

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	29/03/2016
Unique reference number	SC474179
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	Acorn Children's Home (Burton) Ltd
Responsible individual	Rachel Dyche
Registered manager	Vacant
Inspector	Louise Whittle

Inspection date	29/03/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 Good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judge that it has improved effectiveness. Young people have made progress since the last inspection in their educational achievement, maturity, independence skills, confidence and emotional well-being. One young person has been able to settle after a turbulent and distressing period in his life and is benefitting from a more positive relationship with his family. Other young people are engaging in work and education and have aspirations for careers, which enthusiastic staff support. The young people get on well with each other and enjoy trusting and warm relationships with staff. They are improving their social development and ability to understand their peers. Young people have personalised their rooms and enjoy a warm welcoming atmosphere in the home. The home is comfortable and well maintained, but the hallways have a somewhat institutional feel and improvements could make it more homely for the young people and their visitors. Young people enjoy attending a local boxing club and the gym. They are also looking forward to a seaside trip with staff. Staff listen to young people, and give them a voice via key work and young people's meetings. Young people confidently make requests or complaints to which the staff respond positively. Staff give young people incentives to make progress and record their achievements in the positive consequences book. One social worker says how happy her young person is and how well he is progressing here. The current manager started in the post in early December and has applied to be the registered manager. She has over nine years' experience of working with young people on the autistic spectrum in residential settings. She came into the post after a period of instability and uncertainty for staff and young people with regard to the management of the service. The positive experiences and progress of young people is evidence of her ability to provide the clear leadership and guidance that is required to meet their needs and deliver a good service. The manager is highly proactive, methodical and child focused. She has a calm, measured approach to her work and is fully aware of what is happening to young	

people and staff within the home at all times. Since the last inspection, she has made significant changes to the home and to staff morale and confidence. The home is organised and well run, enabling the staff to focus on the young people. Staff supervision and training is up to date and the manager expects staff to review all aspects of each young person's file by a set date each month. Staff now have the confidence to challenge other professionals when they do not provide the necessary services for young people. The manager records and addresses the recommendations made by the independent visitor, effectively using this input and feedback to improve the service.

There have been few incidents and no physical interventions or accidents since the last inspection. Incidents are recorded and responded to appropriately by staff, who work with young people, professionals and families to prevent them reoccurring. Staff are skilled at addressing young people's complex needs, and helping them to manage their emotions and behaviour. Young people understand what bullying is. They are confident to complain to staff if they feel they are being bullied, thereby keeping themselves safe. Staff and the manager regularly review and update behaviour management plans and risk assessments. The impact assessment for the recent admission of a young person was robust and effective. The staff have not assessed any of the young people as being at risk of child sexual exploitation, but fully trained staff are able to address the issue should it arise.

Staff and the manager work closely with family members and social workers to ensure that they correctly identify and meet the needs of young people. They effectively liaise with the police, drug services, youth offending, health and education professionals to support young people's progress and experiences. The work they have undertaken with family members has led to better contact for young people. Staff have closely liaised with one young person's college, resulting in improvements in his behaviour at college and therefore his potential to progress in the future. The social worker for one young person commented that the service is, 'absolutely fantastic'.

The manager has responded positively to the recommendation from the previous inspection. She has ensured that the staff encourage young people to read and be involved in their risk assessment and behaviour management plans. Staff use key work sessions to look at records with the young people and invite them to contribute. This enables young people to understand what is written and why.

Information about this children's home

This privately- owned children's home is registered to provide care for up to four young people aged between 8 and 17 years.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/12/2015	CH - Full	Good
29/01/2015	CH - Interim	Sustained effectiveness
22/08/2014	CH - Full	Adequate

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):

- in order to provide a welcoming environment, staff should seek to meet the child's basic needs in a ways that a good parent would, recognising that many children in residential care have experienced environments where these needs have not been consistently met- doing so is an important aspect of demonstrating that the staff care for the child and value them as an individual. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 15, paragraph 3.7)

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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