, allows for good progress with health issues. Young people also make good progress with their emotional wellbeing. Staff make every effort to understand what young people have been through in their life. They involve key health professionals such as community mental health services, to aid their understanding of how young people can be helped. This promotes further progress. Young people are fully able to develop relationships with their families. They are supported appropriately by staff with these relationships and regularly discuss their wishes, feelings and difficulties. This helps them to find their place within their family and to understand why they are in the care system. Young people develop new friendships, some for the first time in a number of years. This enables a growth in their confidence and self-esteem. Young people receive fantastic encouragement from staff in this area. They have stayed overnight with their friends, who also regularly come to the house. One young person has also taken a friend on holiday with staff. Young people can experience what other teenagers would usually experience in relation to friendships. They are set up to have a friendship network for when they leave the care system, which could be of great benefit to them. Staffing levels are safe but not overbearing. They allow young people to	

appropriately develop their independence skills such as using public transport, banking and budgeting. Young people say that they feel happy when in the house with staff. A high level of quality time is spent providing individual support to young people.

Young people know that they can make a suggestion or a complaint and feel like the manager and staff listen to them. They always get to find out the outcome and any decisions made as a result of their complaints. Young people say that they are satisfied that they are appropriately listened to about the running of the home. They express choice in relation to their daily routines. For example, they have a choice of food, décor, holidays and outings. Young people's views are central to their care and staff work hard to ensure that they encourage participation in their meetings and reviews of care. One professional stated, 'the young person is listened to and his voice is represented in his reviews'.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
Young people feel safe and are safe. One said, 'I am safe all the time'. They are protected by staff who know them very well. Young people's risks assessments are highly individual and allow them to take proportionate, age appropriate risks. Young people's differing needs are very well captured and priorities for safety for individuals are well considered. Risks relating to radicalisation and internet use have been considered by staff, who have some training planned in the near future. However, the risk assessment documentation does not yet capture the risks to individuals in relation to both these matters. This may have the potential to impact on young people in the future because staff are guided by the risk assessments in their work to keep young people safe. Young people go missing from the home less frequently and they are therefore increasingly safe. Where they do have episodes of missing, they are safer because their contact with staff is significantly improved. Police comment about progress saying, 'they are doing everything they can do and regularly pulling together professionals and sharing information'. After every missing episode, there is a return interview completed by an independent person and strategy meetings are appropriately held. The management oversight of the return interviews could be improved to ensure a clearer picture of what the young person has said. In addition, the date of the return interview is not always stated. Further evaluation and management oversight would help in deciding the next course of action and make sure that the information is clear. There has only been one physical intervention since the last inspection. This	

highlights the very positive approach to challenging behaviours. Incentives and praise work very well to improve behaviour. The stable and consistent staff team also ensure that young people are clear about expectations for behaviour and, as a result, their social interactions improve.

Staff are well aware of what they should do if there is a concern about a young person's safety. There is very good joint working with social workers and other agencies such as the police. Staff know and appreciate that safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and report that they would not hesitate in passing issues on to the appropriate authorities. This attitude promotes safety and protects individuals.

The house is a safe place for young people to live, there are regular checks on health and safety and the arrangements for fire protection are clear to all.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The Registered Manager has not been present in the home since March 2015. There is an interim manager in place, who is suitably qualified. She holds the Diploma in Social Work and the National Vocational Qualification Level 4 in Caring for Children and Young People. The organisation has ensured that interim arrangements are in place for the shortest time possible. They have been pro-active in making suitable management arrangements and keeping Ofsted informed. This ensures that the home is well managed during this interim period. The interim manager has ensured that the requirements made at the last inspection are met. This demonstrates her commitment, capability and leadership skills. Improvements include the full implementation of the safeguarding policy. This ensures that all safeguarding information is shared with the appropriate professionals, including Ofsted where appropriate. In addition, this information is now properly recorded, providing clearer information about the event and action taken. There are also improvements to the complaints procedure, where all complaints, actions taken, and the outcome are now clearly recorded. All staff are now first aid trained, ensuring a first aider on every shift, should this be required. The home's statement of purpose is regularly updated to make sure that it clearly sets out the aims of the home. The interim manager's monitoring has ensured that young people actually receive the service as set out in the document. In addition, robust monthly monitoring from an independent person has scrutinised the quality of care, often making recommendation for further improvements. The acting manager has responded well to all these recommendations and there is continued	

improvement because of these visits. This assists the acting manager in driving forward further development and shows that the progress in the home does not stand still.

The interim manager has very good oversight of the young people's needs. She makes it her business to ensure that they continue to receive a good quality of care and oversees care planning to make sure that it is in line with their individual aspirations. Her dedication to multi-agency working helps young people to make good progress. One professional commented on this saying that the home, 'communicates well with me, and the social worker, and with the school'.

The interim manager is aware of the strengths and the weaknesses in the home and how this affects young people. She regularly asks the young people how they feel about their care and always has their opinion at the centre of any management decisions. For example, she has listened to their concerns about the lack of internet access. She has worked to overcome considerable barriers in the homes internet and IT systems in order to implement appropriate security settings in the home.

Staff feel well managed and say that the management team are 'amazing'. The staff team are stable and very experienced. They have all worked for the local authority for some years and fully understand their role. Staff are well trained to look after the needs of vulnerable young people. They are also extremely well supported. They receive regular appraisal and are set realistic development objectives to make sure that their practice continually improves. One professional said, 'staff seem committed, nurturing and caring'. In addition, a young person said, 'they are all great'.

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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