

SC454484

Registered provider: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and operated by a local authority. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to five children or young people who may have emotional and/or behavioural difficulties.

The manager was registered in August 2012.

Inspection dates: 31 October to 1 November 2018

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

Date of last inspection: 12 September 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
12/09/2017	Full	good
08/03/2017	Interim	improved effectiveness
06/12/2016	Full	good
17/02/2016	Full	good

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

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet the Care Standards Act 2000, the 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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The care planning standard is that children– receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home; and have a positive experience of arriving at or moving on from the home. In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure– that children are admitted to the home only if their needs are within the range of needs of children for whom it is intended that the home is to provide care and accommodation, as set out in the home's statement of purpose. (Regulation 14(1)(a)(b), (2)(a)) The home must develop mechanisms to withstand pressure to admit children to the home when this would negatively affect those already living in the home.	14/12/2018

Recommendations

- Children's homes staff should encourage children to take a proactive role in looking after their day-to-day health and well-being. Where children have specific health needs or conditions, they should be supported to manage these subject to their age and understanding. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 34, paragraph 7.10)

In particular, staff should ensure that issues around general well-being, including sexual health and dental health, are fully understood by children and supported by staff.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people are generally happy and secure in this home. They are well looked after by members of staff who are committed to and invest in them. The children and young people make progress in the home due to the consistent, warm and loving care provided by members of staff. One young person has made exceptional progress and is no longer at high risk of harm.

Children and young people benefit from good routines that are consistent and fair. Expectations can be specific to individual children and young people, according to their needs. For example, one young person goes to bed earlier than other young people of her age because she finds this reassuring.

The home is nicely decorated and is kept to a very high standard. Any repairs are organised quickly. The children and young people are pleased that the home does not look like an institution. Everyone says that it is a lovely, homely place for children and young people to live.

The children and young people do many different activities. During school holidays, they have regular trips out, including to the seaside, theme parks and the local countryside. At Halloween, members of staff organised a 'ghost walk' for the children and young people. The children and young people also enjoy activities in the home, including playing board games. A member of staff helped children and young people to carve pumpkins, which were remarkably well decorated. Because of these and other activities, the children and young people are building positive memories of their time at this home.

Education is a priority for the children and young people in this home. Staff encourage them to attend at school or college. The registered manager insisted that the education plan for one young person was agreed before the placement could begin. Members of staff advocate for any children and young people if schools try to exclude them unfairly. If older young people want to leave college, staff help them to find alternative training or employment. The home recognises that the structure provided by education or employment is helpful to children and young people.

Children and young people at this home are healthy. Members of staff remind children and young people about any medical appointments. Staff go with the children and young people when this is appropriate. Members of staff promote a healthy lifestyle for the children and young people. This includes regular walks in the countryside and the preparation of nutritious meals. Some children and young people need extra support around their health needs, and a recommendation is made about this.

The home encourages children and young people to spend time with friends and members of their family. Staff members have developed relationships with the parents of young people who have recently been admitted to the home. Members of staff have given advice to a father who is caring for his daughter under a transition plan. He said:

'(name of child) has her ups and downs. When she is down, I work with the staff to make things better again. I can talk to the staff okay and I know them all well by now.' The home has made links with the family of one young person's boyfriend. Because of this, the young person feels that she is getting better at managing her personal relationships.

Children and young people have regular meetings to talk about their experiences in the home. It is a positive that they are included in the running of the home. The meetings could be more dynamic if they included a topic of discussion to be decided by or with the children and young people.

How well children and young people are helped and protected: good

When children and young people go missing, staff follow the missing from home protocol, including travelling to where the young person might be. On one occasion, this involved travelling hundreds of miles. When a young person returns, staff always ensure that an independent person carries out a return home interview. A professional who speaks to the children and young people when they have been missing from home said: 'Staff are really on the ball when telling me that someone has gone missing, almost always before the police tell me, which is the formal route. This is great, as it means I can get in and talk to them about why they've been missing while it is still very fresh, usually within a few hours of coming back.' There has been a notable decrease in children and young people going missing in recent weeks.

The home has developed excellent working relationships with other agencies, including child and adolescent mental health services, specialist health professionals and education staff. Local police officers visit the home at least once a week to make and keep a connection with the children and young people. Because of this, the young people tend to respond positively when staff call the police to the home.

Some of the children and young people in the home are at risk from child sexual exploitation. Other young people are at risk from gang activity, including 'county lines'. All members of staff have undertaken training on these issues. Staff speak to the police about current local problems and how they affect the children and young people in the home. The registered manager plans to hold further training events to ensure that staff know about the changing nature of these risks.

Staff in the home reward positive behaviour. This approach encourages children and young people to make good choices so that they can learn to regulate their own actions. Staff members work with children and young people on behaviour management and positive strategies plans. These are creative pieces of work that are reviewed in key-work sessions. When sanctions are imposed by staff, these are sensible and are reviewed by the registered manager. If she feels that a sanction is not appropriate, she will overturn it. This has happened once since the last inspection.

Staff use physical intervention when there is no alternative and only when needed to keep a young person or member of staff safe. Staff record such restraints appropriately,

and a review with the young person takes place afterwards. The review considers what led to the incident, including the wider context and immediate triggers.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The registered manager is a very experienced and effective leader. She is dedicated to the children and young people and expects the same of her staff. A police officer who regularly visits the home in a community role said: 'The manager is an inspirational manager. There seems to be nothing she doesn't know about running a children's home.'

The registered manager knows the progress that the children and young people make. She can talk in detail about the development that each child and young person makes. This is also seen in the staff team. One member of staff could tell me a great deal of information about a young person even though she is not their link worker. A former foster carer of one young person said: 'The manager cares for her staff and the children and this makes it a home rather than somewhere just to stay.'

The registered manager has an excellent understanding of the processes involved in running a children's home. She performs these on time and with the needs of the children and young people as her priority. The registered manager knows when a young person should not be admitted, due to the probable effect on the other children and young people. Despite this, two referrals were accepted when the registered manager correctly anticipated a negative impact on the home. A requirement is made to appropriately match admissions to the children and young people who already live in the home.

The staff undertake mandatory and extra training, as required. All members of staff have completed training about female genital mutilation. This was a recommendation at the last inspection.

Recruitment and induction processes are good. This local authority requires that managers obtain three references for new members of staff, rather than a minimum of two. The registered manager arranges for new members of staff to shadow experienced staff for two weeks before taking any responsibility on shift. One member of staff, who has been employed for 15 months, said that she has always felt supported to do a good job with the children and young people.

The staff team is stable. One member of staff has left the team and one has been recruited since the last inspection. The registered manager has approval to recruit more staff, which will provide more flexibility in the current staff team, particularly at times of annual leave or sickness. Team meetings take place every month and are well attended.

Information about this inspection

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided. Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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 whom it is trying to help, protect and look after.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

Children's home details

Unique reference number: SC454484

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council

Registered provider address: Gateway Plaza, Sackville Street, Barnsley, South Yorkshire S70 2RD

Responsible individual: Jonathan Banwell

Registered manager: Jan Jones

Inspector

Jane Titley: social care inspector

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