

Children's homes inspection – Full

Inspection date	20/09/2016
Unique reference number	SC034210
Type of inspection	Full
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	North Yorkshire County Council
Registered provider address	North Yorkshire County Council, Director of Social Services, Racecourse Lane, Northallerton, North Yorkshire DL7 8AD
Registered manager	Katherine Clarke
Inspector	Michele Hargan

Inspection date	20/09/2016
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

SC034210

Summary of findings

The children's home provision is good because:

- Children and young people now take part in an increased range of community-based activities.
- Staff have an improved focus on enabling children and young people to make progress and achieve worthwhile outcomes.
- Staff communicate warmth and understanding to children and young people, building trusting and meaningful relationships.
- Staff recruitment procedures are robust and test prospective staff members' abilities to follow procedures.
- Safeguarding children and young people is a strength of the home.
- All staff receive annual training from medical professionals, equipping them to safely carry out delegated healthcare tasks.
- Leadership and management of the home are improved.
- Staff feel an increased level of support, and new staff receive a thorough induction.
- Improved monitoring and staff support systems are in place.

What does the children's home need to do to improve?

Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered person 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 must comply within the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
<p>The registered person must ensure that:</p> <p>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</p> <p>the date, time and location of the use of the measure; and</p> <p>a description of the measure and its duration;</p> <p>within 48 hours of the use of the measure, the registered person, or a person who is authorised by the registered person to do so ('the authorised person')</p> <p>has spoken to the user about the measure; and</p> <p>within five days of the use of the measure, the registered person adds to the record confirmation that they have spoken to the child about the measure. (Regulation 35(3)(a)(iii)(iv)(b)(i)(c))</p>	28/10/2016

Recommendations

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

- Care must be taken to ensure that prescribed medicines are only administered to the individual for whom they are prescribed. Medicines must be administered in line with a medically approved protocol. In particular, the home's medication procedures must be updated to reflect current legislation and statutory guidance including, 'Managing medicines in care homes'. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 35, paragraph 7.15)
- Staff should continually and actively assess the risks to each child and the arrangements in place to protect them. When there are safeguarding concerns for a child, their placement plan, agreed between the home and their placing authority, must include details of the steps that the home will take to manage any assessed risks on a day-to-day basis. In particular, young people's risk assessments should be reviewed and updated following any concerns, including risk-taking behaviour while travelling. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations

including the quality standards', page 42, paragraph 9.5)

- A deprivation of liberty may occur when a child is both under continuous supervision and control and is not free to leave the home. A children's home cannot routinely deprive a child of their liberty without a court order, such as a section 25 order to place a child in a licensed secure children's home, or, in the case of young people aged over 16 who lack mental capacity, a deprivation of liberty may be authorised by the Court of Protection following an application under the Mental Capacity Act 2005. In particular, all staff must receive training about the above matters. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 50, paragraph 9.63)

Full report

Information about this children's home

The home provides care and accommodation for up to nine children or young people who have sensory impairment, learning disabilities, autism or physical disabilities.

The home must ensure that a placement of any child or young adult accommodated is made under the short-breaks arrangements. This may also constitute an extended, bespoke, shared care plan with the child's or young adult's family or carers, which enables them to remain in their family's or carer's home and attend their local school.

The home is operated by a local authority.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
29/03/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
19/08/2015	Full	Requires improvement
03/03/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
22/09/2014	Full	Adequate

Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are	Good
<p>Staff make meaningful relationships with children and young people. This is because they want them to really enjoy their short stays and they are genuinely invested in aiding their well-being. This approach inspires the confidence of parents, carers, professionals and, most importantly, children and young people.</p> <p>Staff now allot time to plan and execute activities. As a result, children and young people take part in an increased range of home- and community-based activities. For instance, on the site of the larger of the two homes a summer fete was held. A display of photographs capturing the event demonstrates just how much children, young people, families and friends enjoyed the occasion, which raised over £900. A young person said, 'There were thousands of people. I was on a drinks stall. I sold my invention, dandy-coke.' Speaking about the improved emphasis on other activities, a member of staff said, 'The manager changed the shifts. It was much better for children and young people. We worked the whole day, so we didn't have to rush back.' This renewed focus on purposeful activities aids children's and young people's overall development by increasing their social and communication skills.</p> <p>Staff ensure that all achievements, big or small, are celebrated and recognised as worthwhile. This builds young people's self-esteem and confidence. A member of staff said, 'It's not about just going to the shops. The young person wanted to do something that was meaningful. We wrote a list and went shopping properly.'</p> <p>Newly compiled, professionally bound photograph albums logging the activities and experiences of children and young people are now in place. These books are used to complement the home's statement of purpose. A member of staff said, 'We thought the books would help families and social workers see what we do here.' Bespoke copies are also given to children and young people who move on from the service, as a memento of their stay. This provides a pictorial record for young people and others to appreciate their new abilities and accomplishments.</p> <p>Children and young people are involved in compiling the children's guide in a DVD format. This will complement the existing guide, which is also available in a pictorial format. Providing information about the home to children and young people in an engaging way aids their understanding about what the home offers them. This development, when fully realised, recognises and promotes children's and young people's rights to make informed choices.</p> <p>Children and young people joining and leaving the home receive sensitive support from staff, which is tailored to their needs. For example, the admission process is at the child's pace, which helps them to settle more quickly and feel prepared, so that they are able to enjoy their first overnight stay. As part of this procedure, staff</p>	

visit the child or young person in school to aid their overall understanding and establish important links with others. Similarly, close working with staff in adult services, when young people are ready to move on, promotes a successful transition. This way of working helps to reduce children's and young people's anxieties, and those of their families and carers, at times of change. Speaking about the admission process, a social worker said, 'I was really impressed. I thought the young person is going to love it here. They wrote him a social story to help him before he started.'

	Judgement grade
How well children and young people are helped and protected	Good
<p>Improved recording systems support staff to reflect on the effectiveness and consequences of any measure of physical intervention. Information is now logged electronically, and staff complete more detailed recording, enabling a better evaluation of the impact on the individual concerned. This meets a previous recommendation. Although the quality of recording of physical interventions has improved overall, some factual omissions, including the time, the duration of a restraint and whether a young person had been spoken to, were not evident. These omissions mean that records would not stand up to retrospective scrutiny in the event of the need to examine these at a future time.</p> <p>Of the two buildings that make up this children's resource centre, the larger setting now benefits from a number of improvements and initiatives. A major advantage is the installation of an award-winning sensory garden, which was designed by a parent of a child who enjoys short stays at the home. This engaging feature is specifically aimed at stimulating the interest of children and young people who have special needs. This enables them to have an enriching encounter with the natural world. In addition, a more spacious, welcoming entrance and reorganisation throughout the building have resulted in children and young people staying in a setting that is calm, well ordered and relaxing.</p> <p>Children and young people take part in regular fire drills, and they are spoken to about these as part of familiarising themselves with some of the home's routines. This forms part of the admission process. Children and young people are well prepared, and more readily able to respond with support from staff, in the unlikely event that the building needs to be evacuated.</p> <p>Senior staff know when to consult the designated officer for safeguarding advice and guidance. Staff take effective action when they are concerned that a child or</p>	

young person is at risk. As a result, any issues are logged and raised so that matters can be swiftly progressed. These responses reassure parents, carers, professionals and, most importantly, children and young people that their safety is of the utmost consideration. A carer said, 'They asked me about how the young person had hurt themselves, so I know they check.' A health professional said, 'Staff had a concern and they were right to raise it with me.'

Children and young people do not go missing, and there are no concerns regarding sexual exploitation. Neither is bullying behaviour a concern. Although the risks of such concerns are relatively low, staff are not complacent about these possibilities and demonstrate vigilance, promoting the safety and welfare of children and young people.

Effective systems are in place to address any concerns raised with the home. Complaints and concerns are taken seriously, and feedback is given to those concerned. The home's responses demonstrate a willingness to resolve any issues to the satisfaction of those raising them, while providing learning to the staff team. The outcome of this approach results in sustained good relationships with children's and young people's families.

Recruitment practices are robust. All new staff are vetted, and the abilities of prospective staff to follow medication procedures are tested at interview. This thoughtful initiative demonstrates a proactive, determined approach, identifying any learning needs to prevent future mistakes. A senior member of staff said, 'It has been really interesting, and we have had a few surprises, but it means we have more idea about what someone's abilities really are.'

Risk assessments are generally comprehensive and identify young people's vulnerabilities. However, some risk assessments are not routinely updated when a further risk is identified. This omission means that the action that staff have taken to reduce the risk is not formally evaluated. This prevents staff from determining how effective the measure is at keeping the child or young person as safe as possible.

	Judgement grade
The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers	Good
The registered manager has been in post since May 2016, having previously worked at the home as a deputy manager. She is suitably experienced and is working towards the completion of the required leadership qualification. The manager has made significant improvements in the overall running and	

organisation of the home. As a result, the home feels more domestic and spacious, and staff clearly feel re-energised under the manager's leadership and direction. The manager said, 'We are very aspirational for young people and, at the moment, it feels like the sky's the limit.' A member of staff said, 'I really respect the new manager. She is a very good leader. She supports the staff and has the trust of the parents. The staff feel more secure.'

Leaders and managers run the home on the basis that children's and young people's needs are of the utmost priority. There is increased support to staff through improved recording and monitoring systems. This sends a firm message that managers want to ensure that every aspect of the care that they deliver has a positive impact and clear benefit for children and young people. This approach inspires and motivates staff because they are clear about what to do to make a positive difference and they feel valued. A member of staff said, 'I can see a massive difference. The manager notices when you do something well and says "thank you". It sounds like a small thing, but it makes a big difference.'

Medication policies and in-house procedures now include guidance about the management of medical devices used by some children and young people. This ensures that staff are clear about their responsibilities to carry out delegated healthcare tasks safely, to meet children's and young people's needs. This meets a previous recommendation. However, the medication policy references out-of-date children's homes regulations and does not reflect up-to-date statutory guidance regarding the management of medication in children's homes. These omissions result in new and existing staff not being directed to further sources of useful guidance on medication.

The home is held in high regard by parents, carers and professionals. This is because it is very apparent that children and young people receive sensitive care and support that meet their needs very well. The staff team is considerate of families when they experience increased difficulties, such as at times of bereavement. A health professional said, 'They have bent over backwards to try and support a family. I think they are marvellous. They are flexible and responsive and they work in partnership. I can visit anytime, and they are warm and welcoming.'

Staff receive training from registered health professionals using accredited approaches, so they can safely care for children and young people. This training is refreshed annually, and the ongoing competency of staff is assessed as part of a comprehensive in-house approach. This means that, as part of the staff's supervision, managers formally assess each member and their understanding of individual children and young people. Reflecting on this, a member of staff said, 'Initially I kicked up a bit of stink about it, but now I think it's a really good idea, because you have to get to know the young people really well.'

Children's and young people's case records are well organised and up to date. As a result, staff have access to comprehensive information, which informs child-centred placement plans, promoting sensitive, individualised care practice. Reports written

for children's and young people's reviews are also good. These focus on outcomes and progress, and provide a comprehensive outline of children's and young people's experiences during their short stays. Conveying children's and young people's experiences and views in this way respects their rights to be represented as much as possible in discussion about their future care and needs.

An electronic, comprehensive central monitoring system is now in place. In addition, a single electronic format is now used by staff to enter any significant concerns, including accidents or notifications to Ofsted. The system enables tracking of all documentary evidence relating to the running of the home and the care of children and young people. This system underpins reviews of the quality of care, as it enables managers to readily identify any weaknesses or strengths and promotes staff accountability and development. The manager said, 'It is still in its infancy, and the format needs to be finalised, but it has done away with all the previous monitoring books that didn't really work.'

Staff have not yet received training that informs them about how decisions affecting a child's or young person's liberty in a children's home are considered and made. Lack of understanding by staff about this could compromise their ability to ensure that children's and young people's rights are fully respected and upheld.

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 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 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 whom 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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