

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	09/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC483662
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	CareTech Community Services Limited
Registered provider address	5th Floor Metropolitan House, 3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire EN6 1AG

Responsible individual	Mark O'Donnell
Registered manager	Rebecca Quinn
Inspector	Michelle Spruce

Inspection date	09/03/2017
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 judges that it has sustained effectiveness. This home was last inspected in October 2016. One recommendation was raised. The home is judged to have sustained effectiveness. As a result of this inspection, two requirements and one recommendation have been raised. The manager has taken action to provide a parent with a written outcome, following a complaint. As a result, complaints are handled appropriately. Children and young people continue to access the service and enjoy their short break stay. A parent of a child said, 'Staff are trained to manage children with challenging behaviour. There are plenty of staff to provide care. We don't feel guilty leaving our children now.' As a result, parents, children and young people benefit from their short break experience. The health needs of some children and young people have changed since the last full inspection. For example, a young person now requires specialist equipment to help her sleep at night. However, staff have not received any formal training on how to use the equipment safely. They have relied on the parent to show them how to use it. This does not guarantee that it is being used correctly. The manager and staff oversee the health and safety arrangements. Regular monitoring identifies any shortfalls. There are sensors fitted to internal doors that activate on the trigger of the fire alarm bell. However, some door sensors activate when the noise level in the home increases. As a result, the doors can close without being triggered by the fire alarm bell. There is no risk assessment to evaluate the risk of doors closing without warning. This has the potential to place children and young people at risk of harm should they be in the doorways at the time of activation. The manager continues to monitor the quality of care of the service. Regular monthly visits by the independent visitor provide feedback about the home. This helps the manger to identify strengths and weaknesses. Some children and young people's records and internal care plans are not routinely updated. This may hinder the care they are required to receive. Some new staff have been safely recruited since the last inspection. As a result, children and young people are protected from harm. Young people feel safe when they are in the home. They arrive with smiles and sounds of joy. Their excitement	

to be at the home is clear to see. Parents also feel comfortable leaving their child. A parent said, 'The service is a real benefit. I have other children and feel it is a benefit to have a place where my son can come and have a good time. Although I don't leave him overnight yet, I am comfortable with him coming. The staff do a great job.'

Compliments about the service are often received. They are recorded in a compliments book. One entry to the record was from a parent thanking the staff for their hospitality during a visit. It read, 'It is evident that staff are interested in improving lives.' This means that the service provides a good quality of care.

The manager continues to work in partnership with parents and social workers. Regular parent forums take place. This gives parents and staff the chance to discuss what is going well and what can be improved. As a result, the channels of communication are kept open between the home and parents.

Information about this children's home

This short break service provides care and accommodation for up to six children and young people who have learning disabilities and/or physical disabilities. The service is privately owned and forms part of a large social organisation.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/10/2016	Full	Good
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
21/07/2015	Full	Requires improvement

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
12. The protection of children standard: In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure that— (2)(d) The premises used for the purpose of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health.	28/04/2017
The registered person to ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 13(2)(c))	28/04/2017

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that staff are familiar with the home's policies on record keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 62, paragraph 14.4)

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 that 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 whom 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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