

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	08/11/2016
Unique reference number	SC040500
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure unit
Registered manager	Michael Lowry MBE
Inspector	Andrew Hewston

Inspection date	08/11/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection	
<p>This home was judged outstanding at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.</p>	
<p>Young people continue to receive a high level of care from a supportive and highly skilled staff team. Young people's safety and security are significant aspects of the way that the home works, and these are consistently prioritised by all staff. The management of the home has responded well to all areas raised at the last inspection. It has increased the ways in which information is shared, improving consistency and subsequently helping to improve outcomes for young people.</p> <p>Care planning arrangements have developed through improved hyperlinks within the recording system, linking information relating to risk assessments, transition planning and resettlement. This allows plans that were detailed previously to be integrated with additional plans or assessments, helping professionals who work with the young people to have a clear view of all aspects of the work being completed. Managers and staff show a high awareness of the young people, with one staff member stating, 'Although I'm new, I've learned so much from looking at their plans and understand more about them.' One young person stated, 'Here works better than most. Staff know what they are doing, and they can relate to you and life here.'</p> <p>The home uses a range of monitoring systems that raise managers' awareness of any aspects that could be improved. The independent visitor highlighted that 'the whole place never stands still; they are always improving, tinkering with ways to get things done better.' A detailed business development plan guides ongoing changes while consistently supporting improving outcomes for the young people. Each of the units now has a quality assurance senior, with specific responsibility for monitoring and developing the key-working sessions, further improving the way that young people are listened to.</p> <p>Staff are able to discuss how young people continue to make improvements throughout their time at the home. They state that longer periods at the home have an increasingly positive impact on changes to the young people's lives. This is evidenced through diligent pathway planning and assessments of licences within the community, examining breaches to early release conditions.</p>	

The numbers of notifications regarding significant incidents at the home are low. Each report describes how staff have reacted to situations, the other professionals involved, and the eventual outcomes for staff and young people. These show the high level of effective responses to situations and a determination to learn from each event.

The staff continue to work well in partnership with a range of other services to improve the experiences of the young people. Since the last inspection, health staff have increased links with the 'secure stairs' project, developing the mental health provision for both staff and young people. A new work placement scheme with a local garage has allowed young people to experience involvement with the community under a structured environment.

Two requirements and seven recommendations were made at the last inspection. These include two that related to education that were not examined at this inspection, and will therefore continue for the next inspection. All areas examined have been responded to well.

Consultation with young people has improved. Six weekly questionnaires have been developed, with simple gradings on key areas of the home and the care. These have helped with the monitoring of the provision and allow staff to respond when concerns are raised. Young people are aware of the complaints system. Although no formal complaints have been made since the last inspection, one event that a young person was unhappy about was examined in detail, including consultation with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This highlights the management's commitment to ensuring that young people feel supported.

Young people are able to attend additional consultation forums with an independent charity. The arrangements for these meetings have developed well, with increasing use of the home's staff. Young people are able to attend this forum or have individual discussions, allowing them a choice of forums to use to talk about their care.

Arrangements that support young people's resettlement have developed, with links to a clear risk assessment with qualitative information relating to risk in the community. Mobility arrangements now also link to guidance relating to areas such as family contact and the use of the internet. These developments ensure that young people are able to increase their access to both their families and community, with an increased awareness of the risks relating to such contact.

Records relating to single separation now fully show that the criteria for its use are consistently met. Increased monitoring by senior staff of both the legitimacy of the process and the recordings of such events supports the well-being of young people. Recording of physical restraint has further improved, with additional information relating to triggers of challenging behaviours being included within risk assessments. The examination of these triggers also forms part of key-worker discussions, increasing young people's awareness of their behaviours. Staff respond

well to challenging behaviours, with restraint being used only when all other management techniques have been attempted. There were no restraints during the month after the last inspection. An examination of closed-circuit television and restraint records shows that staff are professional and considerate in such situations, supporting young people through a sometimes difficult situation.

Staffing at the home has increased, improving the staff's ability to respond to emergency admissions and developing the range of activities available for the young people.

The registered manager is currently considering a range of responses to ensure that the home continues to be led by a sufficiently trained and experienced manager. This recommendation is to continue.

Information about this children's home

The children's home can accommodate up to 24 young people aged between 10 and 17 years. These are young people who have received a custodial sentence and are placed at this home by the Youth Justice Board. Education is provided on site.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
17/05/2016	SCH – Full	Outstanding
12/05/2015	SCH – Full	Outstanding
26/11/2014	Interim	Improved effectiveness
30/04/2014	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

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

- Ensure that all managers working in a children's home must have the qualification in regulation 28(2) within the relevant timescales listed in regulation 28(3). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.12)

What the inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspection we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

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 focused on the effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.

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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