

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	12/05/2015
Unique reference number	SC033457
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered person	Leeds City Council
Registered person address	Leeds City Council, 3rd Floor, St George House, Great George Street, LEEDS, LS1 3DL

Responsible individual	Mr Stephen Walker
Registered manager	Mr Francis N'Jie
Inspector	Mr Shaun Common

Inspection date	14/05/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained Effectiveness
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
outcomes in education and related learning activities	Requires Improvement

SC033457

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Managers understand the home's strengths and areas where improvement is needed. There is good capacity for improvement. Plans are in place, implemented and reviewed regularly for driving positive change
- Young people are making positive progress in all aspects of their lives. Where progress is not as expected, managers understand why and ensure plans are reviewed and revised to meet on going needs
- There is strong and effective partnership working between staff and relevant agencies, services and authorities. This ensures young people's needs are met
- There are strong links with external safeguarding agencies that ensures good monitoring, consultation on practice and formal referral and management of child protection concerns
- There are good relationships between staff and young people that helps young people to thrive and make good progress
- Staff understand young people's needs are well supported and have access to a range of training that supports them to deliver good quality safe care
- Young people are well supported to understand the reasons they are looked after in secure accommodation, to address these reasons including offending behaviours for those placed by the Youth Justice Board, to develop coping skills, confidence and improved self-esteem that assists a positive reintegration back into the community

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
ensure any restraint in relation to a child is only permitted for the purpose of preventing injury to any person (including the child), serious damage to the property of any person (including the child) or a child who is accommodated in a secure children's home from absconding from the home (Regulation 20 (1)(a-c))	05 June 2015
ensure the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that ensures that staff have the skills to meet the needs of each child; specifically, that all staff have up-to-date training in the use of ligature cutters (Regulation 13 (2)(c))	31 July 2015

Recommendations

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

- ensure that all incidents of restraint are scrutinised by staff who are impartial of the incident and have a sufficient understanding and level of expertise to ensure use is fair and proportionate (Page 46 Paragraph 9.36)
- ensure that during an incident of physical restraint, staff use their professional judgement, supported by their knowledge of each child's risk assessment before removing personal items and possessions from children's bedrooms (Page 48 Paragraph 9.53)
- ensure those with a leadership and/or management role are visible and accessible to staff and able to deliver their leadership and/or management

responsibilities; specifically, ensure there are arrangements in place for night care staff to communicate any issues to senior managers and that senior managers formally respond to any issues raised (Page 52 Paragraph 10.7)

■ ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, ensure the current good progress to implement and embed new systems and processes continues in order to improve outcomes for young people (Page 29 Paragraph 5.18)

■ ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, address staffing issues and concerns so that core and vocational subjects are consolidated, and provide a full and appropriate learning programme for young people (Page 29 Paragraph 5.18)

■ ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, improve the quality of teaching in core subjects and ensure access to ICT becomes an integral and accredited part of the core curriculum (Page 29 Paragraph 5.18)

■ ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, develop the use of information learning technology (ILT) so it is used more creatively to support teaching or to enhance opportunities for young people's learning and skills. (Page 29 Paragraph 5.18)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 24 young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for up to 22 young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and two places for young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are under 13 years of age requires the approval of the Secretary of State. Education is provided on site in dedicated facilities.

This inspection has the purpose of informing the Secretary of State on the continuing suitability for this provision to operate as a secure unit to restrict children's liberty.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/01/2015	CH - Interim	sustained effectiveness
31/07/2014	CH - Full	Good
12/12/2013	CH - Interim	Inadequate
01/05/2013	CH - Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>Young people enjoy living in a large, custom built new home. They each have their own en-suite bedroom in one of three units. Each unit has a spacious lounge and dining area, quiet room, games room, kitchen and laundry facilities. Young people also have the use of a range of facilities such as an indoor gymnasium, a full size 'AstroTurf' football pitch, a fitness suite, a horticulture area and raised flower beds. Consequently young people spend constructive time together playing team games as well as having one to one time with staff. Young people learn new skills and improve their health while having fun and building their social and life skills. This in turn improves their self-esteem and confidence. A young person said, 'I feel I'm fitter since I've been here because I get to do lots of exercise and before I would have just played on my computer.'</p> <p>Young people and staff enjoy strong and productive relationships with each other. This effectively enables young people to engage with the care programmes provided, for example the 'feel good' anger management module. Young people are further supported by participation in a daily routine where they know what is expected of them. Their day-to-day lives are characterised by a predictable structure around the education day, and the opportunity to fill their spare time constructively. Consequently young people feel secure in their home and have the confidence to 'make the most' of the opportunities provided. A young person said, 'I'm proud of the person I've become.'</p> <p>Young people develop a better understanding of themselves as individuals and learn how to create their own solutions to problematic situations. This increased self-knowledge allows young people to develop self-restraint and productive coping mechanisms. A young person said, 'I have built such good relationships with so many staff and with the other boys I've now learnt that it is alright for me to be me. I don't have to be what others want me to be me.'</p> <p>Concentrated programmes of work empower young people to identify and understand reasons for their offending behaviour. The consequent growth in self-esteem and self-confidence empowers young people to make future positive choices. This, coupled with young people's improved social and life skills improve their future life chances, reducing the possibility of further criminal episodes.</p> <p>Young people enjoy structured and positive routines. Cultural diversity is recognised and celebrated. Young people have regular access to their chosen faith with regular visits from religious leaders supporting young people's sense of</p>	

belonging and inclusion.

Young people particularly enjoy sporting activities such as tennis, basketball, football and rounders' where they can play together in mixed unit groups. This enhances their opportunities to build positive contacts, increases their self-confidence and introduces them to new activities. A young person said, 'I really like football and sport has become important to me here and it hadn't before. That gives me something else I can do to make proper friends when I leave.'

Young people are fully supported to maintain contact with family members and friends. This enables them to maintain important cultural as well as familial links promoting a sense of belonging. Young people have access to a private telephone line within their rooms. This system has approved contact telephone numbers programmed in. This enables young people to telephone parents, friends and support organisations, such as advocacy in their own time and in private. The systems are such that a young person on their first night in the home is able to talk to family members and gain reassurance. One parent said, 'Staff keep in touch on a regular basis and my son rings every night.' Another commented, 'I would rather he was there than anywhere else.'

The majority of parents report positively about visiting arrangements and contact from the home informing them of their child's care. On some occasions parents felt that they are only informed of negative behaviours and not always of the positive progress their child is making. The home is working to improve consistency by reinstating 'good news cards'. This will ensure that parents receive a more rounded picture of all aspects of their child's development and progress. A staff member said, 'Where we have good working relationships with parents we have better outcomes for children.'

Strong partnership working with health professionals, led by the in-house medical team helps to improve young people health. A dedicated health suite allows young people to receive appropriate health treatment on site. Effective initial assessments ensure that young person's unique and diverse needs are identified and carefully planned for. Young people's physical, psychological and emotional health needs are met and improve as they engage with the services provided.

The staff team strive to enable young people to share their views on all aspects of their care. Daily conversations over meals, shared time in the homework club and during activities are complemented by the formal 'Junior Leadership Team Meetings'. These are used productively for young people to make suggestions and raise issues on behalf of their peers. For example, how to cope with some young people's problematic behaviours. Young people grow in confidence and self-esteem as they learn appropriate ways of expressing their feelings and make requests that benefit themselves and others.

An excellent Children's Guide provides young people with comprehensive

information about the care they are to receive and who the key people will be during their time in the home. This information, individually shared with young people by a staff member on admission, enables a positive relationship with the home and staff to start immediately. This sense of belonging and nurturing, within clearly defined boundaries, enables young people to grow and develop.

Effective care planning starts at admission and is regularly updated throughout young people's stay. For some young people this can be for a period of weeks, for others their stay in the home can be lengthy. Individually tailored programmes integrate all aspects of young people's holistic needs incorporating both in-house and community provisions to promote positive outcomes. A staff member said, 'We've got a young lad who disclosed to CAMHS that he was having nightmares and flashbacks about his offence. He's worked on that and he is going to go to a specialist hospital to meet with victims. So he has gone from not wanting to talk about it to accepting and acknowledging it and wanting to help victims.'

Young people are fully supported during their time in the home by individually assigned key personnel and access to an independent advocacy service. This not only demonstrates that the home are complying with their Statement of Purpose but helps to ensure that young people's voices are consistently heard on aspects of their care and planning for outcomes. An independent advocate said, 'The manager is very receptive. He's very supportive of young people having an independent advocate. He feels that it is vital for them to have an independent person coming in who they can talk to and voice their concerns and compliments.'

The staff team are proactive and consistently prepare young people well for their transition from the home back into the community. For some young people this includes participation in the 'step-up' programme in anticipation of a move to another secure provision. Other young people learn the requisite skills necessary to move successfully in to independent living. A young person said, 'I was pale and thin due to drugs use when I came. Now I'm healthy, looking forward to the future and living back in the community.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Arrangements for safeguarding young people are good. Staff practice is underpinned by robust policies and procedures that are designed to give young people's welfare, safety and security a high priority. All staff receive good quality safeguarding training as part of their induction. This is regularly refreshed and supports them to be able to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and respond appropriately to any arising safeguarding concerns.</p>	

Links with external safeguarding agencies are strong and are well utilised for the purpose of monitoring, consultation on practice and formal referral of child protection concerns. The Registered Manager is a member of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board secure setting sub-group. This further strengthens these working links and provides a forum to challenge procedural shortfalls to improve safeguarding practice. As a result, child protection concerns and allegations against staff are rigorously managed in the best interest of young people.

Young people's risks and vulnerabilities are meticulously assessed and monitored from the point of admission until their return to the community. Good use is made of formal supervision and staff meetings to discuss and review young people's risks and vulnerabilities. Staff get to know each young person and are able to recognise any emerging risks, concerns or changes in behaviour. These are routinely discussed as part of daily handovers and staff are able to adapt their practice to counteract any emerging concerns. As a result, young people are provided with the right level of supervision, support and guidance to ensure they are effectively protected from harming themselves or others.

Bullying is managed well in the home. A range of approaches are adopted to counter bullying behaviours including individual discussion and daily group work sessions. Young people say they are confident that staff listen and respond when any concerns are raised. Where appropriate, the home delivers individually tailored interventions that support both the victim and the perpetrator. This helps young people to gain an improved understanding of how to develop positive relationships, interact safely and cope in social situations.

There have been no incidents of young people absconding since the last inspection. The home has effective security regimes that staff consistently follow to ensure the integrity of the secure environment is maintained at all times. Mobility and release temporary licence is risk assessed and effectively managed to ensure the risk of absconding is minimised when young people are out with staff or escort services. Procedures are in place should a young person abscond. These are in line with local police procedures and are fully understood by staff.

The home has a policy which clearly outlines the various levels of searching, required authorisation levels and how these searches are to undertaken. The manager is in the process of updating this policy to include reference to the daily pat down searches that young people are subjected to when moving between care and education settings. Young people confirm they are not subjected to any unnecessary searching. They are fully aware of the reasons staff complete searches and say that when they are undertaken, they are not intrusive and staff show respect for their dignity, privacy and belongings.

Well-structured and sensitive support from staff enables young people to learn how

to better manage and control their behaviour. Positive behaviour is reinforced through clear and consistently applied boundaries, respectful relationships and effective use of the homes new reward scheme. A large majority of young people identify these factors as strong motivators for why their behaviour has improved, with several expressing aspirations to achieve the status of champion, the highest level on the homes incentive system. Staff know young people well and have a good understanding of the factors that contribute to them becoming angry and upset, including the pressures of living in a secure setting. Negative behaviour is proportionately challenged. Young people are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and make amends when things go wrong. This helps young people develop an understanding of their own behaviour and find alternative ways of managing their anxieties and frustrations.

Staff are trained in the use of physical restraint and their training is kept up to date. Detailed behaviour management plans are used to inform staff practice, taking account of any physical or health concerns a young person may have. Staff use this knowledge to effectively and sensitively manage young people when their behaviour is at its most challenging. Young people did not raise any concerns about physical intervention and confirm that they receive good support from staff following any incident of physical restraint. This includes access to a qualified nurse, regardless of whether any injury is reported.

If required young people can be managed away from the group or by using single separation. Detailed records that provide evidence of monitoring regimes and staff's efforts to re integrate the young person back into the group are maintained for all types of separation.

A number of quality assurance processes are used to evaluate the effectiveness of behaviour management strategies, including physical restraint. Senior practitioners and duty managers undertake an initial review of each incident of restraint using the report and closed-circuit television (CCTV). An evaluative debrief, which is fully recorded, is then provided for those staff involved as a means of identifying ways to improve practice. However, this layer of quality assurance is not consistently effective. For example, this process did not identify and address practice shortfalls in a physical restraint that occurred during the inspection. This included insufficient use of de-escalation techniques and the thresholds for taking hold of the young person not being fully met. Also, staff were observed removing personal items from the young person's bedroom, including their mattress, without just cause or concern. This incident had been scrutinised by a senior practitioner and signed off by the duty manager. Positively, these issues were identified and addressed by senior managers who had routinely undertaken a second layer of scrutiny using CCTV. While shortfalls in the first level of quality assurance are apparent, there is good evidence that the second layer of scrutiny is robust and has challenged inappropriate practice, including dismissing a member of staff on one occasion.

There is a clear process for the robust and safe recruitment of staff. A number of

new staff have been recruited since the last inspection. Potential staff are subject to a rigorous interview process which includes a challenging face to face interview with young people. Young people talk very positively about their involvement in this process and feel that their views and opinions are valued by managers. Records confirm that relevant checks have been undertaken before new staff start work, ensuring they are safe to work with vulnerable young people.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home has moved to a new building since the last inspection. A range of new systems, processes and staffing structure are now in place. Young people are settling into the new premises and staff understand the range of new systems, procedures and technology with some work ongoing to ensure this is embedded. The building is of a high standard throughout and managers are working with young people to choose frames, pictures and other matters that will go up on walls. Security is a high priority and there are systems and checks to ensure the safety of all. The one requirement set at the last inspection has been met. The Registered Manager ensures that a copy of any monitoring report is sent to Ofsted so that Ofsted can assess and evaluate the progress young people are making and whether they are well cared for and kept safe.</p> <p>There are areas that require further work and managers are aware of these matters. One area is the relationships between the programme development officers (PDOs), keyworkers and key teachers. Programme development officers in summary, have the role of coordinating care and sentence training planning for young people. Currently, there is some lack of understanding of responsibilities between the three aforementioned roles and some young people are sometimes not always clear who does what in relation to their overall care plan. The impact of this issue is minimal as care needs are always met well and work is ongoing by managers to address remaining concerns.</p> <p>The manager is registered with Ofsted and is very experienced and qualified. He has been in post for many years and is provided with good support from his line manager who is the head of children's services for the local authority. The Registered Manager is very committed with a clear vision and aspirations for the home and the young people. Staff and managers understand the strengths and areas for improvement for the home. A position statement reflects the positive aspects of the service and work on-going to monitor and further develop and improve the care provided to young people.</p> <p>The home's Statement of Purpose was reviewed and updated in January 2015 and</p>	

was being further reviewed at the time of the inspection. The document clearly sets out the range of services to be provided to young people and the aims and objectives of the home. These are delivered in practice. The document provides good and accurate information for placing authorities and parents.

Managers understand the progress young people are making and where this progress is not as expected, they understand why and ensure plans are reviewed and revised to address any issues or concerns. The senior management team meet regularly to sample case files and plans and identify any areas that require closer scrutiny and further work. Managers have good relationships both in the home with relevant departments, and external to the home with relevant agencies and organisations. These relationships ensure that good quality services are provided to young people. Appropriate and timely challenge is presented to services and placing authorities where required, to ensure they carry out their duties and fulfil their responsibilities to young people. For example, one young person was not clear where they were going to live on leaving the home. This had been escalated to the relevant agency and a response secured with a positive outcome for the young person.

Complaints processes are known and understood by young people who use the procedure freely. Managers ensure timely and robust responses are provided to young people about the issues and concerns they raise. Records are monitored by the Registered Manager. He also examines the records quarterly with the local authority complaints department to identify any trends, themes or patterns that require further action.

The majority of staff are qualified and the remainder are either undertaking a relevant qualification, or will register for the qualification in due course after completing induction. Staff and managers have access to a range of training that supports them to deliver good quality care. Training completed includes matters such as physical intervention, suicide, self-harm, first aid, fire safety, child protection and medication safe handling. Some staff have completed training in child sexual exploitation and there are plans to ensure that all staff undertake this training in the near future. Most staff have undertaken training in using ligature cutters for those young people who self-harm. However, some require training and others may require a refresher. The impact of this issue is limited as most staff are trained and able to use the implements appropriately and safely. The Registered Manager has introduced a new training course and model of working for managers. This has had a focus on developing personal responsibility and delivering high quality provision.

Staff are well supported and receive regular formal supervision to assist them to deliver good quality safe care to young people. There are daily handovers for sharing information that promotes consistent positive care. These occur between care staff, and also between education and care staff. Communication between night care staff and senior managers is not clearly established and a formal system

or process for this is lacking. Night staff have raised issues with line managers that they feel would improve the quality of care and procedures; however, senior managers do not always get to hear about these issues so that they can consider the information, make improvements and feed back to night care staff about actions taken. Staff are proud of the new building and feel the systems and processes in place for the most part, assist them to deliver good care. Staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of young people's needs and the progress they are making and what is being done to address any issues where progress is not as expected.

External monitoring of the home requires improvement. Visits take place each month by an independent person under regulation 44. Reports of the visits cover a range of matters and identify strengths, though areas for improvement are not always clearly indicated through formal recommendations, even when weaknesses are identified in the report text. In some areas, reporting lacks analysis and evaluation of practice, so that managers can consider whether practices are positive, safe and appropriate. For example, reporting about behaviour management identifies how many incidents there have been, but not whether the visitor feels practice is appropriate and that records are sufficient to demonstrate this.

Internal monitoring systems are in the main effective and robust. A range of systems are in place for assessing quality of care, safety and the progress and experiences of young people. Any weaknesses and shortfalls are identified and acted upon quickly to improve service provision to young people. The monitoring process for reviewing physical intervention is in the main robust, though the issues outlined in the 'How well children and young people are helped and protected' section of the report questions the rigour and independence of the initial quality assurance process by first line managers. Positively, senior managers review these incidents at a second stage, which offers further scrutiny and reassurance about practices at the home.

Managers and staff present as committed, caring and wanting the best outcomes possible for young people in their care. They are reflective, have plans that recognise their strengths and where they need to improve. The home has a clear vision for the future and a good capacity for further improvement.

	Judgement grade
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Requires Improvement
Since the last inspection, action has been taken to secure long-term management arrangements for education and capacity to improve is good.	

Improved systems to determine prior learning and achievement and the refreshed initial assessment process ensures young people are swiftly assessed for reading, writing and numeracy on arrival. All young people receive an assessment for speech and language by the on-site therapist to ensure those with the most complex communication and language needs are prioritised for additional support. Once assessments are completed, young people attend education swiftly and settle quickly in to groups of similar age and ability.

Personal and social development plays an important part in education and over time, young people improve and enhance their communication and interpersonal skills. The range of learning opportunities is developing well since the move to the new building. More vocational subjects are available although the hair and beauty room is not yet functioning. Motor vehicle studies and food technology remain very popular accredited programmes, and design technology (DT) is enabling young people to gain joinery skills. The newly introduced horticulture programme is well supported by a bespoke outdoor area and other landscaped spaces between buildings. Cross curriculum work to establish this activity includes joint initiatives with DT in the construction of raised planting beds and Food Technology in planting vegetables and herbs for use in cookery classes.

Young people are encouraged to continue with their studies if they have been following courses prior to arrival at the home. A small number are working towards GCSEs in mathematics, English and Art, and the large majority are taking functional skills in mathematics and English. In addition, nearly all learners achieve relevant accreditation in Design Technology, Art, Food Technology, Personal and Social Education, Motor Vehicle Studies and Physical Education. Plans for future accreditation include ICT functional skills and horticulture. The Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme is an option, closely linked to ICT and functional skills, and most young people are working towards their bronze and silver awards. Mobility to complete expedition work is encouraged. During the inspection, one silver candidate successfully completed a 6-hour escorted walking expedition in a local park and was embarking on the camping element on-site later that day. Young people enjoy education and in the better lessons teachers use their subject knowledge well, which extends young people's interest and curiosity.

Numbers achieving good qualifications in 2014 were disappointing overall, although most young people leaving the home gained at least one qualification at or above their level of ability. On-going staffing issues, difficulties with data retrieval and planning for transition to the new building contributed to these below par outcomes.

Transition to the new building went well with minimum disruption to education and a new head of education is in post. She has made significant progress in a short period of time and has prioritised key areas to improve and enhance current practice. A timely review of systems, processes and procedures is informing planning and development to good effect. Areas undergoing scrutiny include;

performance management and professional development, absence management, aspects of teaching and learning; curriculum review and timetabling. Some change has been swift. For example, all teaching staff have been observed in lessons, the initial assessment process has been revamped and the individual learning plan is re-designed to improve coherence between the quality of teaching and progression, attainment and achievement. Time to trial these changes, and embed new practices is now required. Projected outcomes for learners this year are already showing signs of improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning is good in most lessons; no inadequate teaching was observed. There were outstanding features demonstrated in vocational and practical subject areas specifically. These findings correlate closely with the observation profile recently undertaken by the headteacher. The weakest teaching was observed in the core subjects, which is a concern. In these lessons, planning was not sufficiently detailed or well matched to individual learning needs. Although teachers were helpfully supporting young people to prepare for imminent functional skills examinations, plans for this work were unclear, and opportunities were not taken to re-cap and summarise key revision points. In mathematics an advanced level of challenge for more able learners was clear and expectations of this group were high. In most lessons, teachers were incorporating work of the appropriate level for different learners but this was not clear to young people who could not confidently describe the levels they were working at or the award they were hoping to achieve.

Assessment of young people's written work, when completed, is helpful. Written comments identify good work and what could be improved. Best practice was observed in mathematics, art and motor vehicle studies but generally, evidence was scant. Young people were not confident about their writing ability and were reticent to share the work they were completing. This was less so in mathematics, where notebooks are used to record work sequentially. During an ICT lesson, young people were very happy to explain their project work and clearly enjoyed working on laptops. Verbal praise for effort and participation is a consistent feature in all lessons to which young people respond well. Three higher-level teaching assistants (HLTAs) provide very good support to teaching staff and are highly regarded as key personnel within education. They were demonstrating sound teaching skills in ICT and physical education, and provided excellent support to young people during lessons.

Personal learning files are compiled for each young person, which contain assessment information and monthly reports about achievement and progression. Each subject lead monitors and tracks progress but there is currently no uniform system to capture data to inform planning and improve practice overall. This makes it difficult for staff and senior managers to interrogate the impact of teaching on progress and to identify learning patterns and trends for different groups of learners. A more robust data system is in development. In addition, the implementation of the new individual learning plan and a new tutorial system,

where all young people are allocated key teacher/mentors, are important changes and overdue.

The curriculum is appropriate and staff have worked well together to coordinate a broad and diverse range of subjects and activities. Nearly all subjects provide good opportunities for young people to achieve accreditation at entry level, level 1 and level 2, or the equivalent. Core curriculum subjects are prioritised and good attention is now given to support young people to develop functional skills in mathematics and English. The quality of teaching in these areas is too variable. Some gaps in delivery are affecting the curriculum offer. For example, science was unavailable during inspection week because of staff absence, and HLTAs were competently bridging teaching gaps in physical education because of long-term sickness. ICT is in the early stages of development as a core subject, taught competently by one of the HLTAs, and with good support from an experienced teacher. Accreditation in ICT is overdue. The vocational programme has increased since the transfer to the new building and a number of options have been introduced to extend young people's practical and vocational skills. Discussions are on-going to further develop opportunities for mobility and work experience linked to individual learning programmes in education.

The curriculum is subject to review while staff adjust their learning styles and use of resources to the new teaching environment. For example, afternoon sessions are overly long and provide too many opportunities for low-level disruption from a minority of young people. Movement of groups from the residential units to education is taking too much time out of lessons for some groups, reducing lessons in some instances by 10 minutes. The new education area is designed to a high specification and provides attractive and well-furnished areas for teaching and learning. New technology is used well in DT and motor vehicle studies, and the well-equipped kitchen provides a lively focal point for budding young cooks. However, the use of information learning technology (ILT) is underdeveloped. During the inspection electronic boards in classrooms were unused and laptops were offered only during an ICT session. Teachers in core subjects are not using resources creatively to support their teaching or to enhance opportunities for young people's learning and skills. This requires improvement. Access to resource materials in classrooms generally is poor.

There is very good attention to health and safety, particularly in practical subjects. Young people use equipment sensibly and safely. The excellent display of young people's work in the art room is not reflected around the building. Generally, little work by young people is displayed elsewhere. Relevant and attractive displays are used to good effect in motor vehicle studies, science and food technology and in the corridors. The Duke of Edinburgh (DoE) Award staff use high quality equipment with young people to ensure they are confident and competent in using for example, maps, cooking and camping equipment for their expedition work. The library, housed in the main corridor, has limited use and is subject to review pending the future recruitment of an English specialist.

Young people have access to a wide range of enrichment activities at weekends and during holiday periods, managed through the programme development team. HLTAs are often involved in during these times; teaching instructors also support care staff in delivering activities including cookery, the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme and sports. Recent collaborative working between staff culminated in a successful 'Master Chef' competition held between residential units and a 'Dragons Den' event, which captured imaginations of staff and young people. A range of external agencies and organisations from sports, creative arts and music, the public services and charitable organisations work are invited to offer activities. Some accredited programmes include the DoE award scheme and sport awards, although formal links to education to enhance young people's achievement are in the early stages of discussion.

Education staff take an active part in informing and influencing care planning. Staff contribute fully to transition planning prior to a young person's release, providing up-to-date information about their educational experiences and achievements they will need when they leave. One young person who had recently left the home had achieved a place at further education college to continue with his catering qualifications. Another young person had just returned from a formal interview at a local college, having secured a second interview in a week's time. Informally, teaching staff will often discuss links between education and employment opportunities. Weekly careers information, advice and guidance sessions have been introduced for young people which is a good development and plans to link these sessions more coherently to their education are soon to be implemented. Attendance continues to be very good at 96% over the last three months. Nearly all young people are respectful of staff and in most lessons young people participate well and the atmosphere is relaxed and purposeful. Young people generally work constructively in groups and independently as required and behaviour overall is good. Minor disruption is managed well by staff, and good cooperation between education and care staff ensures that the more difficult and disruptive incidents are dealt with promptly and with minimum fuss. Staff are consistent in challenging unpleasant or abusive language, which for a minority of young people is too prevalent. Those young people who leave a lesson for a 'cooling off' period return to education within a relatively short period.

The special educational needs coordinator and speech and language therapist are leading useful training sessions for both education and care staff to better equip them to address more challenging emotional and behavioural issues appropriately as occurrences for a small number of young people with highly complex needs become more frequent.

What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of looked after children is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place, however, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

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 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*.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance *raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted*, which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, workbased learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for looked after children and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2015