

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>15/07/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC425985</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Autism Initiatives (UK)</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Autism Initiatives UK, 7 Chesterfield Road, LIVERPOOL, L23 9XL</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Katharine Silver</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Helen Guy</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Chris Scully</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>14/07/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Adequate</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Requires improvement</b>

**SC425985**

## **Summary of findings**

### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Young people are safe and feel safe here. This is because of the warm, trusting relationships they have with staff.
- Developing young people's independence is a key strength of the home. As a result young people are becoming much more independent. They enjoy undertaking a wide range of jobs in the home. This includes helping to do their laundry and shopping for food and personal items which is effectively preparing them to move into adulthood.
- Young people are much more able to manage their own feelings and anxieties. As a result there continues to be a significant decline in the number of physical interventions.
- Young people enjoy a wide range of social activities that actively engage their interests. They enjoy spending time with one another especially when they go swimming.
- Young people's preferred communication systems are understood by all staff and are effectively implemented in practice. This means each young person has a 'voice' and this can be 'heard'.
- All young people are treated with the utmost dignity and respect. They are very clearly seen as individuals with their own interests and needs. For example, sibling's interests and dislikes are clearly defined with regards to the décor of their room and the things that they like to do in their free time.
- Young people are cared for by a compassionate and committed group of staff who want them to achieve their personal goals. Effective partnership working with parents, carers and the placing authorities ensures consistency of care.
- The management of the home continues to improve, The Registered Manager has addressed most of the issues from the last inspection but there remain shortfalls within their monitoring of the home and in particular young people's records. Some perceived risks in the garden have not been identified and the Statement of Purpose is not up-to-date.

## 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
16.—(1) The registered person must compile in relation to the children's home a statement ("the statement of purpose") which covers the matters listed in Schedule 1. (Regulation 16 (1))	28/08/2015
Establish and maintain a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating, the quality of care provided to children, and any actions that the registered person considers necessary in order to improve or maintain the quality of care provided for children, in particular records are consistently well recorded and in sufficient detail (Regulation 45 (2) (a) (c))	28/08/2015
12: The protection of children standard In order to meet the quality standard the registered provider must  (2) (b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;  (d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. In particular the out building in the garden and sandpit. Also, the risk assessments for all areas of the home clearly identify any specific risks.	28/08/2015
The registered person must maintain all of the records which include the information and documents listed in Schedule 3 in relation to each child, in particular they records are sufficiently detailed, and are up-to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry (Regulation 36 (1) (a)(b) (c))	28/08/2015

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a national organisation. It offers accommodation for seven young people who experience autistic spectrum disorder and a possible learning disability. For young people aged between five and 19 years.

Young people who access the home attend the organisation's school. A range of placements are provided in the home, these include 52 weeks, term time, holiday, weekends and short breaks.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
26/06/2014	CH - Full	Adequate
14/05/2014	CH - Full	Inadequate
25/03/2014	CH - Interim	Satisfactory Progress
16/04/2013	CH - Full	Adequate

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>Young people thrive because they live in a stable, nurturing and supportive environment. They enjoy very positive relationships with staff which are built upon trust. Social workers said that young people receive very good care and support, which enables them to feel settled and to engage with staff. Parents are complimentary about the progress their children have made since attending the setting. They said they wished their child could have come here sooner.</p> <p>Staff spend considerable amounts of quality time with the young people. They genuinely enjoy their company and young people's laughter and conversations can be heard throughout the house. Young people are increasing in confidence. One young person who had been playing in the garden came indoors. Staff said 'seaside gone' to check that the activity was over. He then looked at them, strode to the back door closing it and said confidently 'seaside gone.' Clearly indicating that the game was not over until the door was closed. This repetitive use of language effectively enabled him to process what they are doing and make decisions about what to do next. This is echoed by a social worker who said staff are very good at helping young people to move between activities and to understand what is happening next. They make good use of transitional objects including pictorial cards to help young people know it's time for school or to get ready for bed.</p> <p>The ethnic, religious, cultural and linguistic diversity of all children and young people is fully recognised, valued and promoted. Effective steps ensure that they do not experience any barriers in being able to participate in activities within the home or community. This includes planning activities well in advance and identifying any perceived issues or risks for young people and eradicating or reducing these.</p> <p>Staff are skilled communicators. They effectively use a range of strategies to ensure the voice of the young people is heard and acted upon. Young people's wishes, views and feelings are valued highly. They are currently being consulted on the décor for the lounge and as a result there is an eclectic mix of cushions on the settee as each young person has chosen their own. This provides them with a strong sense of ownership and belonging.</p> <p>Young people are provided with comprehensive and individualised care and support. Each care plan is unique to the individual and allows their individual personality to shine. Staff have an innate understanding of each young person's</p>	

needs and use this information well to ensure these are met in their day-to-day practice. For example, knowing how they like to be woken in the morning. This means they are woken gently and are able to start their day in a positive way.

Young people have access to a wide range of social, recreational and educational activities similar to any other young person of the same age. This includes drama clubs, swimming, the cinema, bowling and go-karting. A number of young people have recently enjoyed a holiday with staff. This was a big success and staff said the young people thoroughly enjoyed their time away.

Young people said they like it here but would rather be at home. They understand why this is not possible at this time. They said they enjoy playing on their games consoles and going swimming with another boy in the home.

One young person has just completed an overnight expedition as part of the Bronze award of the Duke of Edinburgh scheme. Staff are delighted with his achievement and have enthusiastically shared this with his family, placing authority and staff team. Staff said school was slightly apprehensive, but we knew he could do it. He was fantastic and did everything he needed to. Such is his success that school are already talking about him doing his silver award next year. This experience has significantly enhanced his confidence and self-esteem.

Developing young people's independence and life skills is a key strength of the home. Staff work tirelessly to support young people in developing skills for life such as preparing meals. As a result, some young people are now able to prepare simple meals, snacks and drinks with minimal support from staff. One young person confidently demonstrated how he can make a cup of tea and said he sometimes does this for the staff. Other young people confidently make their own breakfast and prepare salads for tea.

Some are now really confident to see to their own personal needs for example, washing their hair, bathing and cleaning their teeth. Others continue to need gentle reminders. Some young people are confident to see to some of their health care needs such as administering their own inhalers. Staff are very proud of one young person who recently had to go to the doctors. He confidently told the receptionist who he was, who he was to see and why. This is a fabulous achievement for this young man.

Young people's health care plans are generally well recorded. However, on a small number of occasions the information is not as clear with regards to signs and symptoms of some conditions such as asthma and enuresis or the outcome of hospital check-ups. This is a recording issue that has not been identified via the monitoring and does not impact upon the care provided to the young people.

Highly effective systems are in place to enable young people to keep in close contact with their families and other people who are important to them. Young

people enjoy the opportunities to talk to family members on the phone and to visit them during the week. A young person, excitedly told staff about daddy coming after tea in his car. He was obviously confident with this routine, as he told staff what would be happening that evening. Staff provided clear reassurances saying yes daddy coming after tea. Consequently the young person was reassured and managed to contain his excitement so he could have his tea and see daddy.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>good</b>
<p>Young people are protected as staff have a very good understanding of their individual needs and vulnerabilities. They are safeguarded because staff have a secure understanding of the home's safeguarding and child protection procedures. This is because training has been specific around young people with autism and learning difficulties. This means they are clear on the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and the action to take should they have any concerns.</p> <p>Positive relationships with social workers mean staff are fully aware of any issues which may impact upon young people's safety or well-being. Therefore they are able to take appropriate action when necessary.</p> <p>Young people do not go missing from care as they are effectively supervised at all times. Comprehensive procedures are in place if a young person goes missing, which are clearly understood by staff. This is effectively supported by maps of the routes young people take to their favourite places and information as to where young people may go i.e. to mum's house.</p> <p>Young people are helped to keep themselves safe. This is because staff are aware of the dangers they may face when using the internet, increasingly so because of their vulnerabilities. Staff carefully monitor them when they are using their computer tablets and talk to parents about the safety settings they have in place.</p> <p>Positive behaviour is consistently and effectively promoted. This is because they understand each young person's specific behaviours and their potential triggers. They are vigilant and respond quickly and efficiently to the young people's ever changing needs. Staff effectively address difficult or challenging situations which avoids the behaviour escalating. They effectively use of distraction and using constant phrases to reassure young people. Consequently, the use of physical interventions is minimal.</p> <p>The recording of any incidents are usually well recorded, although on occasion</p>	



staff have not recorded their de-brief or discussions with young people. This is because not all interventions are hands-on. This needs to be made clear within the record. Personal intervention support plans are usually well recorded. The use of subjective language, such as encourage 'appropriate language' and 'appropriate behaviour' does not make clear what staff want young people to achieve.

There have been many improvements in the décor of the home since the last inspection. Young people are fully involved in the decision making about colour schemes and soft furnishings. They are proud of their bedrooms which are all personalised to their individual needs and tastes. Risk reduction is proportionate so that they are encouraged to take 'safe risks' such as helping to prepare food and to tell staff when it is safe to cross the road.

Risk assessments for the home are in place, but do not recognise all potential risk's, for example, in the rear garden. These include the condition of the out building, the rust on grills covering vents, the fire escape and on some scooters, also the remains of a wooden gate at the bottom of the fire escape. These issues have not been picked up as part of the monitoring of the home.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust and there is now a clear audit trail of the checks carried out on staff to ensure they are suitable to work with vulnerable young people. Young people's safety and well-being is enhanced as all visitors to the home are well supervised by staff.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>requires improvement</b>
<p>The home is lead and managed by a committed Registered Manager. She is suitably qualified and has been a Registered Manager for a number of years. She is supported by an equally enthusiastic deputy and staff team.</p> <p>The staff have the young people's wishes and individual needs at the heart of everything they do. This is echoed by social worker and parents who said they would strongly recommend the home to other parents. Staff are well supported by the leadership team and have equal access to a range of training opportunities.</p> <p>Staff are held accountable for their performance and their individual development needs are identified through regular professional supervision. This means they are able to reflect upon their performance and consider ways of further enhancing this. Staff work well together as a team.</p> <p>The Statement of Purpose has not been updated for some time. Although this</p>	

process has recently begun the reviewed document does not contain all of the required information. For example, amongst other things, it does not make clear on how health support staff are supervised, the educational support, and how to access the child protection and behaviour management policy. This does not provide parents, carers and placing authorities with an up-to-date and comprehensive picture of the care and support provided to their children. The homes development and staff plans are also currently under review.

Action has been taken to address the issues from the last inspection. Monitoring of the home by the Registered Manager has improved but is not yet robust. This is because the monitoring has failed to identify shortfalls in record keeping and the risks identified within the garden. Managers monitoring reports are not evaluative as they do not identify the shortfalls found and the action taken by the home to rectify these.

The recording in young people's records has significantly improved since the last inspection. They are more evaluative and are written from the young person's perspective. This makes them 'real' to the reader. However there remain some issues with regard to, young people's names and gender changing in the documentation. An incorrect address for one young person and some missing information with regards to their health care plan needs. Risk assessments for the home are not sufficiently detailed. These issues are scattered within the documents and are not being identified through the monitoring processes.

## 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*.

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