

Children's homes inspection - Full

Inspection date	26/01/2016
Unique reference number	SC033152
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered person	North Lincolnshire Council
Registered person address	North Lincolnshire Council, Pittwood House, Ashby Road, SCUNTHORPE, South Humberside, DN16 1AB

Responsible individual	Darren Chaplin
Registered manager	Lesley McKenzie
Inspector	Simon Morley

Inspection date	26/01/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Sustained 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

SC033152

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- Children and young people experience a high quality of care during their short-breaks that takes account of their individual needs.
- Children and young people have excellent experiences at the home. Some of these benefits would not be possible without this service.
- Staff implement detailed care plans and work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure children and young people's holistic needs are promoted.
- Children and young people benefit from very well planned projects such as the recent independence group.
- The home is managed effectively. Staff have a strong commitment to children and young people and implement in practice the aims, objectives and values of the service.
- The strength of leadership is evident in the exceptional care and experiences of children and young people.
- Safeguarding practice is good and responsive to the needs of children and young people with various disabilities.

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 independent person must produce 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 (4) (a) & (b))	31/03/2016

Recommendations

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

- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 42, paragraph 9.5). In particular formalise a process for agreeing what action to take if any in respect of body map records.
- The registered person should play a key role in shaping the ethos of the home through developing a culture of high aspiration for children which is demonstrated through the care, resources and opportunities offered to the children (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 52, paragraph 10.4). In particular ensure any comments or suggestions about care practice made at multi-agency meetings are followed up promptly.
- Case records must be kept up-to-date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. (The Guide to the Quality Standards, page 62, paragraph 14.3)

Full report

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by the local authority and provides short-breaks for children and young people with learning and physical disabilities. The home can accommodate up to six children and young people at any one time including an emergency placement. At the time of inspection, 21 children and young people were using the service.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
27/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
20/01/2015	Full	Good
18/03/2014	Interim	Good progress
12/09/2013	Full	Outstanding

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	outstanding
<p>Staff plan comprehensively for each short-break to promote the unique needs of children and young people with learning disabilities, autism and other disabling conditions. Children and young people therefore receive care that is highly sensitive to their individual and complex needs.</p> <p>Staff work hard investing time and effort in making children and young people's experiences very positive. Staff know them very well and this shines through in all they do. For example, personalising the home according to individual preferences before the start of each short-break. These efforts have significant impact; children and young people feel comfortable, build strong relationships with staff and have a vibrant ownership of the home. A stakeholder commented, 'Children feel relaxed and staff provide a high quality of care.'</p> <p>Parents are highly satisfied and full of praise about the home, 'It's a home-from-home,' and 'like having extended family.' Children and young people benefit from exceptionally nurturing care that effectively encourages their development. They improve: their personal care skills; communication; social skills; learn to wait and take turns; and manage daily transitions, for example, from school to short-break with less anxiety. In turn, this promotes their self-esteem and dignity.</p> <p>Children and young people's views, needs and wellbeing are at the heart of the service. Staff use a range of strategies to ensure they are listened to. This results in them having a very strong influence in decisions about their care and the running of the home. They can choose: what is in their room for each visit; what they do; the menus and were recently involved in planning an independence project. One room has been turned into a games room at their request.</p> <p>High staffing levels allow children and young people to try out new experiences in a sensitive and safe way, which may otherwise be unavailable without this service. This promotes learning and development by improving independence, socialising at youth clubs, visiting local parks and shopping.</p> <p>Through an independence project, children and young people have developed an extensive range of skills. This includes planning, shopping, cooking, kitchen chores, co-operation, communication and evaluation. The successes and experiences children and young people achieve, contribute significantly to their preparation for adulthood.</p> <p>Parents remain responsible for their children's health and education. The staff also have effective links with these agencies. Care plans and targets fit with individual</p>	

education targets promoting consistency and continuity in care. Health plans, health care and robust medication systems are overseen by qualified nurses. As a result, children and young people's health is promoted and they receive excellent care in respect of specific health conditions.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
<p>Children and young people are safe, trust staff, feel settled and emotionally secure. Staff awareness of and positive responses to their individual needs and vulnerabilities protects them from harm.</p> <p>Risk management is very effective and based on highly personalised risk assessments. For example, how to brush a young person's hair and keep their face dry when bathing. This attention to individual detail promotes security, well-being and gives children and young people a predictable environment.</p> <p>Close attention is paid to organising short-breaks safely. Children and young people are matched carefully to reduce unnecessary risks and avoid disappointment. For example, some children are noise sensitive and they are not matched with noisy children.</p> <p>Children and young people experience positive structure and consistent boundaries. This helps reduce anxiety that can be caused from changes in routine. Parents feel re-assured their children are in safe hands. They would recommend the service to others.</p> <p>Close observation and high levels of support to keep children and young people safe means that their whereabouts are known at all times. Missing from home incidents are exceptionally rare. There has been only one incident in years. The response to this was effective and the young person located safely and very quickly.</p> <p>Staff are trained, with regular refreshers to support children and young people's challenging behaviour. The nurturing approach, structure and attention to individual needs means that incidents are rare. Staff will physically intervene only as a last resort to keep people safe. The methods used are minimal and with good management oversight to ensure practice is appropriate.</p> <p>Concerns about an individual's health or welfare are shared appropriately with other agencies and parents. A health professional commented, 'Staff will call me whenever they need to.' This makes sure any issues are promptly actioned.</p>	

Parents are informed of any accidents and staff update body maps of children and young people. These are shared with social workers to monitor cuts and bruises. This could be more robust with a clear decision making process about what action to take, if any, when a body map is updated.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	good
<p>The registered manager has been in post for over eight years, she has a social work qualification, a level 4 qualification in working with children and young people and is undertaking a level 5 management qualification. She has extensive experience in caring for children and young people with learning disabilities.</p> <p>She uses her knowledge, skills and experience effectively putting children and young people first and promoting their needs. The service fulfils the aims and objectives of the statement of purpose to: provide a family environment; value individuality and inclusion; promote partnership working; and provide continuity of care.</p> <p>The registered manager has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the service. There is thorough monitoring of practice with a strong focus on promoting children and young people's views. The manager ensures this aspect of practice continually improves.</p> <p>There is additional, regular, monthly, independent monitoring that highlights good practice and positive feedback from parents and stakeholders. The independent visitor's reports do not fully meet regulations by not including their specific opinion about safeguarding and the well-being of children. This has not impacted on how well the manager runs the service.</p> <p>Local children with complex health needs are now starting to use the service instead of having to travel long distances out of the area for a short-break. The manager promotes good relationships with the community nursing team who provide staff with training and ongoing support. Effective partnership is making this new development a success.</p> <p>Staff are well trained to provide the care that children and young people with complex needs require. There is ongoing, effective supervision, support and training. The staff team are friendly, motivated and make short-breaks a very positive experience for children and young people.</p> <p>Staff work in close partnership with families, other agencies and have developed links with the schools that children and young people attend. On one occasion, information shared about communication needs was not followed up as swiftly as it</p>	

could have been. Monitoring and progress reports show that this has not had any negative impact and the manager took action to address this.

Records on the whole are well maintained and demonstrate that children and young people make good progress with communication, personal care, socialisation and independence. Occasionally care records are not signed and dated by staff who have written them. This is the exception rather than the rule and does not have an impact on the care children and young people receive.

Written records are enhanced with plenty of photographs of children and young people's achievements and the good times they enjoy. This helps families see the fabulous times their children have.

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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