

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>11/10/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC039900</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Mark Bates</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Lisa Walsh</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>11/10/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Sustained effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
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.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

## SC039900

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is outstanding because:**

- Staff recognise the importance of person-centred care, empowerment and equality. Great care is taken to ensure that young people are provided with a homely and supportive environment, in which they can stretch their imaginations through sensory engagement, or from being able to relax in comfort with friends.
- Staff create an atmosphere that enables young people to be happy and at total ease. This caring relationship is based on a climate of mutual respect and trust.
- The emphasis on safeguarding young people is an integral part of the staff team's day-to-day practice.
- Staff strive to ensure that young people are supported to make continued progress in all aspects of their development.
- Staff effectively challenge barriers that impact on young people's learning. They are proud of the young people's educational progress and celebrate every success.
- The registered manager and staff team confidently and consistently meet their responsibilities to keep young people safe.
- Excellent partnership work ensures that the care and support that young people receive is specific to their individual needs.
- Highly effective communication with families and professionals ensures that young people receive high quality and consistent care.
- Young people enjoy a wide range of social and leisure pursuits that match their interest and preferences.
- The registered manager is an effective leader who sets high standards and motivates staff.
- The team are extremely motivated to learn from others and explore research to help them improve the service to the benefit of young people.
- The registered manager is in regular dialogue with young people, parents, staff and other professionals. However, he does not always fully evidence the feedback he receives in his regulation 45 report.

## 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
The registered person must ensure that the system for reviewing of quality of care undertaken by the registered provider provides for ascertaining and considering the opinions of children, their parents, placing authorities and staff. (Regulation 45)(5))	24/11/2016

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This home is one of five local authority homes. It is registered for up to seven young people with learning disabilities and is situated within an urban area.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
21/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
11/11/2015	Full	Outstanding
17/03/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
27/11/2014	Full	Good

## Inspection Judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>Outstanding</b></p>
<p>Every young person is provided with a safe, caring and stimulating environment, where they have the opportunity to develop life skills that enable them to reach their full potential. This child-centred approach ensures that young people feel respected, supported, and able to have a strong sense of personal identity.</p> <p>Staff provide sensitive and professional care, which is tailored to the specific and complex individual needs of young people. As a result, young people flourish and make excellent progress in many areas of their lives. A parent told the inspector that staff had worked miracles and they could not ask for better care for their daughter.</p> <p>Young people’s lives are enhanced by living in a well presented home. There are lots of photographs and pictures on the walls relating to their aims, objectives and achievements. The staff work hard to make sure that the home is inviting and designed to meet young people’s physical and emotional needs. The grounds are spacious and very well maintained. Many of the young people particularly enjoy being outside in the gardens where they are kept safe by close staff supervision.</p> <p>Staff use a range of communication aids creatively, each specific to a young person’s assessed needs. Staff embrace specialist advice and support and adapt their practice accordingly. This ensures that young people have both an active voice and a say in every aspect of their day-to-day lives. Varieties of innovative methods are employed to do this, including information being presented pictorially and using objects of reference throughout the home. Young people’s communication improves markedly at the home and staff continually reflect and revise methods of communication in line with young people’s progress.</p> <p>Young people have excellent social opportunities. One parent told the inspector that her daughter has a ‘brilliant social life and opportunities afforded to her’. Young people enjoy a wide range of purposeful activities and have access to a wide range of activities and venues. These include local facilities as well as trips further afield. Some belong to local zumba clubs and complete voluntary work, meaning that they participate in community events and expand their social circle.</p> <p>Irrespective of disability, ethnicity, faith, gender or beliefs, young people accomplish significant personal milestones that help to prepare them for adulthood. For example, young people benefit from formal and informal opportunities to develop age appropriate life skills and knowledge, such as managing personal care, learning independence skills and time management. This supports greater</p>	

independence and responsibility. Continuous help from staff helps to build young people's confidence and they move towards semi-independence better equipped with appropriate life skills. Staff successfully support young people to work towards personal aims and objectives and to achieve tasks that meet their personal needs. A recent example of this is that one young person is now able to prepare for his shower and dress himself.

Staff are courteous and treat young people with dignity and respect. Staff have expert insight and understanding of the emotional needs of young people. Young people have enormously positive relationships with staff and this underpins the exceptional progress that they make living at the home.

Young people have excellent school attendance and make meaningful progress in their learning. A headteacher told the inspector, 'Communication is good. We are able to call at any time and speak to people who know our children extremely well.' This daily liaison between schools and home ensures that young people are fully supported so that they make meaningful progress.

The staff team makes sure that there are clear mechanisms for monitoring individual health needs, including ensuring that young people have informed health plans. Staff ensure that young people have access to specialist services such as child and adolescent mental health services. This means that their global needs are appropriately met.

When there are concerns about young people being overweight, staff work tirelessly to encourage them to eat meals that are more nutritious. This has resulted in one young person being able to lose weight.

When possible, young people enjoy contact with their families both at the home and in the community. Staff are dedicated in supporting young people and their families and promote good quality contact time. Young people enjoy seeing their families and, consequently, their relationships with their loved ones are strengthened.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<p>Young people are safe and protected from harm. Safeguarding policies include strategies to ensure that safeguarding is responsive to the needs of young people with complex needs. The emphasis on safeguarding practice and strategy is comprehensively embedded in the functioning of the home. Staff understand each young person's needs and quickly recognise changes in their presentation and</p>	

behaviour. Collaborative working is a particular strength of the home, and a social worker said, 'Joint working between myself and staff has been excellent. Staff are dedicated to create the best outcomes for young people.'

Staff work highly effectively with specialist health services to protect young people during risk-taking behaviours such as self-harm. Staff are tireless to ensure that appropriate support is available for young people. This integrated approach to protecting young people means that they become increasingly safe. There have been two unauthorised absences since the last inspection, during which the young person did not leave the sight of the member of staff. These incidents are extremely well managed. Staff understand the risks to young people of sexual exploitation and take the necessary steps to eliminate the risk. This includes being diligent in monitoring how young people use social media.

Staff work tremendously well as a team in managing young people's behaviour. They provide consistency and safety for young people, enabling them to express their views and supporting them if they are upset or struggling to express their emotions effectively. Interaction between staff and young people is observed to be caring and supportive. Staff are enthusiastic and the home has an ethos of positivity where positive behaviour and attitudes are rewarded. A colourful 'rewards tree' display gives a good visual record of achievements, promoting further successes. Sanctions are not used in the home. Physical interventions are only used when it is necessary, and staff ensure that records are rigorously completed. Restraints are well recorded and all involved with the young person's care are informed.

There is a safe and robust system for managing young people's medication. This contributes to a good standard of care. The registered manager audits records and monitors staff practice to ensure that the home is compliant with national standards on the care of medicines.

Young people live in a home that is safe and secure. Regular safety checks are made of gas, electric and fire systems to ensure that they stay in good working order. Young people are familiar with the need for checking fire alarms and complete regular fire evacuations. In recent collaboration with the fire service, additional safety measures have been implemented to ensure the ongoing safety of all young people. This approach helps young people to understand more about fire risks and how this safeguards them.

Young people's safety is further promoted through the appropriate vetting of staff. There are effective and safe recruitment practices in place. This means that young people are protected from adults who may wish to harm them.



	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>A highly committed, motivated and dedicated registered manager runs the home. He is very experienced in providing residential care services for young people. He is qualified up to level 4 diploma in residential childcare as well as in leadership and management. The registered manager, who is supported by an extremely competent deputy manager, set very high standards for the care. All additional staff have the necessary level 3 diploma in residential childcare. Young people therefore benefit from a suitably qualified and experienced staff team.</p> <p>Since a monitoring visit in August, the manager has strengthened safeguarding practice and procedures in the home. Consequently, requirements made at the time have all been addressed and young people are now better protected.</p> <p>There is a clear, accessible and comprehensive statement of purpose that clearly sets out the aims and objectives of the home. These objectives are utilised in the staff team's everyday practice, including ensuring that young people feel safe and well cared for.</p> <p>Practice is based on a person-centred approach, which can draw on a range of therapeutic models and strength-based approaches, such as social learning theory. These therapies help young people to build up the confidence, self-esteem and resilience that they need to overcome difficult past experiences.</p> <p>High standards are maintained through strong role modelling and effective supervisions. The staff team use reflective practice, research and clinical input to challenge their own practice and introduce new strategies to meet young people's needs better. This enables staff to identify patterns or trends that negatively impact on young people's development and the opportunity to devise action plans to address identified shortfalls. Consequently, the service continues to evolve to reflect young people's individual needs and to ensure that the high standards of care in the home is maintained. Recently, staff attended an autism awareness event and gained practical skills to enable communication with young people in situations of high distress. This enhances empathic practice and, as a result, the care that young people receive is particularly well informed.</p> <p>Young people's records are extremely detailed and present an excellent overall picture of their experiences and progress to date. Records are maintained to a very high standard. Young people's files are up to date and contain all the required information. Staff ensure that they are routinely checked for consistency and content. This in turn ensures that all recorded details are in place, guidance is clear for staff and, consequently, young people receive continuity of care.</p>	

The registered manager has an excellent understanding of the strengths of the service and the areas for further development. The registered manager challenges health, local authorities and education professionals and supports families to do the same when he sees decisions being made which are not sufficiently child focused. Close liaison with school and medical staff ensures that services are co-ordinated in order to meet young people's needs.

The staff team complete three monthly summaries about young people's progress. This enables staff and young people to constantly review targets and ensures these are achievable. Staff prepare comprehensive reports for young people's reviews, detailing their progress and future needs.

The registered manager has also used the results of a questionnaire to inform his planning and development. However, he does not always fully evidence this in the Regulation 45 quality review report. This creates a missed opportunity to further enhance best practice.

## 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 children looked after 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 that 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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