

Children's homes - interim inspection

Inspection date	12/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC036740
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered person	Nottinghamshire County Council
Registered person address	Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Loughborough Road, West Bridgeford, Nottingham, NG2 7QP

Responsible individual	Shelagh Mitchell
Registered manager	Thirza Smith
Inspector	Ann-Marie Born

Inspection date	12/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged Outstanding at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>At the last inspection of this home in July 2015, there were two requirements and five recommendations raised. Three recommendations related to the education provision and will be assessed at the next full inspection. Both of the requirements and one of the remaining recommendations have been fully addressed. This demonstrates the home's capacity to improve the quality of care provided to young people.</p> <p>The standard of care in this home remains outstanding. Excellent care planning ensures that all of a young person's individual and diverse needs are carefully organised and met. Young people make exceptional progress in most aspects of their lives but in particular, building self-esteem, learning to trust appropriate adults and participation in education. A head of education said about a young person, 'There was an attitudinal change. If we look at her graph, she went up a whole national curriculum level, six times the expected progress in four months in maths and English.'</p> <p>An ongoing refurbishment plan ensures that all of the units are now maintained to the same standard. Young people enjoy living in a comfortable home with a range of appropriately furnished shared areas. They are able to personalise their bedrooms to their taste which increases their sense of belonging and provides them with a safe space in which to have quiet time if they wish. A young person said, 'I love my room. I've even got a guitar in here. I've started to play since I got here. I didn't know I could before and I'm absolutely loving learning how to play.'</p> <p>Improved processes, which comply with locally agreed protocols, ensure that all necessary information is captured in the event of an incident of absconding. Since the last inspection, there have been two incidents of absconding by one young person while on an approved visit to the community. On both occasions the staff acted swiftly to inform relevant authorities and actively search for the young</p>	

person. Records evidence that arrangements were made with the placing authority for someone suitable to meet with the young person on their return to the home to conduct an independent return interview. In addition risk assessments were updated, including the inclusion of a current photograph. Young people are safeguarded by these measures.

A comprehensive training schedule ensures that all staff have the necessary skills to meet the needs of the young people in their care. A number of young people in the home have been perpetrators of sexual offences. To assist them with supporting these young people, all staff have recently completed training in 'Sexually Harming Behaviour – Treatment and Your Role'. In addition, since the last inspection the staff team have received specialist training in identifying and managing young people at risk of being drawn into terrorism. Members of the management team have also arranged to attend a specialist assessment training programme which will further enhance the knowledge and skills in the home providing all young people with appropriate safeguards. This expertise benefits young people in that they are empowered to understand the reasons for their placement and learn valuable lessons which will inform and safeguard them once they return to the community. A staff member said, 'The training helped us all to understand why some of the boys act the way they do.'

Young people report that they feel safe. There are occasions when some young people's disruptive behaviours can have a negative impact on the other young people in their unit. For example, tearing down Christmas decorations. Young people report that they are learning how to cope with the frustrations these actions can cause in them by observing the way staff manage the situation. They trust staff to care for them and feel that they are important thereby building social and life skills which benefit them now and in their future adult lives. A young person said, 'I feel the staff manages (Name and Name) really well and I'm amazed at how patient staff are. I feel I could learn some of that as well.'

Positive behaviours are encouraged and young people thoroughly enjoy the benefits they receive by advancing through the reward scheme. A young person said he was 'on graduate and very proud of this and myself'. This effectively promotes feelings of well-being while providing young people with aspiration to succeed.

The use of restorative practice when imposing a sanction for inappropriate behaviour is not being implemented consistently. Regularly sending a young person to bed earlier than normal for a misdemeanour does not teach them alternatives to their behaviour. There are some good examples of young people negotiating their sanction and discussing the impact with staff, but not all young people are being provided with the same opportunities.

As a result of their growth in self-esteem, young people confidently express their wishes and feelings. Any complaints are investigated promptly and full feedback shared with young people. They feel valued and listened to empowering them to engage with the care and participate fully in the life of the home. A young person said, 'Being here is definitely better because it is a home, no matter what we've done.'

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is managed by a local authority. It is approved by the Department for Education to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to 18 young people, who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for up to 14 young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and up to four 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
28/07/2015	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17/06/2014	Full	Good
26/02/2014	Full	Good

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
encourage each child to take responsibility for the child's behaviour, in accordance with the child's age and understanding. (Regulation 11 (2)(a)(iii)); in particular, that where possible and appropriate, sanctions used to address poor behaviour are restorative in nature.	14/03/2016

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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