

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>29/07/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC409502</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Bedford Borough Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Bedford Borough Council, Borough Hall, Cauldwell Street, BEDFORD, MK42 9AP</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Darryl Freeman</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Joyce Ward</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Angie Bishop</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>29/07/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Good</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>Outstanding</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

**SC409502**

## **Summary of findings**

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

- The home is a warm and welcoming environment, which is equipped to meet each child's individual needs without appearing clinical.
- Introductions to this home are well planned and led by the children's needs and responses.
- Children make exceptional progress from the point of starting to spend time in this home to the point of moving on.
- Very strong links exist between the home, key professionals and family members. Views of children, their families and professionals inform all decision making and staff are creative at ensuring children's views are at the forefront of their care.
- Social and emotional development is integral to the day-to-day routines and staff positively introduce children to new experiences whilst appropriately managing risk.
- Along with children, staff personalise all areas of the home and use a number of moveable objects personal to the children to individualise bedrooms for short stays.
- All staff access a broad spectrum of generic training and support that is specifically tailored to young people's individual needs.
- The management and staff team in the home is stable and dependable, affording children trusting relationships with staff and consistent care.
- Policies and guidance are in the process of being revised, completion of this is required to ensure the staff have a clear and up to date reference point if needed.
- Some handwritten recording on children's records is unclear and not up to date or consistently signed and dated by staff.

## 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
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which are kept up to date and are signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1) (b) (c))	31/08/2015

### Recommendations

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

Ensure the registered person prepares and implements a policy, which is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse and neglect and sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 44, paragraph 9.19)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is owned by a local authority and provides care and accommodation for up to five children with physical disabilities, learning disabilities and sensory impairment. Three children can be accommodated under short break arrangements, one young person can be accommodated as a permanent placement and one young person can be accommodated under a shared care arrangement.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/03/2015	CH - Interim	Declined in effectiveness
19/09/2014	CH - Full	Good
23/01/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
23/05/2013	CH - Full	Good

## 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>The home provides care for children with multiple complex needs, many of whom depend on specialised equipment to enable staff to meet their needs. Despite this, staff work hard to ensure that the home does not present as institutionalised.</p> <p>Children enjoy individualised care tailored to their emotional and physical needs. Staff understand their needs and how to respond to them; they are well attuned to each child. As a result, family members are confident in entrusting the care of their children to the staff in this home. One parent said: 'They know her and know how to respond to her and they know her responses. I was wary at first; she does not miss me at all now. I can relax knowing she is looked after.'</p> <p>In conjunction with family members, staff ensure that children make progress during their stays in this home. They introduce new experiences to expand children's social and emotional development and actively engage children in a broad range of activities in the home and community. A social worker said. 'The young person has developed since she has been in the home. It has made a lot of difference in her emotional well-being, she makes good progress.'</p> <p>Relative to children's circumstances, staff integrate formal education into the daily routines in this home. Children access a wide range of books and interactive learning and staff encourage children to expand their learning in line with their formal education plans. Staff spend time in children's schools and observe their individual responses to learning. This ensures children receive a consistent response to their education between the home and school.</p> <p>Staff communicate with children in a variety of ways. Where children have additional communication needs, staff work closely with family members to ensure children are able to express their wishes, views and immediate needs. A weekly voice group takes place in the home where children share their thoughts and in conjunction with staff make decisions about their stays. Staff listen to children, consequently they develop trusting relationships characterised by consistent, dependable responses from staff.</p> <p>Embracing and celebrating individual identities is a key part of life in this home. Where a child has a particular cultural or religious identity, staff take the time to learn about how this translates into their care and routines. One parent said: 'They are in touch with my son's cultural needs. They have asked me questions and have spent time with him and our family.'</p>	

Contributions by staff to transition planning are fundamental in successful transitions for children into adult service provision; staff are strong advocates for children and their families. A manager from adult services was recently invited to the home to meet with staff and family members. This benefits children and families by alleviating some of the anxiety surrounding transition. This process enabled open sharing of information, including concerns about the impact of change on the children who stay in this home. A social worker said: 'We have input from the home about everything. They are always present in meetings, are very involved with families and they understand the difficulties the children and families face.'

Children have lasting memories of time spent in this home. This is based on experiences and reinforced with a book, which they are presented with at the point of moving on. The book includes photographs and written memories of children's time in the home.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>The staff, manager, family members and professionals carefully plan children's transitions into this home. Detailed induction plans ensure that children do not stay overnight in the home until family members and the children are familiar with staff and completely comfortable in the surroundings.</p> <p>Due to their additional needs and individual diagnoses, children who spend time in this home are not ordinarily risk aware and in the main depend on staff to keep them safe. The manager and staff achieve this and effectively safeguard them from harm. Staff deliver joint activities focused on safeguarding; these include identifying safe people, harmful friendships and bullying. None of the children have time unsupervised and when staff take them into the community appropriate risk assessments safeguard them from identifiable harm. Missing is not an issue in this home.</p> <p>A stable staff team implement repeat, consistent boundaries and children can predict their responses. This, coupled with creatively adapted practice contributes to a unified feeling of security. Every child using this provision has unique needs; levels of staffing reflect those needs and ensure that all children are supported at all times. The manager carefully matches children who spend time together in the home. This promotes the building of natural peer relationships and interactions. A parent said: 'My child has made some very good friends. He enjoys the company, they are providing him with opportunity to do the things his peers are doing in the community, things he couldn't do with me.'</p>	

There have been no incidents of physical intervention and no negative consequences or sanctions since the last inspection. This is reflective of the harmony that exists in this home. A social worker said: 'There is a really nice peaceful feel to this home.'

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The manager was registered in 2010; she has appropriate experience and qualifications for the role. She was not available due to illness during the inspection and the home was being managed by the deputy manager. The deputy manager is appropriately qualified and has worked in this home since 1997. Together, they understand the children and the provision and readily recognise strengths and areas for improvement. The manager has addressed the three requirements and two recommendations raised at the last inspection.</p> <p>The manager and deputy support staff through regular supervision and annual personal development reviews. These identify staff strengths and areas for improvement. Staff well-being is an important part of supervision and managers acknowledge the emotional impact on staff of caring for some of the children who spend time in this home. Staff attend regular team meetings and during these meetings, managers consult with them about change, review young people and discuss new referrals. Managers value staff feedback, which contributes to the stability and longevity of service within the staff team.</p> <p>Effective monitoring systems are in place and the manager uses these to inform improvement of the home. As part of this process, she consults with family members, professionals and children. Managers undertake regular file audits, which they use to review the quality of records and track dates when they request information from the local authority. Some documents in files remain out of date and contain some unclear hand written updates.</p> <p>The manager is in the process of reviewing and revising policies; the safeguarding and child protection policies are yet to be updated and implemented. Staff receive regular training and are familiar with the protocols in place. However, they require an up to date policy to refer to in the event of a safeguarding or child protection issue.</p>	

## **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*.

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.

## 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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