

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC036732
Inspector	Judith Longden
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered person	Nottinghamshire County Council
Registered person address	Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall Loughborough Road, West Bridgford NOTTINGHAM NG2 7QP
Responsible individual	Vonny Senogles
Registered manager	Lynda Marie Rhodes
Date of last inspection	07/08/2014

Inspection date	25/02/2015
Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	There has been no enforcement action since the last inspection.

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

This home provides a short breaks service for young people with learning and physical disabilities. The Registered Manager is very experienced and continues to demonstrate a desire to improve the service for young people and their families.

The requirement and recommendation made at the last inspection have been met. The independent person, who monitors the home monthly in accordance with regulations, consults with young people, parents and placing authorities to gain their views on the service. This ensures the care, welfare and safety of young people is appropriately monitored. Staff have access to a range of training opportunities. These include training on first aid, sexual exploitation of young people with disabilities, sensory awareness and understanding autism. This ensures they can meet the individual needs of young people. No requirements or recommendations are made as a result of this inspection.

A number of improvements have been made since the last inspection. Staff bring a variety of skills and experience to the service. They have recently undertaken a skills audit which has identified their strengths and how this supports the development of the home. The audit has also identified areas for further training that have been sourced. This ensures staff are skilled and suitably trained to meet the longer term objectives of the service.

The service is due to move into a new building on the site which is currently under construction. Young people, parents and placing authorities have been consulted on the building and facilities. This ensures their views are considered.

Young people are more involved in their care and the running of the home. The frequency and quality of house meetings has improved and staff use a range of

communication tools to ensure active participation. Topics for discussion have included the role of Ofsted, bullying and personal hygiene. Several meetings have focussed on the new building, facilities and what they would like in the new home. They have also discussed the work of the builders, the hazards of the site and how to stay safe. Photographs of young people wearing high visibility jackets and helmets provide evidence of the work undertaken and remind them of their learning.

Young people are supported by an independent advocate who visits the home. A house meeting is planned to enable them to understand more about this role and how they can benefit from the visits. This ensures young people have access to other professionals for support.

A new format for recording progress has been introduced. Key workers complete reflective accounts of the time young people spend in the home, identifying the progress they have made and the role of the home in promoting this progress. Staff are also starting to explore creative and innovative ways of recording care plans using computerised systems. This enables all services and parents involved in the life of a young person to access and update the system with new information and achievements.

The manager has a number of robust plans for the further development of the service. These include provision of a sleep behaviour programme, to be delivered in conjunction with occupational therapists. This programme will provide an early intervention strategy to support parents and young people and promote the benefits of sleep in managing behaviour. The manager is also developing a telephone support line to provide help to parents and to signpost them to relevant services.

A good, well trained and competent staff team deliver well planned, person centred care. Staff work closely with families, spending time with them in order to share ideas and methods of working with young people. Staff are able to signpost parents to additional support services. This means parents and families are supported and there is consistency in the care of young people. One parent commented, 'I am always confident of a professional caring service, the staff are very caring towards all of us as a family'. Parents will have the use of dedicated areas in the new building in order to observe and interact with staff strategies for engagement, which will further promote consistency.

The service is able to support young people and their families as they source longer term placements. The manager is able to increase the number of stays a young person has, which provides consistency and support during the transition period. Staff are able to identify when a young person requires alternative support; they identified that one young person's needs were increasing and they were unable to effectively meet these needs in the home. An alternative placement was identified and staff were able to accompany the young person on their initial stays to provide continuity of support from people that he knew. This ensures transitions to new homes are as smooth as possible.

Staff support young people who are new to the home. Placements and visits are well planned and this ensures the mix of young people is suitable. Initial visits progress to tea time visits before the first overnight stay. This ensures young people feel welcomed and settled before longer stays at the home.

Staff understand the needs and behaviours of individual young people. A social worker stated, 'staff are very knowledgeable of the young person's needs. They treat young people as individuals.' On occasions where staff identify an unusual behaviour or concern they discuss how best to manage this through a person centred meeting with the staff team. This enables them to discuss what strategies already work with this young person, what the problems are and which interventions are best to address the issue. This ensures there are consistent solutions to any concerns. Good communication ensures all staff are aware of how to care for the young people and how to support them to gain the most from their stay at the home. Young people indicate they are happy when they stay here, one young person said, 'it is good'.

Young people make good progress in a number of areas as a result of their experiences in this home. One social worker commented, 'they have opportunities they don't have at home.' A range of activities are provided in the home, garden and local community. Young people enjoy community events such as the Christmas lights and regularly attend the library. This provides them with opportunities to engage with people and helps improve their confidence. One member of staff commented on a young person's progress saying, 'they have come on in leaps and bounds since coming here and are so confident now.' Young people's health is promoted through a range of healthy activities, such as dancing and walks in the local forest, and the provision of healthy, home-cooked meals.

Regular health, safety and fire checks are carried out. Young people and staff participate in full evacuations to practice what to do in event of a fire. Young people are further supported to understand fire safety through discussion at house meetings. There have been no incidents of young people being absent or missing because staff are very vigilant and are aware of the particular vulnerabilities of individuals. Good protocols and procedures ensure staff are aware of what to do in the event of any absence. As a result young people are kept safe.

The use of physical intervention has significantly decreased since the last inspection. Where it is used it is recorded in good detail and staff and young people have the opportunity to discuss the incident. The manager reviews interventions and evaluates their effectiveness to ensure they remain appropriate.

Staff are motivated and enthusiastic; they are supported through regular supervision and attendance at staff meetings. These meetings discuss the individual needs of young people, any current concerns or changes to risk assessments, progress made and how best to support them. This ensures staff are supported to continue to

deliver a very good quality service for young people. One member of staff stated, 'I absolutely love it here'.

Information about this children's home

The home is run by the local authority and is registered to provide short breaks for a maximum of eight children who have a learning or physical disability.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/08/2014	Full	good
18/02/2014	Interim	good progress
01/10/2013	Full	good
28/01/2013	Interim	good progress

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections 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

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The 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 relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.