

## Children's homes inspection - Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>24/09/2015</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC034900</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered person</b>	<b>Nottingham City Council</b>
<b>Registered person address</b>	<b>Nottingham City Council, Loxley House, Station Street, NOTTINGHAM, NG2 3NG</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Kay Sutt</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>John Imms</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Caroline Brailsford</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>24/09/2015</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Improved effectiveness</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>	Outstanding
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceeds the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
<b>how well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Good
<b>the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Outstanding

## SC034900

### Summary of findings

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

- This home is not just a short break for young people; it positively affects their life in many ways, particularly with their overall well-being, behaviour, safety and confidence.
- Young people receive excellent care at all times.
- Staff look for new ways to work with young people so that they can make more progress and they never stop trying.
- Young people experience activities that they would not normally experience. This opens up new opportunities and areas of interest, which will be of great benefit to them in their future life.
- Staff are kind, caring and extremely inspirational in their approach. They are highly creative, go the extra mile and do this because they genuinely want to. Their practice is so good that it warrants sharing with the wider sector.
- The safeguarding ethos is very good. There is a tremendous open, reflective and learning environment, where staff at every level seek to find better ways to protect young people.
- Young people and their families receive the help that they need to keep their family together.
- Even when young people are not receiving their short break, staff continue to support them in between stays to ensure the momentum of improvement.
- Managers have a genuine desire to positively affect young people's lives and lead the staff team very effectively to share their approach.
- Managers and staff influence the community and wider society about their acceptance of disabled young people in our society.
- There is a shortfall in relation to time delays in passing safeguarding issues to the relevant authorities, although this has not impacted on young people's safety to date. Whilst this has had an impact on the judgement for safeguarding which is not outstanding, this does not detract from this being an excellent service overall.
- The other recommendation for improvement is in relation to storage of controlled drugs. These are not double locked as the guidance requires.

## **What does the children's home need to do to improve?**

### **Recommendations**

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

Ensure that the registered person follows the guidelines from the document *Managing Medicines in Care Homes* (March 2014). (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 35 paragraph 7.17)

Ensure that there are clear procedures for referring child protection concerns to the Local Authority. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 44 paragraph 9.19)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

The home is registered to care for 11 young people. It provides short breaks to young people with a learning disability and associated physical disability. The home is run by a local authority.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	Interim	Improved Effectiveness
15/09/2014	Full	Good
05/03/2014	Interim	Satisfactory Progress
10/07/2013	Full	Good

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	Outstanding
<p>Young people experience an extremely high quality of care at all times during their stay. Staff know young people exceptionally well and understand the importance of high quality planning. This ensures that young people feel very welcome, comfortable and highly respected. Where they have complex needs and alternative communication, staff work hard to understand their behaviour. Young people's behaviour is always seen as positive, and their personality is celebrated. This positive ethos is extended to each aspect of care, and staff take every opportunity to encourage growth in self-esteem through a culture of high respect.</p> <p>During their stay, young people experience a wide range of new activities. Staff help them to identify what they enjoy and help them to explore their interests. Even where young people are extremely shy in the community, they come out of their shell and new experiences are opened up to them. There is an ethos of individuality and creativity from staff at every level. Staff inspire young people to get involved in activities that they will be able to enjoy in their future. For example, some young people have been involved in an art project in a local art gallery and have realised their talents. Their work has been highly respected by the gallery and a private viewing has ensured that young people's talent was celebrated, increasing their self-esteem.</p> <p>There appears to be no end to staffs' creativity and the homes budget extends to ensure that where an activity is beneficial to a young person, that it takes place in reality. Each young person has a wish list with their highest aspirations identified. Staff ensure that these are achieved, and it appears that no idea is impossible. One young person has attended a music festival with their friend, one young person has been to Wembley to see England play football and another has been able to go to Harry Potter world. In addition, young people have been able develop their interest in physics and Isaac Newton.</p> <p>Even when young people are not on their short break, there are examples of work continuing during other aspects of young people's lives. During the inspection, staff were planning to take a young person out for a meal with their friend and the young person was not currently resident at the home. In addition, young people have been involved in charity events such as the 'Great Nott's Bike Ride', using a range of bikes provided and maintained by the home. Some young people were not resident at the time. Families were also involved in this event and all reflect on this being very special because young people crossed the finish line to a standing ovation from the crowd. All of this work significantly increases young people's</p>	

confidence, self-worth and effects their life as a whole. Given that this is a facility for short breaks, the service has a big impact on young people's overall life and not just when they are staying at the home.

Staff practice with regard to behaviour management is excellent. They strive to share their practice with families, who may be struggling to cope with particular behaviours because of young people's anxieties, such as, anxieties relating to young people's learning disability or Autistic Spectrum Disorder. They regularly go into young people's own homes to model their strategies. During the inspection, staff were going to support a family with a method that they believe had worked particularly well with that young person. Best practice therefore influences the young person's life as a whole and not just during their time at the home. There is an emphasis on current research and practice and staff ensure that they are working with the most up-to-date information. For example, they model 'intensive interaction' to assist young people with their behaviour. In addition, an assistant unit manager is completing his Master's Degree in Autism. This is being supported by the organisation, who know and understand the importance of new ways of working to positively influence change.

Young people acquire new skills as a direct result of staying here. There are extremely good links with relevant health care professionals, schools and also the young person's home to ensure a highly consistent approach. Age appropriate activities ensure that they are able to increase their independence skills in a safe environment. As a result, they are better prepared for the transition to adult services. Staff know that they can help young people to make excellent progress when they come to the home and actively persuade young people and parents to access the facility because they know that they can make a difference to their progress and self-esteem.

The arrangements for meeting young people's health care needs are excellent and staff are competent and skilled to ensure that young people can continue to use the home and access the community, despite their complex needs. Their medication is also well managed although the storage of controlled drugs is not in line with current guidance. This does not impact on young people's care.

The home actively promotes positive endings and there are many photographs, experiences and memories that young people take away with them when they leave the home. Staff continue to keep in touch with some young people, where this is appropriate and have met them at college or in the community for lunch to continue the support that they know young people will readily accept.

For new admissions, there is an acknowledgement that some disabled young people find transition incredibly difficult. Staff go the extra mile to make sure that young people feel at ease. For example recently, where a new young person has been admitted, a considerable amount of time has been taken to ensure their familiarity of the home and understanding of their situation. The same member of

staff has been to see the young person at school, at home and has welcomed them and worked with them in the home on each stay. This has ensured that the young person knows what to expect and that the transition goes at their own pace. This reduces anxiety and ensures that young people are as settled and comfortable as possible.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Good
<p>Young people’s safety is an absolute priority. Staff know the vulnerabilities of individuals and good planning reduces risk. Young people’s risks are specifically identified and the steps that staff need to take to protect them are made absolutely clear. Risk reduction is creative and the staff make sure that they look at the full range of aspects that might influence safety. For example, they examine behaviour in particular groups and compatibility issues as well as behavioural triggers. One parent said staff, ‘saw the trigger points at the first home visit’. Which gave them confidence that their young person would be safe at the home.</p> <p>Staff seek to understand each young person’s safety profile against the risks that they face individually, in groups and in our society. They have a very thoughtful approach to aspects of safety such as e-safety, going missing, child sexual exploitation and radicalisation. They understand what such issues mean for disabled young people and fully acknowledge their added vulnerability. For example, some particular work on relationships and e-safety was completed with a young person who was preparing to move on. This ensured that they were as knowledgeable as possible and equipped with the skills to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>Behaviour management in the home is particularly good and staff rarely have to use physical intervention. The actions by staff are always about putting the young person first and great effort goes into understanding why they are behaving the way they are. The views of the young person are always at the centre and patterns and trends of behavioural incidents are always well considered by managers. Each event is analysed and staff are held accountable for their actions. They know that they have a big responsibility and are quick to identify improvements to their practice. Staff supervision is used so that performance can be fully monitored. This ensures that staff continue to have the skills needed to effectively and safely manage behaviour.</p> <p>The open team culture fully encourages honesty and transparency. Where mistakes are made, staff are actively encouraged to share their learning with the rest of the team. This promotes an excellent safeguarding culture, given the young</p>	



people's vulnerability.

Where there have been safeguarding incidents in the home, these are passed on to the appropriate authorities, so that the required professionals can make robust and informed decisions about aspects of safety. On two occasions there was a short delay in passing an issue to the young person's local authority social work team. Both incidents happened on a Sunday and were not passed on until the Monday morning. Managers are more than happy to acknowledge this mistake and the learning culture gives confidence that the required improvements will be made. During both of these incidents, the safety and welfare of young people was an absolute priority and good quality handovers ensured that staff were working with the most up-to-date information. As a result the safety of young people was not compromised.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Outstanding
<p>The manager is registered with Ofsted and holds the Post Graduate Diploma in Public Service Management. He has the skills and experience to manage this type of children's home. He is supported by three very effective assistant managers and the numbers that make up the management team reflects the management hours needed in this complex service. The staffing levels are effective. The staff numbers change regularly and reflect the needs of young people individually and as a group.</p> <p>The managers work extremely well together in championing individual young people's progress whatever their disability. They are confident that the service is high quality and they are ambitious for young people. This influences young people's lives, particularly through the wide range of activities and experiences they receive. Managers ensure that the home is not just providing short breaks but that there are direct benefits for young people. The high aspirational approach is filtered down to staff and young people, ensuring that there are no limits to achievements.</p> <p>Managers and staff are thoughtful, creative and innovative and there is a continuous momentum of significant improvement. Parents comment on management saying, 'they are just lovely and so tuned in'. There is a strong emphasis on quality assurance and listening to parents, other professionals and young people. For example, managers have recently commissioned a student social worker to complete a quality assurance study around the views of parents. Interviews with parents and questionnaire results are readily available to all and the very positive results motivate staff to continue with their excellent work. Examples of parent comments are: 'I really would not know what I would have</p>	

done without them,' and, 'staff are brilliant'.

The local authority organise monthly visits to the home where an independent person makes their own assessment on how the home is functioning in meeting its statement of purpose. Where there are any recommendations made, there is an extremely prompt response, which reflects the ethos of continuous improvement.

Managers know the strengths and weaknesses in the home. They lead the staff to fully reflect on their work and create opportunities for discussion about what could be better. Even the highest performing staff are encouraged to strive to achieve more and are asked to specifically reflect on each significant event to find areas for improvement. In addition, daily meetings and staff meetings are a place for further learning and reflection. The high quality work from staff is acknowledged and this inspires staff to do even more. One manager commented on a staff's work with a young person saying, 'he is genius with him'.

Leaders ensure that they respond to any complaints as soon as is possible so that parents can continue to feel very positive about the service, reducing anxiety and pressure on the family. There has only been one complaint which was responded to within one hour, demonstrating that managers always have time to listen and have a drive to make improvements wherever possible.

Training is of a very high quality. Young people at this setting have complex and changing needs, including those associated with Autistic Spectrum Disorders and particular health care needs. Training is bespoke and very much focused around young people's specific needs. For example, the home has their own trainer in behaviour management, enabling each young person's behavioural needs to be very specifically addressed. In addition, a registered nurse is responsible for training and measuring staff competence in specific health care tasks. Parents feel very involved with staff training and are reassured by the home's open approach. One parent reported that they joined the nurse in delivering some training for her son, increasing her confidence in staffs' abilities. She said she was pleased that this gave her confidence and that as a result, her son, 'can start the next chapter of his life'.

The local community have a very positive relationship with the home because managers make sure that young people are very involved. For example, community newsletters are available in the home so staff know if there are any new initiatives. They make sure that all activities are readily accessible to all young people. Some have been involved in the running of a café and a gardening project in the community since the last inspection.

## 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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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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