

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	09/10/2015
Unique reference number	SC059203
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Mrs Susan Ghulam
Inspector	Ms Deborah White

Inspection date	09/10/2015
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	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.	
how well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
the impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good

SC059203

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Young people experience excellent short breaks. Relationships with staff are outstanding and consultation with young people is exemplary.

Individualised, child-focused care and support unquestionably impacts on very positive outcomes for young people.

- Wide ranging activities significantly enhances young people's lives and experiences. Transitions are managed effectively and good planning provides young people precious time with their friends and peers.
- There is a strong emphasis on comprehensive inter-agency working and individual support for parents and families. Highly motivated staff deliver resourceful and meaningful care that is inspiring.
- Inclusion in the local community is undoubtedly a strength. Positive equality and diversity, particularly in relation to promoting the rights of disabled young people, is threaded throughout the home's ethos and practice.

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
6. In order to meet the quality and purpose of care standard, with particular reference to the home's written care and health care plans, the registered person must ensure that staff: (2)(b) (iv) provide personalised care that meets each child's needs, as recorded in the child's relevant plans.	31/12/2015

44. The registered person must ensure that an independent person visits the children's home at least once each month, and that the independent person produces a report about a visit ("the independent person's report") which sets out, in particular, the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded; and the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (1) and (4) (a) and (b)).	31/12/2015

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides short breaks care and accommodation for 6 children with a learning disability. It is operated by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	CH - Interim	improved effectiveness
31/01/2015	CH - Full	Outstanding
14/03/2014	CH - Interim	Good Progress
18/11/2013	CH - Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</p>	<p>outstanding</p>
<p>The quality of relationships between young people and staff are superb. I was able to spend a significant amount of this inspection visit with the staff and young people and I observed a range of outstanding practice.</p> <p>Each young person was warmly welcomed upon their arrival and they were clearly happy to be staying at the home. There was lots of laughter and excitement and the young people very quickly settled and made themselves comfortable in the lounge to have a snack. The young people were very happy to see each other and it was clear that meaningful peer relationships are a key factor in their positive outcomes.</p> <p>A parent said, 'I used to get worried leaving my child but he runs in without a backward glance to us. He loves it there and we have peace of mind knowing he will be safe and cared for.'</p> <p>Consultation with young people is an integral part of the home's ethos. Staff have a wide-range of communication skills that ensure all young people are included and listened to regardless of their disability. This fully supports young people which values their wishes and feelings.</p> <p>A young person said, 'I like it here and I like the staff and I can talk to the staff. My friends are here, its good here, the best.'</p> <p>An example of exceptional consultation is involving young people in the weekend plans. I joined the young people whilst they were having their snack and each young person was asked to choose an activity they would like to do over the weekend. Staff used a large activity board to show pictures of each activity so the young people knew what they would be doing and when.</p> <p>Some young people were able to say what they would like to do and for other young people, with communication difficulties, there was a range of pictorial aids and photographs of activities that young people could point to or signal their choices.</p> <p>The outcome of this exercise was young people were equally included and listened to; all young people fully contributed to the weekend plans; and staff fully embraced a culture that promotes equality and diversity.</p>	

Part of every weekend routine involves young people planning their menu and putting together a shopping list before visiting a large supermarket for the weekend 'food shop'. I was invited to join the group outing, which was a positive experience for young people. The young people were very happy and relaxed entering the supermarket and were warmly greeted by the shop staff. It was evident the young people knew the staff; who waved and said hello to the young people as we walked around the shopping aisles.

Each young person chose food items from the shopping list along with other items they wished to buy before proceeding to the checkout. They all helped to unload the trolleys and pack the groceries. The checkout staff were extremely helpful and patient, allowing the young people the time they needed to carry out their tasks. The shop staff encouraged the young people and praised them for doing a 'very good job'. Upon our return the young people helped to carry the bags into the home and put the shopping away.

A parent commented, 'This is a great service. Great staff, great everything. My child has come on so much, they do a brilliant job. I never ever thought he would go into a shop and now when we go shopping he comes with us and pushes the trolley. It's a fantastic place.'

The range of activities is varied and comprehensive, which enhances young people's life experiences. Staff actively research local amenities to ensure they are suitable for young people with a disability, and look for community events that may be of interest to young minds.

A parent said, 'My child loves coming to the home. He loves activities with his friends and learning new things that he wouldn't do at home. It's good he gets to go to other places, such as the cinema. The best thing about the home is him mixing with other young people and having a great time with his friends.'

Individualised planning and support is paramount. Regular multi-professional review meetings carefully analyse each placement to ensure young people receive the care and support they need. Parents are fully involved in all aspects of their children's care and staff actively contribute to improving young people's lives through each care and planning process. This unified approach undoubtedly gives young people the means to thrive and achieve their full potential.

Young people's case files are organised and kept up to date. Daily records, in the form of a personal diary, tells each young person's story of their short breaks experiences and individual photograph albums provides a visual record of happy times and young people's achievements. This provides young people with a record of childhood memories that they can reflect on in later life.

There are positive aspects recorded the home's written short breaks plans, such as young people's aims and aspirations and how they will achieve these. There are a

number of exceptional achievements that include a young person talking for the first time since he started having his short breaks; a young person gaining the confidence to use the telephone and calling her mother whilst she is staying at the home and a young person, who was previously totally withdrawn, socialising with his peers. These examples clearly demonstrate that young people progress as a direct result of staying at the home.

A parent said, 'My child's diary is always full. Her independence skills have really progressed, she now washes and dresses herself and helps around the house. Her speech is so much better and she rings me at home. She would never have been able to do this before.'

Although the overall standard of planning is good there are elements of the written plans that are not fully in line with the statutory guidance for short breaks planning; therefore some important information is missing. Some aspects of healthcare interventions are not clearly explained and the plans do not fully include the measures taken to safeguard young people.

This has not unduly impacted on the young people who currently attend for short breaks because the majority of them have been having their short breaks for a number of years and staff have a very good knowledge of their needs and how these will be met. However, for young people new to the service incomplete information can potentially compromise their welfare and outcomes.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Young people are safe, feel safe and spend their short breaks in a safe environment. Positive relationships with staff and the staff's knowledge of young people and their needs improves how well young people are protected. There have been no episodes of missing and no young people are at risk of exploitation or bullying.</p> <p>A parent said, 'I cannot say anything negative about the home. My child has progressed and is very happy there. I couldn't be happier. I trust the staff 100%. I know my child is safe and they love him and care about him.'</p> <p>Young people's needs, including their sometimes complex needs, and risks are known and understood by staff. This knowledge and good risk management reduces the potential of harm and accidental injury. Written risk assessments are regularly reviewed and updated to reduce known hazards. This enables young</p>	

people to take age appropriate risks while being kept safe from harm.

Regular environmental checks reduce potential hazards within the home and extensive risk management protects young people whilst they are out in the community. Good staffing ratio's and high levels of supervision ensure young people can safely enjoy their activities of daily living.

Behaviour is managed positively. Young people are gently guided, praised and encouraged to manage their behaviours and staff are very good role models. The staff team as a group have a very good insight into how young people's disabilities can impact on their behaviours. As a result, no young person is ever chastised for behaviours that are beyond their control.

Staff receive the training and development they need to fully understand safeguarding young people with a disability. Leaders and managers robustly monitor the safety of young people and all the parents consulted at this inspection said they would speak to the Registered Manager if they had any concerns. This demonstrates open and transparent practice that keeps young people safe.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The Registered Manager has been in post for four years and has the right qualifications to operate a children's home. She is highly motivated and committed and has consistently high expectations of the service she offers to young people and families.</p> <p>Young people and their outcomes are a top priority. Good communication within the home and with other professionals contributes effectively to good care and support. Staff handovers are comprehensive and the Registered Manager maintains a meticulous knowledge of young people. Inter-agency working is consistently robust and parents are routinely included in the care of their children and the home's operation. These measures result in high quality care.</p> <p>A social worker said, 'I have been involved with the home since it opened and worked with a lot of young people who have attended. The home is excellent and so are the staff. I have had lots of contact with the manager, which has always been positive. All the social workers I know have a very high opinion of the home and of the manager.'</p> <p>Support for parents is very good. The Registered Manager understands some of the stresses experienced by parents, and families, and shows a great empathy and</p>	

understanding. She operates an open door policy for parents and provides comfort and advice where this is sought. This additional support network is invaluable.

A parent said, 'The staff and manager couldn't be more supportive. They have really helped us out, sometimes at short notice when we had some family illness. I once rang the manager and she said I could bring my child to the home straight away and she arranged additional nights. I couldn't be more grateful.'

All young people have significantly progressed from their starting point and continue to achieve, some beyond expectations. They are supported by a dynamic staff team who feel supported and valued. Staff training and development ensures the team have the right skills, knowledge and experience to meet the needs of young people. Consequently, young people thrive as a direct result of spending short-breaks at this home.

A parent commented, 'I can't sing their praises enough. The staff are lovely, excellent, and they have done some amazing work with my child. I can't thank the home enough for what they have done.'

There are strengths and weaknesses in how the home is monitored. Internal monitoring is good and the Registered Manager has a clear oversight of the home's operation. There is good consultation with young people; their parents and social workers and their views are very much taken into account. Development plans include how the home intends to progress and extend child-focused services. As a result, young people's short-breaks continue to be first class.

The external monitoring covers a range of practice areas and provides a level of analysis and evaluation of the care young people receive. As with the internal monitoring consultation is good. The independent visitor positively questions and challenges practice for the betterment of the home and outcomes. However, the written reports provided to the home, and Ofsted, do not adequately express the independent visitor's opinion that young people are safeguarded or that the conduct of the home promotes their welfare.

Whilst there is no suggestion that any young person is at risk; the failure of the independent visitor to record their satisfaction regarding the safety and welfare of young people compromises the ongoing quality of the external monitoring of the home.

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
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