

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	09/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC471153
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Sara Stoker
Inspector	Jane Partridge

Inspection date	09/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
This home was judged Requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has Improved effectiveness. The home remains a stable environment where the unchanged permanent staff team offer predictable care to the same young people in placement. No new young people have entered the home and no young person has moved on. The home is warm, welcoming and presents in good decorative order. Young people are safe and continue to make progress emotionally, educationally and socially. At the last inspection five requirements and three recommendations were set to improve the quality and standards of care. Since that time all have been met or started to be met. In relation to the protection of young people; the manager has ensured that staff understand the individual roles and responsibilities of each professional including that of the Local Authority Designated Officer. This new learning is likely to improve the protection of young people as staff better know child protection processes and lines of responsibility. The manager has implemented a new system where staff read and sign all new risk assessments relating to young people. This ensures staff know and work with the most current information to safeguard young people's welfare. In relation to monitoring the quality of care delivered by the service; the manager has worked with the independent visitor to ensure that young people's family members are contacted by them to gain an independent view of the delivery of care. Similarly, the manager's monitoring of the service now includes feedback from young people, their parents and family members, the staff group and the wider professional team. This information offers the manager wide ranging opinions of service delivery. The analysis of this data contributes to service development and improvement. In relation to the three recommendations: the home has not had to consider the impact of the placement of a new young person against those already placed. However, the organisation have developed a more robust impact assessment. It is	

therefore more likely that young people placed in the future will have a positive experience of care and make notable progress as a result of a well matched placement. Through the behavioural management scheme young people are now experiencing recognition for their achievements and the positive changes they have managed. Lastly, processes are in place to offer young people an independent return home interview following an episode of missing from care.

Since the last inspection the young people continue to experience positive relationships with staff members and are supported in placement. One young person continues to excel at school. His recent parents evening offered a glowing report and the staff member who attended reported: 'I walked out feeling like a very proud parent!' For another young person who is out of statutory education and training, this inspection noted a shortfall in practice. The home does not offer a consistent structured day where planned activities offer routine in which to gain confidence and experience in returning to a formally arranged day. Staff lacked knowledge of the role and responsibility of the Virtual School Head. Staff knowledge of education systems is likely to result in improved educational support and advocacy for young people admitted to the home in the future.

Young people remain safer as a result of the care they receive. Episodes of missing remain relatively low and significantly lower than in previous placements. Similarly episodes of self-harm remain both significantly lower and with less intensity than in previous placements. Good mental health is prevailing and one young person is now engaged in formal therapeutic input whilst this is no longer necessary for another. Staff work with some complex young people. They appreciate how past experiences impact on present behaviour and support young people to make good choices. For one young person staff have supported the personalisation of a bedroom to create a soothing, relaxing environment in which to aide restful evenings and good sleep.

Young people placed do not share a close relationship. For one young person plans to move to a more appropriate resource cannot come quickly enough. The professional team seek to identify a foster placement. Young people have established and maintained friendships outside of the home and staff support individual contact plans to maintain family relationships.

The permanent staff team continue to deliver predictable and familiar care to young people. Staff continue to receive regular supervision and annual appraisals in line with organisational policy. Supervision is both young person and staff development focussed. This ensures a team who are conscious of enhancing practice and knowledge through appropriate training meets young people's needs. Since the last inspection staff have undertaken training courses that underpin safeguarding practices and have developed their skills to deliver effective key working.

The staff work very much as part of the professional team to deliver quality care to young people. One social worker reported: 'Staff are approachable and always

keep me updated, they work very well with all professionals. They are very nurturing, caring and supportive to young people.' Staff complete an individual weekly report. This report reflects a balanced view of the young person's time within the home and will successfully contribute to life story work. A social worker sums up: 'This home ticks all the boxes, it replicates a family home.'

Information about this children's home

This home provides care and accommodation for up to two young people with emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. A private organisation owns and operates this home.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
03/11/2015	Full	Requires improvement
25/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/07/2014	Full	Adequate

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.

Recommendations

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

Ensure staff have an understanding of the role of the Virtual School Head. If a looked-after child from a different local authority is placed in the home, the Virtual School Head of that local authority remains responsible for promoting the child's educational achievements. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 27 paragraph 5.10)

Where a child at the home are not participating in education they should be supported to sustain or regain their confidence in education and be engaged in suitable structured activities. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 28 paragraph 5.15)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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