

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	14 June 2016
Unique reference number	SC036740
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure unit
Registered provider	Nottinghamshire County Council
Registered provider address	Nottinghamshire County Council, County Hall, Loughborough Road, West Bridgford, Nottingham NG2 7QP

Responsible individual	Shelagh Mitchell
Registered manager	Thirza Smith
Inspector	Paul Taylor

Inspection date	14 June 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 exceed 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
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Outstanding

SC036740

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is outstanding because:

- There are excellent trusting relationships between the young people and members of staff. Subsequently, young people make excellent progress during their time placed at this home.
- Young people's individual needs are at the forefront of planning and consideration.
- Excellent multi-disciplinary working and a culture of welcoming the views and opinions of stakeholders, in particular those of the young people, ensure that there is a strong sense of working together.
- Young people thrive in the educational setting and some make remarkable progress, especially when considering their starting points and disrupted educational histories.
- Healthcare provision is of a high standard and promotion of young people's emotional and psychological health is a particular strength.
- Thorough induction programmes, well-planned training and good ongoing support and team work ensures that members of staff have the skills and competencies to provide high-quality care.
- Members of staff strongly advocate on behalf of the young people if needed.
- Shortfalls identified during this inspection have not compromised the safety or well-being of the young people.

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 within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>12.—(1) The protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>(a) that staff—</p> <p>(i) assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child;</p> <p>(v) understand the roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children that are assigned to them by the registered person;</p> <p>(b) that the home's day-to-day care is arranged and delivered so as to keep each child safe and to protect each child effectively from harm;</p> <p>(e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that there is a policy, procedure and process (which may be added to the home's existing child protection or self-harm policies and procedures) that set out how and when ligature cutters are checked periodically and after any use, and verified as fit for purpose.</p>	30 July 2016
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>(a) is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect.</p> <p>(2) The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular—</p> <p>(b) provide for a prompt referral of an allegation about current or</p>	30 July 2016

<p>ongoing abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the home is located;</p> <p>(c) provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about past abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the alleged abuse or neglect occurred.</p> <p>In particular, comply with the home's procedure in ensuring that all child protection matters are referred promptly to the local authority child protection service and the designated officer as appropriate.</p> <p>(Regulation 34 (1)(a) (2)(b)(c))</p>	
<p>The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes the matters set out in the regulation.</p> <p>Specifically, that managing away records are kept in line with the regulation, single separation and managing away records provide sufficient detail to justify the continued use of any incident and single separation and physical restraint records show that young people have been provided with the opportunity to discuss any incident within 5 days.</p> <p>(Regulation 35 (3)(a)(c))</p>	<p>30 July 2016</p>

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Staff should provide a nurturing environment that is welcoming, with particular reference to the car port ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.7).
- Ensure that every effort is made to re-establish the use of the vocational area so that more young people who are eligible can achieve vocational experience and qualifications ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards, page 29, paragraph 5.18).
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the registered manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, for example teachers or

social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. In particular, ensure that all staff are given opportunities to discuss their work in-house and attend external professional development opportunities in order to keep abreast of changes and trends in their subject specialisms ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2).

Full report

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
12 January 2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28 July 2015	Full	Outstanding
17 March 2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
17 June 2014	Full	Good

Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Outstanding
<p>Young people continue to make outstanding progress following their admission to the home. High-quality multi-agency resources and skills available within the staff team allow for a whole range of initial assessments to be made within days of admission. This includes both physical and mental health assessments as well as others. They identify strategies and develop ways of working with young people which addresses their individuality and specific areas of need.</p> <p>For young people, the experience of being in the home can be life changing. A social worker when describing the previous lifestyle of a young person currently living in the home stated, 'If he had not come here he would either be dead or in a long-term placement with little or no hope.' An ex-resident who spoke in some depth about their time in the home concluded, 'My whole life has changed. There wasn't much for me when I first came here. Look at me now, not been in trouble, doing well with my apprenticeship and living back in my community with my family.'</p> <p>Building and maintaining relationships with young people who are often in crises when admitted, is a real area of strength. These relationships withstand challenges and at times rejection due to the persistence of staff who work through periods of difficulty in a systematic, resilient and non-judgemental way. Staff have the skill, experience and training that allows them to understand the issues that affect behaviour. As a result, relationships remain intact even in the most challenging of times. This builds trust, which leads young people into making significant changes to their previous lifestyle.</p> <p>Positive feedback from external professionals supports this view. For example, the social worker of one young person said 'This young man has made massive progress during his time there. His education, social skills, self-care skills and confidence have all grown immensely. They have found and recognised issues that we didn't know existed and he has developed a range of new skills which the home has introduced, such as him learning to play the guitar.'</p> <p>For case tracking, a number of young people, all randomly selected by inspectors, have been reviewed as part of the evidencing process linked to them making progress. All are at different stages of their journey through the home. Inspectors had the added benefit of having contact with two ex-residents. The evidence gathered clearly shows that young people are making exceptional progress in all areas of their lives.</p> <p>For example, during the inspection one young person, seriously affected by child sexual exploitation and who was initially damaging, challenging to themselves and</p>	

others and un-cooperative, experienced a planned move from the home to a long-term specialist provision. This positive move took place due to the success of the individualised work programme put into place and the young person's engagement and responses. Inspectors also noted how staff in the home advocated strongly with the placing authority to ensure that a placement, which would meet the young person's specific needs, was identified and provided.

Another young person who, at the point of their admission, was a danger to themselves and was very reclusive is now participating fully with their education and all other aspects of daily life in the home. Normal planning procedures did not work for this young person at first, due to the complexity of issues that they presented. Therefore, senior staff had a complete rethink about the young person's care and how the home was to provide it. A unique planning format and strategy of care was devised that addressed the issues being presented at that time. This allowed the young person to first engage positively with staff and then move towards addressing their issues at a pace and in a manner that they found comfortable. This is one of a number of outstanding examples of staff thinking outside normal procedures and developing strategies, unique to a young person, which then enable young people to make significant progress.

Planning, case management and transition are well coordinated. Plans, assessments of risk and strategies of working with young people reflect the multi-agency approach which is so successful in the home. The home excels in its monitoring of these plans and strategies, which are reviewed and updated regularly to keep them current. Young people have input and demonstrate an understanding of their own plans, which reflects the high levels of consultation noted by inspectors throughout the inspection. As a result, young people feel that they have ownership and are part of the decision-making process which affects their future.

Consultation with young people and their ability to make suggestions and choices is a feature of daily life in the home. The strong relationships created, allied to the trust that young people build, provide for high levels of positive daily interaction between themselves and staff. All young people are given opportunities to take part in the more formal levels of consultation. For example, within the young people's meetings that take place on the separate living units as well as participation in the student council. Young people say that they feel involved and confirm that they have regular opportunities to influence certain aspects of the home's daily routines. This gives them a sense of empowerment.

The organisation and arrangements to promote young people's health is an area of real strength. Young people have a range of health professionals providing them with a multi-agency response that is capable of addressing both physical and mental health. This is an area that has continued to grow since the last full inspection. For example, the addition of a prescribing nurse capable of dealing with medication issues should the visiting psychiatrist be absent.

Health promotion is excellent with a range of incentives and initiatives to encourage young people towards adopting more healthy lifestyles. For example,

this is reflected in healthy eating, facilitated through regular consultation with the catering manager who visits each living area regularly. Other areas, such as sexual health, general fitness and the work undertaken with young people looking at drug, substance and alcohol misuse, all lead towards promoting a healthier lifestyle. This results in young people's physical, emotional and psychological health needs being very well met.

To complement this, the home has its own interventions team on-site that works with young people to address a whole range of issues. For example, some areas covered include offending work, developing interpersonal and social skills and child sexual exploitation. Programmes are devised to meet individual needs and are based on tried and trusted methods of working, which are underpinned by accepted theoretical models. This gives young people opportunities to explore issues in a safe environment where support is plentiful.

The home has excellent facilities that allow for a wide range of activities to take place. Activity and enrichment programmes are meaningful, well planned and link into individual plans. They look to support known interests that young people bring with them. In addition, they introduce new activities and pastimes that develop transferrable skills, which can serve young people well in the community. For example, the home has an excellent record in developing musical skills.

Activity and enrichment programmes also develop and utilise skills which complement the independence programme, for example, cooking. For one young person, their love and skill of cooking, which originally started as an activity, has led to part-time work in a kitchen and then to the young person securing a full-time apprenticeship, which includes a placement at a local college. This is one of a number of examples that showcase the progress made by young people.

The building is secure and in a very good state of repair. Communal areas are warm and friendly, creating a homely atmosphere. Young people are relaxed and at ease in their environment, with many personalising their bedrooms to suit their taste and interests. The carport, the area that young people see first when driven into the home, is stark and uninviting. This could lead to a poor first impression of the home. A recommendation is made for the home to address this issue.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Young people feel safe. Staff are vigilant and demonstrate to young people their clear intentions to protect, care and keep them safe. Young people and the advocacy service confirm that there have been no incidents of bullying. This provides young people with a safe environment to live in.</p> <p>The registered manager has clear processes for implementing the government's 'Prevent' agenda. Staff have received awareness training. The home can promptly</p>	

implement procedures if required through the well-established links with a senior manager in the local authority who liaises directly with the regional police counter-terrorism team.

Prior to and on admission of a young person, assessments of their vulnerabilities and any risks are thoroughly undertaken. This includes those which relate to self-harm and child sexual exploitation. Staff are aware of the risks to each young person. Reviews and updates of risk assessments take place frequently and as new information materialises. Measures to reduce self-harm incidents are successful because of the seamless collaborative working between staff and the on-site child and adolescent mental health service. This ensures that young people receive close oversight, support and therapeutic interventions that promote their emotional well-being and safety. Ligature cutters are stored securely in an appropriate place for use by staff when needed. There is no formal system to ensure that they are periodically checked, or examined after any use, to ensure that they remain suitable for the intended purpose.

Young people are helped to develop positive behaviour and social skills. Staff achieve this through their excellent role modelling and the strong and trusting relationships that they build with young people. Staff have a calm approach, listen and routinely explain their expectations, with clear reasons to young people. This supports young people's understanding of what the accepted rules, boundaries and socially accepted behaviour are. In addition, young people achieve and gain rewards through the consistent use of the incentive scheme, which reinforces good behaviour.

The home has a restorative practice approach. This enables young people to understand what they have done wrong, including the impact of their actions upon others. This ensures that they are supported and learn how to make amends for their behaviour. A low number of sanctions are used, indicating how young people's behaviour improves with staff support.

Staff use physical restraint in line with the regulations. Incidents have good management oversight to identify positive practice and address any shortfalls. Debriefs with young people are not consistently completed. Managers stated that key work sessions are undertaken with young people, but records did not always show that this was the case, nor was it easy to track that sessions had been carried out. Triggers are therefore not fully explored with young people, which would help to inform behaviour management plans and risk assessments and assist staff in managing behaviour. The manager reports annually to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) about restraint practices. The board do not directly assess restraint practices as part of their formal review as set out in Working Together to Safeguard Children 2015. The manager has formally raised this with relevant managers in the local authority.

The use of single separation is in line with the regulations. However, some records lack sufficient rigour and detail. They do not always clearly evidence and justify the continuation of a single separation incident and do not always contain the views of young people.

The practice of managing young people away from their peers to maintain safety is appropriately used. Records are kept, though these are not fully in line with regulations. On occasions, records lack sufficient detail to fully justify the continued use of this measure during any incident.

The home has clear policies and procedures for staff to follow relating to searching. Searches take place on a risk-led basis to maintain the safety of young people and staff and the security of the building. Any individual searches of young people involve a 'pat down' and the use of an electronic wand. If a 'dressing gown' search is required, due to increasing concerns about safety or security, this has to be authorised by a senior manager. These types of searches are undertaken in young people's rooms. Young people remove clothing out of sight of staff and put on a dressing gown. Their clothing is searched and a 'pat and wand' used. Records are kept of all searches undertaken. Managers evaluate all search records to ensure that practice is appropriate and any concerns that require further action are taken forward.

There have been two incidents of absconding by young people while they have been on mobility or attending appointments since the last full inspection. Staff have fully implemented the policy and procedure. This has resulted in the swift return of young people to the home. An immediate review of mobility arrangements and relevant plans and risk assessments occurs.

Good relationships exist with the designated officer from the local authority and the LSCB. The designated officer stated, 'Communication is open and transparent.' Referrals to the local authority child protection service have mainly been undertaken in line with statutory guidance. However, two incidents have gone beyond the normal referral timescale. Once identified, managers have appropriately responded to address the shortfalls. The impact of these deficits has not compromised young people's safety.

The recruitment of staff is undertaken robustly. Procedures are followed and required checks carried out. This helps to ensure that all those employed to work with vulnerable children and young person are suitable.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>There is an experienced registered manager in post. She has over 20 years of experience of working with young people and is qualified to level 4 in Management and Care. Additionally, she has a Post Graduate Diploma in Public Services Management. She is supported by an effective management team that provides strong, clear leadership and that has high expectations of the staff team.</p> <p>All members of staff receive regular planned supervision and yearly appraisals. Support plans are put in place for members of staff who require additional training</p>	

and management support to enable them to build their competence and effectiveness. There is a thorough and well-planned training programme for all members of staff and this, combined with the supervision and support which all staff receive, ensures that the staff team is skilled and competent. A well-planned and thorough induction programme is put in place for every new member of staff. This means that they are suitably prepared to work in a secure environment. There are sufficient members of staff to provide a high standard of support and care to the young people.

There are good systems in place to ensure that each young person's unique needs are planned for and met to an excellent standard. In particular, the case management system operated in the home ensures that all young people have their care plans scrutinised so that their progress can be monitored closely and changes made if needed. This flexible and responsive approach means that each young person's care plan is a bespoke package designed to nurture their development and meet their needs.

The multi-disciplinary teams which provide support to the young people work cohesively and collaboratively and welcome the views of all stakeholders, such as parents, social workers and the young people. This means that there is a sense of team work and cooperation. Members of staff and managers strongly advocate on behalf of the young people if they feel that the individual plans, especially with regards to transition, are not being suitably followed. They challenge placing authorities resolutely so that the chances of success for each young person are improved. Feedback from professionals is very positive regarding the staff engagement with the young people and impact on their well-being. 'They go the extra thousand miles' is a comment by a visiting professional.

The home's statement of purpose is regularly reviewed and gives a clear explanation of the service which is provided. All young people have a handbook which also explains the aims of the home and gives further information about which external organisations, including an external independent advocate, the young people can access especially if they feel that they need to make a complaint.

All complaints are taken seriously and investigated promptly. Complainants are informed of their right to progress their complaints further if they do not feel their concerns have been resolved. Young people are fully aware of their right to complain and feel their views are taken seriously. This approach means that young people are confident in expressing their views and feel that they can have their concerns acknowledged and addressed.

The home has monthly monitoring visits carried out by independent persons as required under regulations. They ensure that a cross section of stakeholders, including young people, parents and professionals, are consulted during these visits. This means that there is a broad view of the quality of service being delivered to the young people. Any shortfalls are reported in these visits and managers then make action plans to explain how they are to be addressed. This system ensures that managers are not complacent and are providing evidence to

these visitors to show how they are maintaining good standards.

Some records have contained shortfalls, despite being checked and endorsed by duty managers. These include the recording of some periods of single separation, debriefing sessions after restraints and episodes where young people have been managed away from the group. Although these shortfalls have not had an impact on young people's welfare, they have not been of the standard and detail required.

On one occasion, the home did not follow its own procedure in notifying the local designated officer of a concern raised by a young person after a restraint. While this did not compromise the safety of the young person, the managers concerned did not address this issue in a timely manner. All other issues have been promptly notified to the relevant agencies and this one event was atypical of normal established practice in this home.

	Judgement grade
Outcomes in education and related learning activities	Outstanding
<p>Since the last inspection, the home has continued to provide outstanding education outcomes for young people. Strategic planning is highly effective and ensures that work within education keeps abreast of local and national priorities. Collaboration and effective communication between the residential and education teams provide a strong framework to encourage and support young people to do well during their stay. The curriculum has developed since the last inspection and young people continue to shine, with strong outcomes in their levels of progress and achievements. Operationally, staff work relentlessly to give young people the best possible learning opportunities and experiences. Work to re-energise professional dialogue with staff and to develop continuous professional development opportunities externally has lessened recently. This is much needed to enable staff to review their work and to refresh their own specialist skills by, for example, drawing on practice from external sources.</p> <p>Initial assessment is thorough and comprehensive. Information from previous placements and schools is sought and used to inform the initial assessment process on arrival. Many young people arrive with poor school attendance records and literacy and numeracy skills well below those expected for their chronological age. They are highly likely to have complex behavioural, emotional and mental health needs. Close attention is given to determine any additional learning needs and the use of diagnostic assessments, to identify dyslexia for example, ensures that no stone is left unturned. Programmes are closely matched to meet specific needs and additional support is established early on so that barriers to learning can be minimised or removed. Staff continue to be very diligent and highly committed to helping all young people aim high and achieve well. As a result, nearly all young people make good or outstanding progress from their starting points and leave with at least one formal qualification, and usually more.</p>	

Young people often arrive with low self-esteem and in a highly vulnerable state. Much time is taken to ensure that learning plans reflect this level of vulnerability while maintaining high expectations of them. The importance of developing their personal and social skills, self-esteem and confidence remains a key focus across the centre and significant gains are made by young people as they become more settled and familiar with the positive learning environment.

Young people are encouraged to gain qualifications which have value when they move on to further education, training or employment. Nearly all young people work towards GCSEs and entry level, level 1 and level 2 examinations in the core subjects such as mathematics, science, information computer technology (ICT) and English. In addition to, practical areas such as art and design technology, cookery and sports activities such as using the trampoline. Currently, one young person is receiving intensive tuition towards A-level qualifications in mathematics and science. All young people are encouraged to take functional skills qualifications in mathematics, English and, most recently, ICT. For those young people of lower ability, accredited AQA awards are used purposefully to develop their ability and confidence; most achieve well and move on to study at GCSE level. Literacy has been prioritised effectively and a reading scheme is well embedded, delivered during tutorial time in education and on the residential units. As a result, young people develop their literacy skills markedly throughout their stay.

Teaching, learning and assessment are good and in some lessons outstanding. Staff work tenaciously to ensure that young people engage well, stay on task and achieve their potential during lessons. Teachers set targets that constantly stretch and challenge young people's abilities and attitudes to learning. Formal observations of teaching and learning are completed by the education manager and the local authority's school improvement partner. These are recorded and discussed with teaching staff to ensure continuous improvement. Learning walks are also undertaken regularly by senior staff and used well to highlight aspects of practice and participation observed. Resources are carefully matched to support each learner and a variety of teaching styles and methods are used skilfully to encourage wide participation and the exploration of ideas and independent thinking. Lessons are well paced to suit the needs of individuals who work to personalised timetables. Peer support and learning is also encouraged and a good example was observed in a trampoline session when one young person coached another capably through a challenging sequence of exercises, while a third recorded the session on a tablet. Good revision support was ongoing in lessons and on the residential units to support young people through their examinations.

Staff use praise for effort and achievement constantly in lessons, which is clearly valued by young people and this positive approach contributes to the highly productive learning environment. Young people are very motivated by the education rewards scheme, which helps to keep them on track to engage positively in lessons while usefully monitoring their efforts, achievement and behaviour across the week. Generally, young people's work is well organised in subject specific files or electronically and work is regularly marked, providing clear and constructive feedback. This was demonstrated well in work samples from English

and art and design technology. All learning areas are well managed and a good range of appropriate resources are accessible to young people during the lessons. Recent work achieved in education is displayed in classrooms and on the corridors and much is of a very high standard, which clearly demonstrates progress that is being made across all levels of ability. Subject specific displays are used particularly well to support the curriculum in English, science and art and design technology.

Individual learning plans have continued to develop and are exemplary. Each one explains in very good detail the young person's learning journey, it monitors learning targets regularly, shows progress over time and records levels of achievement across all subject areas. Additional information, including specific plans relating to learning needs, is also logged. Tutorial sessions are regularly held with learners to review targets and to discuss any issues regarding their education.

Staff work diligently to ensure that those young people with additional learning needs receive the resources and support that they need to progress. A team of four teaching assistants provides excellent support and interventions within lessons and particularly to those young people who struggle to concentrate or complete tasks. One-to-one study support sessions are used effectively for individuals who require more intensive support with their literacy skills.

The curriculum has been boosted since the last inspection with the addition of history, music technology, media studies and increased ICT teaching. Young people have good access to an interesting range of subjects with an appropriate mix of academic study, some vocational work and practical subjects, which they particularly enjoy. The quality of work achieved in music, art and design technology and the arts award is of a consistently high standard. All subjects provide good opportunities for young people to achieve accreditation. Core curriculum study is prioritised for all young people. The thorough attention paid to functional skills in mathematics, ICT and English has helped young people to grasp the importance of developing these skills in preparation for moving on to further training or employment. A new ICT teacher has invigorated this subject area; computers, laptops and tablets have been upgraded and increased in number, but the lack of an ICT base room hampers further development. Those young people who have been diagnosed with specific needs can now use assistive technology to support their learning; ways to further enhance this area of learning are in progress.

Personal, social and health education is centred on focused work around life skills, drug and substance misuse and sex and relationships education. Bespoke sessions in British values, extremism and cyber safety are also prevalent. Good attention to equality and diversity across the centre and highlighted in school assemblies enhances young people's understanding of other cultures, values and religions.

The purpose-built vocational area is currently underused, following the termination of the external training provider contract. Three young people are continuing to receive bespoke training in the area to complete industry-based qualifications in motor vehicle maintenance and construction. Work is ongoing to establish new

partnership arrangements swiftly so that the centre can once again provide much needed vocational skills to those young people who meet the criteria. Work experience and mobility continue to provide a range of opportunities, in-house and in the community, to extend young people's knowledge and interest in potential future career and training settings. For example, in hairdressing, animal care, catering and mechanics. The education team is successful in encouraging the take up of apprenticeships where this is possible.

Young people use equipment safely and there is good attention to health and safety, particularly in the practical subjects.

Young people have access to a wide range of enrichment activities after education, at weekends and during holiday periods. The arts award programme spans the whole centre and enables young people to work towards these during education time and in the evenings and at weekends. This work is supplemented by input delivered from an eclectic mix of professional performers and external organisations representing, for example, the sports, creative arts and music sectors as well as local schools. Strong collaboration between residential and teaching staff, in consultation with young people, ensures that whole centre initiatives are a regular feature and include many fun days and fundraising activities for a plethora of chosen charities.

Education staff contribute fully to transition planning prior to a young person's transition and are very supportive in ensuring that young people leave with comprehensive information about their educational progress, achievements and experiences. All young people receive at least one careers interview from an external provider during their stay and, in response to the last inspection report, improvements of this provision in-house are in development. The quality of careers information, advice and guidance received is of a high standard.

Attendance continues to be very good at approximately 96% over the last three months. Nearly all young people are respectful of staff and in the majority of lessons the atmosphere is relaxed and purposeful. Most young people participate enthusiastically in activities and for the minority who struggle to concentrate, staff are usually successful in their efforts to draw them into learning. Behaviour is good. Young people generally get on well together and work constructively in groups and independently. On the few occasions when there is minor disruptive behaviour, this is managed swiftly and professionally by education and care staff. During the inspection week, a large number of young people were taking external examinations. Groups were therefore smaller and different from the norm and this was managed extremely effectively by staff and young people with minimum disruption.

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 that 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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