

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	13/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC046524
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Secure unit
Registered manager	Kieran Hill
Inspector	Paul Taylor

Inspection date	13/09/2016
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:

- The home is managed and led with passion and an expectation that high standards will be achieved.
- Young people develop trusting, warm relationships. This enables them to reflect on their life experiences and to develop confidence and self-esteem.
- Individual behaviour management is very well planned and of a high quality. As a result, young people make excellent progress in managing their behaviour, especially bearing in mind their starting points.
- Close multidisciplinary working ensures that all young people receive a bespoke service to meet their complex needs.
- Both care and education staff work closely together to ensure that the value and benefits of education are embedded in the routines and culture of the home.
- Young people's emotional well-being and stability are promoted and protected to a particularly high standard.
- The management team works closely with external agencies, and this ensures transparent reflective practice that welcomes external scrutiny. This promotes and protects young people's safety and well-being.
- The decor in some areas of the home is stark and not welcoming.
- There are gaps in staff training in some key areas, and some shortfalls identified in a fire risk assessment have not been addressed in a timely manner.

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 '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>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>In order to meet the leadership and management standard, the registered person must—</p> <p>(2)(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.</p> <p>This is with specific reference to ensuring that all staff receive formal training in key areas such as safeguarding and child sexual exploitation.</p>	30/10/2016
<p>After consultation with the fire and rescue authority, the registered person must take adequate precautions against the risk of fire, including the provision of suitable fire equipment in the children's home.</p> <p>This is with particular reference to rectifying shortfalls identified in the home's fire risk assessment and ensuring that all the young people's bedroom doors have intumescent strips. (Regulation 25 (1))</p>	30/10/2016
<p>Ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of any investigation.</p> <p>This is with particular reference to ensuring that a record is made of how the investigating officer came to their conclusion and that the complainant has their views consistently recorded. (Regulation 39 (3))</p>	30/10/2016

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. Specifically, ensure that the staffing team can continue to sustain the high workload and successful outcomes by reviewing the current establishment, and that experienced and skilled teaching assistants are recruited as soon as possible to enhance the team's capacity further. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- Ensure that the ethos of the home supports each child to learn. Specifically, swiftly implement the after-education programme so that young people are purposefully engaged in enjoyable learning activities and opportunities during the educational week. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)
- Ensure that there is a system in place so that all staff receive supervision of their practice within the timescales required by the home's policy which allows them to reflect on their practice individually and as a group. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)
- Improve the overall appearance of the home by taking steps to make it look and feel more welcoming and child friendly. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- Ensure children are consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. Specifically, improve the consistency of the minutes taken at community meetings and evidence clearly the responses of staff and the steps taken by them to the suggestions, requests and choices made by young people at these meetings. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)
- Consider interim arrangements to cover the delay in creating a permanent medical room. This should be a dedicated space or room where medical practitioners can see and consult with young people in private. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 36, paragraph 7.22)

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 four young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and for four 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 is 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
02/02/2016	SCH – Interim	Improved effectiveness
10/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
01/07/2014	Full	Good
11/02/2014	Interim	Satisfactory progress

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 that young people receive is excellent. As a result, young people make very good progress especially when bearing in mind their starting points. The impact of being in the home, for many young people, proves to be a positive experience which can often be life changing. Individuality is recognised and staff work cohesively with external agencies in an effort to get the best possible outcomes for young people.</p> <p>An area of strength is the staff’s perseverance in working with troubled young people. Staff are patient and resilient, working ceaselessly and with great dedication through troubled times and the challenges which emerge. They develop and implement individual strategies and plans which are carefully thought through and personalised to meet individual need. These are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are current and relevant to the changing needs of the young people.</p> <p>Young people make progress. Small steps, for some, are significant when looking at their starting points. For example, inspectors accompanied staff and a young person, who has been in the home for a prolonged period, on a short trip outside of the home. This trip was part of the plan to nurture and support the young person to reintegrate back into the community. This is something that was unimaginable for the young person a year ago.</p> <p>The home works in partnership with external agencies and professionals who recognise the qualities which have been highlighted. For example, an independent reviewing officer told an inspector, ‘They have given her the most stable period in her life. Relationships with staff have developed well. Staff have a strong commitment towards her and get a good response.’</p> <p>Such is the commitment of staff that they regularly keep in contact with and support young people who have moved on. Some of the work currently being undertaken requires high levels of staff commitment and time, and often takes place out of normal working hours. For example, a youth justice worker, who is working closely with staff in supporting the community placement of a young person recently discharged, described the intensity and quality of work still being undertaken with the young person. She concluded by praising the dedication and commitment of staff by saying that ‘their perseverance with him has been exemplary’. This is one of a number of examples that the inspectors found where the home goes far beyond its remit in an effort to give vulnerable young people extra support in the community.</p>	

The depth and quality of relationships formed by staff and young people are for the most part, strong and often long lasting. The more experienced, longer-serving staff are particularly skilful in using the strength of their relationships with young people to manage behaviour. This reduces the number of incidents that take place.

Educational, care and medical staff work cooperatively and cohesively with young people, whose identities and cultural backgrounds are recognised and celebrated. For example, a young person spoke about how Ramadan and Eid were celebrated, acknowledging the support received from staff. The combined approach utilised by the home regarding care, education and health allows young people to confront issues and reflect on their histories. In turn, this leads them to make significant changes to their attitude and general outlook on life. This often results in them being prepared to change their lifestyle and to make positive choices.

There are excellent arrangements to address young people's physical, mental and emotional needs. Specialist staff work closely with care staff to address all aspects of health, following a full health assessment. For example, weekly meetings attended by representatives from all these areas review, in depth, the progress being made. This means that the current plans and strategies can be adjusted to ensure that their needs are consistently met.

Health promotion is an area given high priority in the home. For example, young people receive a consistent, all-round message regarding promoting healthy lifestyles. This promotion is embedded in all areas of their lives, including education, their care and their diet. Other areas, such as substance misuse, are also addressed. Overall, young people's physical, mental and emotional health needs are being met very well. The young people's emotional security and psychological health are promoted to a particularly high standard.

The home is in the process of improving and extending certain areas of the building. For example, there are plans for the development of a fully functioning medical room. In the meantime, there is no dedicated space within the home where health professionals can see young people in privacy. This can mean that venues for such meetings are sometimes difficult to find, due to the size constraints of the current building.

The level of communication between staff and young people is sensitive and insightful. This is underpinned by strong, warm relationships. These factors are reflected in the high levels of ongoing, informal consultation taking place in the home between staff and young people. Formal consultation also takes place regularly in community meetings, which provide opportunities for young people to make suggestions, float ideas and make choices around certain aspects of the home's daily functioning. The minutes that record community meetings are of inconsistent quality and often do not evidence what responses staff have made to young people's requests. As a result, young people reading the minutes are not able to ascertain how their wishes and feelings have been responded to and

addressed.

The home advocates strongly for young people when preparing them for leaving. For example, during a review observed, a key worker eloquently challenged some of the views being expressed by the young person's social worker and advocated strongly on the young person's behalf. This strong representation gained the approval of the independent reviewing officer, culminating in a more prescriptive, child-focused plan being agreed.

The building is secure and in a good state of repair. The plans that are in place for refurbishment and to extend facilities are ongoing. Young people are relaxed and at ease in their environment. Bedrooms are decorated and personalised to suit the taste of the occupant. Some communal areas appear tired, stark and uninviting.

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good

Young people's safety is at the forefront of staff awareness. Members of staff are vigilant and acutely aware of the vulnerabilities and risk-taking behaviours of the young people. As a result, all the young people have individually tailored support plans which are implemented effectively. Members of staff are seen to manage young people's behaviours with high levels of insight and sensitivity. This enables young people to lessen their risk-taking behaviours, self-harm, and verbal and physical aggression. This approach has assisted the young people to develop the skills to self-regulate their behaviours more successfully.

The trusting relationships between the young people and staff result in young people having numerous adults whom they can approach to discuss any issues which are causing them concern. The measured and calm responses from the staff reassure the young people and provide them with stability, and a feeling of being protected and cared for. Additionally, the young people have a variety of other adults, external to the home, whom they can approach for support and to address any concerns or complaints. Examples of services include an independent advocate and the Office of the Children's Commissioner.

Young people's positive behaviour is acknowledged and celebrated. They are able to earn extra privileges when they behave well and show sustained effort in managing their behaviours. Privileges include the use of a 'graduate lounge', later bedtimes and extra electrical gadgets, such as games consoles, in their rooms.

There are low numbers of sanctions for poor behaviour, as there is an emphasis on restorative practice. Whenever possible, young people are encouraged to meet with peers or staff if there have been any incidents or disagreements. This gives all parties involved an opportunity to discuss and reflect upon what has happened and

helps the young people to develop insight and empathy.

Staff's use of physical restraint is monitored and reviewed by both internal managers and a representative from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). The representative has been trained in the method of restraint used in the home, so has the knowledge to review and assess incidents. This promotes transparency and independent assessment of practice. Records of incidents of physical restraint are of a good quality and include all the details required by regulation. A sample of incidents of restraint were examined and these showed that it is used in line with regulations.

The use of single separation is in line with the regulations. All incidents are reviewed by senior members of staff to ensure that such use is appropriate. Records are signed by the young people and their comments invited. This helps the young people to discuss and understand why the measure of control had been imposed.

The practice of managing young people away from their peers to maintain safety is appropriately used. Records are kept and the use of the measure of control assessed by senior members of staff to ensure that the criteria for implementation are met and reviewed.

There is a clear policy in place regarding searches of both the environment and young people. Personal searches are only carried out when there is a belief that the security and safety of the young people are at risk. There have been three personal searches carried out on young people since the last inspection. These have all been 'pat and wand', that is, patting of clothing and the use of a metal detector. The decision to search a young person is made by senior members of staff, and the decision-making process and grounds for the search are clearly recorded. This approach means that young people's privacy and dignity are balanced appropriately with safety and security.

No young people have absconded from the home or while out in the community since the last inspection. There are clear protocols for the staff to follow in this event.

Any significant incidents are notified to relevant agencies promptly. This includes referrals to the designated officer in the local authority, as appropriate. As a result, any concerns can be followed through and young people protected. The representative from the LCSB reported very good communication with the home, and that practice is transparent with clear lines of accountability. The approach of review and learning from incidents is seen by the LCSB representatives to be of a very good standard.

Other safeguarding concerns, such as disclosures from young people that are historical, are promptly shared with placing authorities and the local authority. This

ensures that they can be addressed and that young people’s safety and wellbeing protected.

While members of staff know what to do and who to inform if they have concerns about a young person’s safety and well-being, not all have attended formal training in areas such as safeguarding and child sexual exploitation. Similarly, not all staff have received formal training in dealing with young people who are at risk of radicalisation. While this has not had an impact on young people’s safety, it means that not all members of staff have the same level of knowledge and insight in these key areas.

The recruitment of staff is thorough and ensures that all necessary checks are carried out prior to anyone commencing work in the home. This ensures that only adults with appropriate and safe work histories are employed.

In June this year, a fire risk assessment noted that an intumescent strip on a young person’s bedroom door was missing. The home was asked to rectify this shortfall within a month, but this has still not been completed. Although there are fire doors leading to the corridor where the bedroom is situated, therefore the risk is not seen as high, there is a shortfall in ensuring that all the recommendations made in the fire risk assessment have been addressed.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
<p>The home is led and managed by a devoted, motivated and enthusiastic registered manager who is very well supported by his senior leadership team. They share the same child-centred approach and values. The registered manager is suitably qualified, very experienced and leads by example. Staff and young people speak highly of the management team’s open door policy and appreciate it. Staff say that managers are approachable, visible, accessible and involved in the day-to-day operation of the home. They also say that the managers place the young people’s needs first, always lead by example, and have high expectations and aspirations for the staff and young people. Young people say that they have the confidence to raise concerns without reprisal and actively seek out individual managers to spend one-to-one time with.</p> <p>Other agencies, such as members of staff from the LCSB, social workers and education staff report that the home works openly and cohesively. This ensures that all professionals are working together in order to promote positive outcomes for the young people.</p> <p>Since the previous inspection in February 2016, the manager has appointed a training manager. Following this appointment, a full audit of the staff’s training has</p>	

been completed. This audit confirmed that a significant number of staff have not completed training or refreshed their training in a range of key areas, for example safeguarding, child sexual exploitation, preventing radicalisation, first aid, and equality and diversity. In response, the training manager has taken immediate action, such as requiring all supervisors to review individuals' training and development needs and to set targets to attend and complete courses. The learning from the training courses will assist staff in developing their understanding, knowledge and awareness, and will enhance their practice further.

Retention of staff has historically been a concern. In response, the manager and his senior leadership team have reviewed the home's recruitment and induction policy and procedures. This means that all new staff appointed are subject to a comprehensive interview and induction process that complements the robust recruitment and selection of new staff.

New comprehensive recruitment and induction procedures are in place. This has allowed the senior managers to assess prospective employee's suitability, resilience, understanding and compassion before formally offering employment. As a result, staff retention has improved. Subsequently, the young people are looked after by a team of staff who are aware of their job roles and responsibilities, have an understanding of the varying individual needs of young people, and acknowledge and celebrate individual achievements.

Team meetings, and individual and group supervision sessions, are well attended and provide formal forums to share information and review the progress of every young person. These forums are not fully utilised to consider reflections, shared practice or opportunities to identify patterns and trends of behaviours and effective strategies. This limits the staff's ability as a team to share good practice and reflect on incidents that they have managed. In addition, as a result of staff shortages, the frequency of formal supervision has been inconsistent and not within the timescales required by the home's policy. Staff did comment that they feel well supported and can discuss any concerns or issues with managers at any time.

Internal monitoring processes are good and take place regularly. Monthly visits are undertaken by an independent visitor, who ensures that the views and experiences of the young people and parents are sought. The reports are informative and detail clear action points for the manager to address. In turn, the registered manager writes action plans which outline how each shortfall is to be rectified.

The registered manager has reviewed the home's statement of purpose and service development plan outlining the development needs of the home, and its aims, objectives, purpose and function. Local authorities, parents and young people are provided with up-to-date information with regard to the services provided to young people.

Young people know how to make a complaint and are confident in expressing their

views. To raise a complaint they are reliant on requesting a form from a member of staff, asking to use a telephone or speaking to the advocate when they visit the home. This impacts on their opportunity to raise a complaint independently. Records of complaints are maintained, and the investigating officer responds promptly and details the outcome or resolution of the complaint. Records do not evidence the process followed by the investigating officer in reaching the outcome. Neither are the young person's views regarding whether they are satisfied with the outcome always recorded.

Young people receive a holistic service and are making good progress across all outcome areas. Examples of achievement are seen in all young people, regardless of their individual starting points. These include developing social skills, increased confidence and self-esteem, and trusting relationships, especially with members of staff.

	Judgement grade
<p>Outcomes in education and related learning activities</p>	<p>Good</p>
<p>The strong collaboration between the care staff and the teaching team ensures that all educational activities maintain a high profile. The education manager is also deputy manager of the home, and this has further enhanced the consistency of approach and the commitment to delivering a rounded, inclusive experience for young people during their stay.</p> <p>Initial assessment is thorough and provides a useful first evaluation of the levels that young people are likely to achieve in reading, writing and numeracy. Information received on arrival about past educational attainment is generally sparse or out of date. Baseline data is therefore routinely reviewed to ensure that the work set in lessons is appropriate for each young person, so that they do not fall behind. For some young people, special educational need statements or the more recent education health and care plans have been implemented prior to their arrival and, in such instances, additional learning resources are allocated from their home local authority. The education manager strives to ensure that these resources are readily accessible, although this can be an uphill struggle. Additional learning needs are often identified during the initial assessment and further diagnostic testing is promptly arranged through the home's local authority, when necessary. Pupil premium payments are also pursued for those young people who are designated as looked after by their placing local authority, so that they can also receive additional resources to extend their learning.</p> <p>Young people are consistently encouraged to aim high and achieve well. As a result, most make good or outstanding progress from their starting points and leave with at least one formal qualification, and usually more. Nearly all learners have achieved functional skills at Level 1 or 2 in English, mathematics and</p>	

information computer technology (ICT). Considerable gains are also made with regard to their personal, social and emotional development, and nearly all move on with greatly enhanced self-confidence, and improved social and interpersonal skills. Termly learning reviews are held to ensure that young people are making their expected levels of progress, at a minimum. This has been reviewed and refined since the last inspection to make sure that young people are clearer about the targets that are set and have a better understanding of the work that they need to do to achieve them. In a mathematics lesson, two learners could articulate lucidly what they had already achieved and how they were hoping to improve further.

This academic year has seen very good progress across a range of subjects, with a strong focus on functional skills development. This is a good achievement, particularly regarding the small number of learners at any one time. The range of subjects offered at GCSE and Levels 1 and 2 are also impressive, given the small teaching team and limited learning space. Subjects available include English language and English literature, mathematics and higher mathematics, general studies, science, business studies and ICT. Two learners achieved GCSE grade C in mathematics this summer and both are currently working towards higher grades. Other accredited programmes are used to extend young people's knowledge and skills. These include ASDAN short courses in, for example, preparation for life and work, enrichment subjects such as basic cooking, art and fitness, and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Music, a popular curriculum option, will also be offered as a short course in the immediate future. The new music studio, which is unfortunately not yet operational, will provide an important bespoke space to develop this exciting subject further. Lack of occupational workshop space means that vocational programmes cannot be substantially developed. However, as far as the building and staffing constraints allow, teachers make considerable efforts to accommodate individuals' interests and needs, offering opportunities such as on-site work experience and approved/agreed educational or work-related visits out of the home, when appropriate, so that learners remain motivated and interested in developing their knowledge and abilities.

The quality of teaching and learning continues to be outstanding. The unit manager and education manager undertake learning walks regularly and provide feedback to staff. External lesson observations from the school improvement partner are less frequent. Lessons are planned well and paced to suit the needs of individuals. Where possible, the more able learners work together and are provided with sufficiently challenging material. Most learners are encouraged to extend their efforts. Resources made available to them provide sufficient stimulus to encourage further exploration and discussion. Interactive work is used effectively to enliven topics and encourage good participation. Humour is never far away in the best teaching, and young people certainly learned from and enjoyed entertaining role play in a PSHE lesson about consumer rights. Confident and highly skilled teachers encourage learners to be inquisitive and to use their knowledge intelligently. In an English lesson, the initial lack of focus conveyed by one learner was given short shrift and the group was successfully challenged to concentrate harder and to

introduce more interesting vocabulary in their essay planning. In a minority of lessons, teaching was less inspiring, relying too heavily on worksheets and with limited opportunity for discussion.

Young people generally enjoy education, and teachers working in a range of subject areas use their knowledge and experience well to create interest and curiosity. Teachers constantly give praise for effort and achievement in lessons, which is clearly valued by young people. This helps to create a positive and stimulating learning environment. The marking scheme is highly effective, providing constructive feedback which is clear and succinct. Young people organise their work well, and the regular attention to improving handwriting and presentation skills has clearly paid dividends. They take pride in sharing their work, which is regularly displayed.

The curriculum is sufficiently well scoped to ensure that a range of subjects can be delivered effectively. The major focus on the core subjects of English, mathematics and ICT has been successfully mirrored in the good accreditation achieved. Very good progress has been made in implementing ICT accreditation since the last inspection. All learners have electronic tablets and access to laptops during lessons. A recent minor breach in security by a young person after education was quickly identified and a more robust security protocol has been instigated. Practical subjects such as outdoor games, trampolining, cookery, art and music are very popular. The reorganisation of the timetable to ensure that academic subjects receive their better concentration during the early part of the day enables learners to let off steam and be more energetic as the day progresses. Personalised programmes of learning are established when individuals are unable to attend full-time education, and mini projects, such as gardening, are devised so that those young people can experience practical as well as academic activities safely.

Learning areas are well organised, and most young people respect the environment and equipment, working sensibly and safely. Displays of young people's work enhance the work spaces, and in some rooms colourful and informative displays illustrate topics such as Black history month. Little mention was made in lessons about equality and diversity, and this has already been identified by the education manager as a training priority for this term. All staff were aware of the 'Prevent' duty agenda. Professional development opportunities tend to take place in house, and mandatory training such as safeguarding is to be completed this term.

The transitory team of two teaching assistants provides good support to teachers in the classroom. The focus on behaviour management is helpful, but more is required to extend the scope to the full range of teaching and learning support that these posts would normally offer. Permanent recruitment to these posts is anticipated soon.

Enrichment activities are jointly planned between the education team and care staff. A good development has been the recruitment of a higher level teaching

assistant (HLTA) to the post of learning coordinator for enrichment activities. A qualified teacher himself, the HLTA is responsible primarily for developing and coordinating holiday schemes, which provide a broad range of creative, fun and physical activities such as street dance, music, games workshops, art and sports. He is also in discussions with the education manager to re-establish weekday after-education activities in the hour immediately following education. Plans to reintroduce a flexible timetable, negotiated with young people, are slowly progressing.

At present, ad hoc arrangements provide a minimum of activity for a minority of young people, for example a weekly cooking slot for two young people, one-to-one chess or a card game with a teacher. During the inspection, this hour was underutilised and most young people were outside their bedrooms, not purposefully engaged.

The education team provides very good support to young people in transition planning. Staff attend all relevant review and planning meetings. Formal education reports are completed which identify the progress made and the accreditation achieved. Significant work is undertaken to help to allocate appropriate work or college placements or school attendance for those leaving. The education manager also attends other secure establishments to discuss the range and style of learning activity that a young person might expect to receive if s/he moves to a new placement. Her review of such visits is used effectively to inform transition planning.

Attendance continues to be good. Some fluctuation is inevitable, given the complexity of health and welfare needs of the majority of young people. Behaviour is generally good and education staff quickly achieve accurate insight into the variabilities and temperaments of each young person. In most instances, teachers temper the activities and the environment skilfully to achieve high levels of participation. Difficult behaviours displayed by one young person do, on occasion, feed in to disruptive outbursts from others. A number of refusals to engage in activities were observed, once in lessons. Highly impressive behavioural management techniques employed by the teaching team and the HLTA ensured that any resulting low-level disruption was de-escalated swiftly and skilfully. Relationships between staff and young people are very positive. Challenges to unacceptable behaviour such as offensive use of language are successfully confronted, in most cases. Collaboration between care and education staff is exemplary and ensures that issues arising from education for individuals are resolved effectively and to the best interests of the young person.

The education team receives very good support from the local authority at both strategic and operational levels. The advisory group, chaired by the assistant director for inclusion, meets termly and ensures that there is sufficient challenge and support to the education manager and her team. Reports regarding curriculum development, staffing, achievement and accreditation, behaviour and attendance

are submitted and reviewed with rigour. Staffing capacity continues to be a concern and requires review. The success of education is highly reliant on the very small teaching team, which includes the education manager, and must be flexible, high performing and multi-skilled at all times to achieve consistently positive results. The team would be greatly enhanced by a permanent and settled TA team to support the further development of teaching and learning strategies.

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 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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