

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	03/11/2015
Unique reference number	SC453372
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Responsible Individual	Mr Richard Parker
Registered manager	Mr Gary Snaith
Inspector	Mr Colin Imrie

Inspection date	03/11/2015
Previous inspection judgement	sustained 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	Requires improvement

SC453372

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- The manager and staff are very committed to the care of the children and young people. They are enthusiastic and are willing to work over and above expectations to ensure consistency, continuity and excellent care
- The staff have created a very homely and family type environment which enables the children and young people to be relaxed, and comfortable and to feel like it is their home. This contributes greatly to the long term placements success
- The children and young people have excellent relationships with the staff and this ensures they always have someone they can trust, to talk to or spend time with
- Staff place a high priority on routine and structure within the home. This allows the children and young people to be clear about expectations and boundaries and it enables them to feel safe
- The children and young people make very good progress at school and college because of the support they get from staff and because staff liaise closely with school staff
- The children and young people are able to have good quality contact with their families and friends because staff spend time organising and planning this important activity
- The children and young people are able to participate in a wide range of activities. This includes riding and caring for the ponies at the home and helping care for chickens and the adopted house cat. These activities build confidence and self esteem

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
31: Staffing of children's homes The registered person must ensure that- (a) at all times, at least one person on duty at the home has a suitable first aid qualification. (Regulation 31 (2))	05/12/2015
35: Behaviour management policies and records 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 (v) details of any method used or steps taken to avoid the need to use the measure (Regulation 35 (3)) In particular this relates to a physical intervention which was used but not recorded with sufficient detail	05/12/2015
40: Notification of a serious event The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if- (c) there is an allegation of abuse against the home or a person working there. (Regulation 40 (4))	05/12/2015
44: Independent person: visits and reports The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month. (Regulation 44 (1))	05/12/2015

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the registered person maintains good employment practise. This should include a record of how decisions are reached as to who is to be appointed in the light of any criminal convictions or other concerns that are declared or discovered during the recruitment process. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 61 paragraph 13.1)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home is privately owned and registered for the care and accommodation of up to four children with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. EBD.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
25/03/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
11/06/2014	CH - Full	Good
03/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
12/12/2013	CH - Full	Adequate
17/10/2013	CH - Full	Inadequate

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	good
The children and young people are cared for very well. Staff are highly motivated to provide excellent individual care for each child and young person. Staff work over and above expectations to ensure continuity and consistency of care. Staff will cover for colleagues who require time off to ensure outside or agency staff are not used. Staff are also generally prepared to work additional hours to cover appointments and key events when consistency is required. Care planning is excellent and care recording is good. One child's care review minutes said, 'there is no doubt that' they 'benefit from the structure and routine afforded by Fairfield'. Another review noted that a young person, 'has really come into her and has matured and developed into a polite and sociable girl'. The staff work very hard to create a family atmosphere which means that the children and young people are able to be relaxed and comfortable. The children and young people comment on how nice it is living at the home, how supportive staff are and how this helps them make progress. The staff have clear expectations around behaviour and have basic routines worked out for all the children and young people. This is well balanced with the nurturing approach and creates an environment that is safe and where children and young people say they feel safe. The relationships between children and young people and the staff are very good. This was particularly apparent at key times. After school the children came in from school were greeted warmly and were eager to talk about how their day had been and about their plans for the evening. This relaxed yet structured environment provides the foundation for very good care. One child said 'I have really done well here', 'staff help me learn'. Another child spent time saying how well they got on with their keyworker and how important this was. Children and young people do make good progress in all areas of their lives. All of the children and young people attend school or college very well with high attendance rates. They take and pass their exams well and this is usually at above expected grades. Staff liaise well with school staff and any individual difficulties are quickly sorted out. Two of the children attend school homework clubs and all of the children have support with homework from the staff once they return from school. One young person who attends college is making very good progress and has a work placement where they have a job offer once they have finished the course. One child at the home has a history of finding exams very stressful and after negotiation between staff and school it was organised for them to take the exam in isolation. This resulted in much better than predicted results. This will not only give	

this young person additional confidence but also ensure maximum progress and attainment.

The health needs of the children and young people are well attended and they are referred to specialist professionals when the need arises. One child is spending time talking to a Child and Adolescent Mental Health worker and another has spent time with a specialist nurse discussing other health issues.

Children and young people clearly make good progress in their social skills and with their independence skills. All the children and young people are working through independence skills workbooks and this starts at a young age which is excellent.

Staff place a high priority on maintaining and improving family contact and there are individual plans in place for all the children and young people. Several of the children commented that this worked well and one of the children said how much better their family contact was now because staff were so active and organised. A number of the children at the home have complex and difficult family relationships and staff work hard to accommodate and supervise these as well as preparing children for these stressful times.

Staff also encourage children and young people to spend time with appropriate friends and these arrangements are also part of care planning. Children are supported to attend local community activities such as lifesaving classes and play for a local football team. Young people are encouraged to bring their friends to the house for visits or for tea so that staff have an opportunity to meet them. Staff will also go and meet the parents of friends to establish some understanding and communication. This all goes to ensure excellent safety as well as promoting social life outside the home.

Children and young people help to care for the house ponies and the chickens as well as the adopted house cat and they enjoy this. They also get plenty of opportunities to ride the ponies and this is a favourite activity. This helps them develop a sense of belonging and also gives them a chance to take some responsibility.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
The children and young people are kept very safe at this home. Children and young people do not go missing. The one occasion when a young person was reported absent was an older young person coming home a few hours late after being out with a friend. There have been no child protections issues since the last	

inspection.

Staff have clear expectations around behaviour and also have clear routines. This not only keeps the children and young people safe but also ensures that they feel safe.

Risks are well understood by staff and they take great care to minimise these.

Young people are encouraged to build up their free time outside the home and this is done slowly and in stages.

Any challenging behaviour is well managed by staff. Staff much prefer to use talking and negotiating to influence behaviour rather than using sanctions. There have been almost no sanctions used at all, with only one minor instance since the last inspection. Children do occasionally require a physical intervention but these are all very low level minimum interventions such as escorting a child out of a room or moving them away from a difficult situation. Staff show great patience with some of the children when they have angry and aggressive outbursts.

There are a number of incentive schemes in place for children and young people and these work well. Several of the children commented about how good these were. In the games room each child and young person has a notice board full of achievements and rewards and these are personalised with a range of photos and decorations. The children and young people clearly take a pride in these and enjoy the display of their achievements.

One child has made a number of allegations against staff during angry outbursts. These are all retracted quickly once the situation has calmed. Staff are working to help this child understand this behaviour and make some changes. Although these incidents are recorded they have not always been notified to HMCI as is required.

One minor physical intervention was not recorded well enough.

Both these issues are now required to be addressed.

A more important issues is that not enough of the staff have a current first aid qualification so that often there is nobody on shift suitably qualified. While this has not impacted on the safety of any child or young person so far it is clearly a concern and this requires addressing immediately.

There were no health and safety issues noted at the home. There were good risk assessments around working with the animals and around riding the ponies. There were also good hygiene arrangements in place around the animals.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	requires improvement
The manager is experienced and has been in post since the home opened three	

years ago. He is appropriately qualified and is undertaking a further level five leadership award. The home is clearly achieving its aims and objectives as set out in its statement of purpose.

The manager is clearly very child centred and is enthusiastic and committed to the care of the children and young people. The manager does spend a good deal of time working directly with the children and young people and clearly enjoys having excellent relationships with them. Senior staff are also experienced and are similarly enthusiastic about their work and provide good role models for the rest of the staff team. The staff team is small and this means that the children and young people get good consistency of care and ensures that all the staff know all the children and young people very well.

Staff get good support from the manager through regular supervision and with regular training. One staff member described the team as 'a strong team that worked well together'. The manager does need to review the training matrix more often as staff first aid training is now poor with too few staff qualified. This is an error of management but also a potential safeguarding issue.

The monitoring of the home has been poor. The independent visitor has missed some monthly visits. Addressing this issues is a requirement. The manager does understand the importance and benefits of having a regular independent review carried out and has taken steps to appoint a new person to undertake this work.

Internal monitoring is carried out regularly and reported on as required, however there is room for these reports to be made in greater detail.

The manager fully understands the strengths of the home. He is clear about how well the staff provide individualised care to the children and young people and about this is delivered in a way that is nurturing yet has clear boundaries and expectations. The manager also understands that he needs to spend more time taking an overview of the work and to ensure that paperwork and monitoring is carried out with a more robust approach.

Two social workers contacted commented on the good progress their child was making. Several parents commented that their children were happy and doing very well.

The manager and staff have good relationships with other professionals involved in the lives of the children and young people. This is particularly so with school and college staff where communication is very good.

Social workers comment about good communication and about good working relationships between them and staff.

There were a number of requirements and recommendations made at the previous inspection around the management tasks. The statement of purpose has been reviewed and is now up to date. The manager has also met the requirement around getting full information from prospective employees prior to appointment. A

recommendation that confidential information is kept in a secure place has been met. Another recommendation about reviewing training needs has not been met and with the oversight around first aid training and has now been made into a requirement. A further recommendation around keeping a record of discussions around information and or concerns on DBS checks has only been partly met so that this is raised again.

There are four requirements and one recommendation raised at this inspection and these are of a similar nature to ones raised previously.

This clearly indicates that while the manager ensures excellent child care, that there is a need to further prioritise the monitoring and overview aspects of the job. This area now requires some improvement to ensure regulations are met.

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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015