

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	20/10/2015
Unique reference number	SC046524
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered person	Sheffield City Council
Registered person address	Sheffield City Council, Town Hall, Pinstone Street, SHEFFIELD, S1 2HH

Responsible individual	Dorne Collinson
Registered manager	Kieran Hill
Inspector	Paul Taylor

Inspection date	20/10/2015
Previous inspection judgement	Improved 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	Good

SC046524

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Young people enjoy excellent relationships with the adults who care for them.
- A diverse staff team provides positive role models and high quality care.
- The Registered Manager is extremely committed and drives improvement with enthusiasm and ambition.
- Close liaison and open communication is maintained with key stakeholders to ensure transparency of practice and prompt responses to significant incidents.
- Excellent health care arrangements ensure that young people health needs and healthy living are promoted to a high standard.
- Young people achieve very good attendance and make significant progress in education.

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.

<p>Ensure that the registered person only employ individuals to work at the children's home when full and satisfactory information is available in relation to each of the matters in Schedule 2; specifically, ensure if a person has previously worked in a position involving work with children or vulnerable adults, verification so far as reasonably practicable of the reason why the employment or position ended. (Regulation 32 (2)(3), Schedule 2, item 4)</p>	<p>30/11/2015</p>
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Recommendations.

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

- The registered person should ensure that staff can access appropriate facilities and resources to support their training needs, and should understand the key role they play in training and development of staff in the home. (This is in relation to ensuring that all staff who work with the young people, teaching and care staff alike, are trained in identifying and responding to young people who are at risk of Child Sexual Exploitation. (CSE))
- Ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, ensure staffing levels in education, including teacher and TA support are reviewed and gaps filled urgently so that young peoples' progress is not impeded. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29 Paragraph 5.18)
- Ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, embed ICT across all subject areas and implement the functional skills qualification in this area. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29 Paragraph 5.18)
- Ensure the ethos of the home supports each child to learn; specifically, improve the staff room so that teachers have sufficient space and access to resources to plan effectively. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 29 Paragraph 5.18)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to eight young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for up to five young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and three 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.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
10/03/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness

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>The quality of care provided by the committed staff in this home is excellent. Some young people make remarkable progress, especially when bearing in mind their starting points. A basis for this success is the building of trusting and warm relationships between the adults and the young people.</p> <p>Clear boundaries, positive role modelling and embedded respect ensure that young people have a firm foundation to make valued relationships. Young people are seen to seek members of staff's company and reassurance and are genuinely pleased to see their favourite members of staff come on duty.</p> <p>Young people are aware of how to make a complaint and are confident in expressing their views. All complaints are investigated and records show how they have been resolved. They are also visited by an independent person to ensure that they have ready access to external professionals if they feel that their complaint cannot be addressed within the home. 'There's loads of people I can talk to' said one young person, 'the staff are kind.'</p> <p>Young people are living in a home where attendance in education is embedded in the routine. This means that they take advantage of the opportunities made available to them by the education provision on site.</p> <p>During education holidays there is a well-planned enrichment program which ensures that young people have excellent opportunities to take part in positive and stimulating activities. The home uses specialists from the community to support these programs and to present the young people with positive role models from areas such as sport and art.</p> <p>Members of staff support young people during their transitions and use visits to the community through planned and approved mobility programmes as an opportunity for them to develop life skills as well as acclimatising to life outside of a secure environment. This is done sensitively and with close liaison with relevant external agencies such as the Youth Justice Board and social workers.</p> <p>There is excellent health provision in the home. Access to health care professionals such as Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS), substance misuse workers and a general practitioner as well as Speech and Language Therapist, is readily available. Young people attend any medical appointments with staff support if necessary. They benefit from holistic and well planned health</p>	

support. Additionally they are encouraged to eat healthily and to take part in regular exercise. This reflects a culture of leading healthy lifestyles which is embedded in the home.

The home has clear routines and structure which enables young people newly admitted to have a good understanding of the rules and expectations of living there. Transition planning for moving on is a particular strength. There is an eye for detail and bespoke programmes ensure that young people are supported to an excellent degree. Managers strongly advocate on behalf of young people if they feel that placing authorities' plans are not robust or do not meet the needs of the young person.

Each young person has a clear individual plan which outlines targets and areas which need to be explored and addressed in order for them to make progress in their lives. For example, they will receive specific guidance in anger management and receive excellent support in order to attend education. The individual plans and strategies are regularly reviewed to ensure that they up to date, relevant and that young people are making progress. The attention to detail and thorough oversight of these plans increases young people's success and enables them to make great strides during their time at this home.

A diverse staff team ensures that young people see positive role models from a range of cultures and backgrounds. This is underpinned by having an embedded respect for all individuals and a celebration and enjoyment of difference. As a result equality and diversity is promoted to an excellent degree. There has been a significant turnover of staff over the past six months and this means that resilience, skills and experience of all members of staff are still continuing to develop. Additionally, significant training such as working with young people who have been subject to child sexual exploitation (CSE), has not been received by all members of staff.

Young people are supported to maintain contact with families and friends. Where there are restrictions in place these are made clear to the young people and explained. If needed members of staff will supervise visits to ensure that safety is maintained and to be available for the young person if contact is an anxious experience for them.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
This home has effective and robust systems that help ensure young people are safe and secure. Health and safety checks are completed regularly to support the	

welfare of both young people and staff, including fire safety checks and well thought through drills. Key management systems are strong and plans are in place to develop this further.

Young people feel safe and state that it is a good place to live. A young person stated, 'If we are worried about anything we can talk to staff.' An effective complaints system ensures that concerns raised are responded to swiftly. Records of complaints are detailed and evidence effective responses and how each complaint is resolved. The home has a robust risk assessment approach, examining a wide range of risk factors and triggers relating to concerning behaviours. Assessments are updated to reflect the individual needs of the young people.

Child protections systems ensure that when safeguarding concerns arise they are dealt with quickly and promote young people's welfare. Staff training is completed through both external and internal on-line systems, keeping all up to date with current recording and reporting processes. Disclosures made to members of staff are received and responded to in a professional and sympathetic manner. Strong links are in place with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board (LSCB) and the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO). Visits from the LADO examine the use of restraint and this ensures transparency in practices and has helped in developing consistency in staff approaches and implementing in behaviour management strategies.

Absconding procedures are clear and no incidents have occurred since the last inspection. Mobility risk assessments are detailed and clear with guidance in place should emergency responses be necessary on visits outside the home.

Young people are supported should they display self-harming behaviours. Staff have a high awareness of effective responses to self-harming, again based on a detailed risk assessment approach.

An excellent approach has been taken to those that display significant behaviours. The Registered Manager has spent significant time assessing differing staff strategies and responses. This has led to increased consistency and 'increased decisiveness' by the staff team relating to responding to behaviours and subsequently giving young people greater stability.

Searches of young people and their belongings are completed appropriately. Regular checks are made around the home, raising necessary minor improvements in the environment. Searches of young people on admission support their privacy, with additional permissions from senior managers being necessary for anything above basic 'pat and electronic wand' searches.

Behaviour management systems are of an extremely high quality, with restorative justice being central to the home's model. Young people are aware of the incentive scheme and talk with enthusiasm of the points system and 'graduates' rewards.

Targets for behaviours are individualised, with young people having an input into their own development once they reach graduate level. This supports ownership of their own behaviours.

Restraints are well managed and only occur in line with individual behaviour management plans and regulations. Events are swiftly examined through the closed-circuit television (CCTV) system, assessing both safety and the effectiveness of the restraint. Recording systems are effective with a new computerised system that ensures records are fully completed, while decreasing the time taken for completion. The system links well with contacting social workers and related professionals to ensure that they receive information about restraints. Similarly robust records relate to single separation. Directed separations include more detailed levels of recording, linking with risk management plans where separations are longer and are needed to support young people's safety.

Sanctions are appropriate and show that staff work well with young people in developing an awareness of how to respond well to situations. Staff therefore work in a constructive rather than directive way. All behaviour management records are well monitored by the management team and this supports young people's development and safety.

Recruitment processes promote young people's safety. The Registered Manager completes annual visits to the local authority human resources offices to sample records and check them against expectations. Increased evidence is necessary to show the reasons why staff have left previous employment, especially when that has involved working with young people or vulnerable adults.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>Management is effective and well organised. A stable management team is very well led by the Registered Manager who is suitably qualified and very experienced. He is very well respected by colleagues and young people alike and is an excellent role model. He is committed to his role and ensures that he is accessible to both young people and staff. He is ambitious for both the young people and the development of the home and there are areas of outstanding practice in the delivery of service. For example, the development of detailed and child focussed plans for young people.</p> <p>There are sufficient numbers of staff on duty to provide good support and supervision for the young people. The staff team has undergone a number of changes in the last six months but is now more settled. The staff team is</p>	

continuing to develop skills and resilience with guidance and training from more established and experienced members of staff.

The quality of care in the home is regularly examined and scrutinised. This ensures that care plans and progress can be closely monitored and that there is a fluid response if young people's needs change. Planning and assessment in cases where young people have not made progress has been detailed and involved multi-disciplinary collaboration with services such as Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS), education and placing authorities. This has ensured there is no complacency and continuous reflection on practice. A placing social worker of a young person displaying very challenging behaviours stated, 'They have been remarkable; their skill level has been outstanding.'

There are clear development plans for the home. These include major refurbishment and significant rebuilding of specific areas. Funding has been agreed by the department of Education (DFE). The management team are aware of areas of practice and training which need to be consolidated in order to further develop the skills of the staff team. Not all members of staff, including teachers, have received training in working with young people who are at risk of Child Sexual exploitation. (CSE). This is a key training, especially bearing in mind the backgrounds and vulnerabilities of young people who live at the home.

Close liaison is maintained with all stakeholders including placing authorities and the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LCSB). The new computer system automatically informs key professionals of any significant incidents. This underpins the prompt and transparent sharing of information.

All members of staff receive regular supervision. This is particularly well structured for those in their probationary periods. This ensures staff are effectively supported to develop their skills and confidence and also examines each member of staff's aptitude, resilience and ability to work with a group of young people who can be very challenging.

It is accepted that the home has a role to play as part of the national secure provision to provide care for young people who can display very challenging behaviours. The Registered Manager is conscientious in his appraisals of referrals. This ensures that new admissions do not compromise the progress and safety of those already living in the home and that the staff team are confident that they can meet the needs of each young person.

The Statement of Purpose contains clear information which describes the services the home provides. There is a young person's guide. This provides young people with a range of information about the home and what it is like. It also contains information about how to complain and how to contact external agencies for help and advice. This document is available in other languages for young people whose first language is not English.

Case records are very well organised and give a comprehensive history of each young person's time spent in the home.

Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Good
<p>Soon after arrival young people receive an effective induction into education. An assessment for reading, writing and numeracy takes place swiftly and provides sufficient information for teaching staff to prioritise young people's learning needs. Additional information about prior educational histories and any specific learning concerns are collated quickly to further inform individualised learning programmes. The team works closely with the Children and Adolescents Mental Health Service (CAMHS) team and the new speech and language therapist to ensure the right provision is made available to those requiring specialist services. Teaching staff ensure that pupil premium funding from host local authorities is used to enhance each young person's learning programmes. When appropriate they also secure additional resources for young people with special educational needs (SEN) or education and health care plan.</p> <p>Individual learning targets are negotiated with young people and recorded in their personal provision maps and most achieve their targets. Personal and social development is prioritised and opportunities to improve their interpersonal skills, self-confidence and relationships are embedded. Progression data across curriculum subjects are collated regularly and outcomes are mapped onto individual progress charts. Regular reviews are held with young people formally in assessment meetings and during lessons. This ensures that they generally have a good understanding of how well they are doing and how much they have learnt. Young people enjoy their time in education and make good progress while at the unit, particularly in English and mathematics. In nearly all cases young people make good gains in skills and knowledge relative to their starting points and length of stay. All achieve at least one level higher than their base line at entry level, level 1 or level 2 functional skills in English and mathematics. Information communication technology (ICT) is embedded well across some curriculum areas such as mathematics, personal, social and health education (PSHE) and English. It is not yet offered as a qualification. Where young people demonstrate the potential and aptitude they are encouraged to achieve higher qualifications such as GCSEs.</p> <p>Young people can also work towards Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) qualifications through the award pathway although this has faltered recently owing to staff absence through ill health.</p> <p>Standards of young people's work are generally good; they take pride in their</p>	

written work and keep their work files in good order. This discipline helps them to keep on track with the levels of work and how well they are doing.

The quality of teaching, learning and assessment is outstanding. The quality of lesson planning and use of teaching resources are good. Lessons are appropriately pitched to meet individual needs. A good variety of methods are used within lessons to encourage independent learning and to stimulate enquiry and interest.

ICT is used effectively by teachers to increase young people's attention and to broaden the scope of some subjects. Very good teachers expect all young people to participate fully and to contribute to discussions in lessons. Persistent encouragement through question and answer work is developing young people's self-confidence and their speaking and listening skills.

Learning walks are undertaken regularly and feedback is shared with teaching staff in team meetings and during supervision sessions. Being a small staff team, discussion about teaching styles and strategies for learning and managing behaviour are reviewed almost on a daily basis. This helps continuity and consistency of approaches which suit the particular learning needs and behaviours of individuals throughout the day. It also contributes to the generally calm and purposeful learning environment where young people often thrive.

Work is regularly marked and the reviewed marking scheme is popular and effective. Young people's work is used effectively for display, for example poetry in the main meeting room and mathematics and art work in corridors. A range of art boards have been completed by young people to demonstrate vocational skills they have developed during their stay, for example, horticulture work around the unit, 'come dine with me' cookery skills activity; a day trip to a local forge.

The small team of teaching assistants (TA) provides very good support during lessons; the TAs develop good relationships with young people and offer sound learning support to them. One TA works closely with a young person on the unit who cannot attend education. This diversion means the TA is not always available in the classroom and this creates a conspicuous absence. The complex learning needs of individuals are such that any reduction of adult support in the classroom, already overstretched, is evident and sometimes to the detriment of the learning environment.

The curriculum is sufficiently broad to provide individual young people with a good mix of learning opportunities. English, mathematics, physical education and PSHE provide the core curriculum, with options chosen by young people across a range of subjects, such as ICT, music, art, textiles, drama, horticulture and cookery. The flexibility of this curriculum is partially undermined however by the long term absence of a full time teacher. When possible the learning coordinator will use the local woodland for forest education activities. ICT has developed well since the last inspection with new laptop and tablet computers recently introduced, supported by

very good technical advice and support from the local authority. Use of internet to enable independent learning and research is encouraged and used safely. Young people are benefitting from the strong focus on functional skills across the curriculum and achieving good qualifications.

Equality and diversity has been embedded throughout the curriculum/ Lively discussions were observed in English and in PSHE about important events in black history, the Muslim faith, and gender and race equality.

Learning areas are well managed, tidy and conducive to learning. The staff room however is too small with insufficient access to work and lack of space for planning and meetings. Teaching resources are used well to develop young people's interest and understanding of issues. The vocational offer continues to be limited because of the lack of space within education and on the site. However staff are highly imaginative and have adopted a 'can do' approach, providing a range of opportunities to introduce and explore employability skills whenever possible. For example, all teaching staff have recently been trained in basic woodwork techniques so that this can be offered as an option. Bespoke timetables are created to introduce individuals to vocational areas that interest them. When possible, mobility is used very effectively to encourage young people to explore these interests and develop their understanding of work and potential future pathways.

The learning coordinator is responsible for developing enrichment programmes during education holidays and these are well organised and popular. Residential staff and the education team work collaboratively to encourage a strong learning ethos throughout the unit and to ensure young people make the best of their time both in school and in the residential units. Weekly homework is set and each young person uses home learning time on the unit to complete set reading, writing and numeracy tasks during the week. This is monitored by teaching staff and managed by residential workers.

The local careers guidance service provides appropriate careers information; advice and guidance for young people are from Sheffield. Contact with other LA Youth offending teams ensures all young people have some access to careers advice prior to moving on. All young people receive a comprehensive exit report with the latest information about their qualifications, aptitude and attitude to learning while they have attended education.

Attendance is very good overall and when appropriate, work is taken to the living units for completion if a young person cannot attend lessons. Education refusal is managed effectively and expectations are high that full attendance is achieved each day for the majority of young people.

The behaviour of young people is generally good and any inappropriate language and actions are quickly challenged and addressed. Teachers and the TAs are skilled

at de-escalating situations so there are very few occasions when more serious interventions and support are required. Time out of class is used sparingly but effectively to enable the young people to re-focus and re-engage. Clear boundaries for behaviour are set and young people demonstrate good understanding of these.

They like the reward and merit scheme in education which motivates them to participate well in most instances; they know what they may jeopardise if poor behaviour persists. Good work is celebrated in weekly assemblies which is also an important marker at the end of the week to demonstrate how well each young person is doing in education.

The management of education is good. Data are used well to demonstrate progression made for each young person and the range of qualifications achieved. Reports are made available on a quarterly basis to the education advisory board for scrutiny and challenge. Attendance is also closely monitored and discussions held if absences are a concern. Support by the local authority to the board is strong and the school improvement partner supports quality assurance and improvement.

Staff receive access to further development and training in generic and subject specific areas through the local authority. Teacher networking to share and develop good curriculum practice across a number of secure children's homes has been a constructive development. Joint training between education and residential staff ensures consistency of approach in issues such as safeguarding, managing behaviour and restraint. Training sessions for child sexual exploitation and the 'Prevent' agenda have not yet been implemented for teaching staff.

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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