

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	06/12/2016
Unique reference number	SC035409
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure unit
Registered manager	Julie Tinkler
Inspector	Shaun Common

Inspection date	06/12/2016
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection.</p> <p>This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>At the last inspection of the home in July 2016, seven statutory requirements and four recommendations were made. Two of these recommendations related to the education provision. Although education provision was inspected and progress seen to be made, due to the relatively short time since the last inspection, more time was needed for the home to demonstrate how they have fully addressed these matters. Therefore, they will be assessed at the next full inspection of the home.</p> <p>Of the seven statutory requirements, five have been fully met. Young people's privacy is promoted when they use their bedrooms or en-suites. Further measures are being looked into regarding how this can be further improved. Single separation and behaviour management plans (managing away) are detailed and fully recorded on each occasion promoting young people's rights. The collection of data regarding young people's education attendance has improved, and is now presented in a user-friendly way. Teachers are now recording young people's longer-term aspirations within personal education plans. These are used to set qualification aims and plan approved visits into the community to prepare young people for moving on. Approved visits into the community for young people are increasingly well planned. A new procedure has been developed to more accurately link these activities to education healthcare and personal education plans. This identifies the associated learning objectives and records the assessed learning outcomes for each young person. Managers' monitoring systems have improved. Managers are more rigorous when scrutinising records, which ensures that records are fit for purpose and capture the right information.</p> <p>Two statutory requirements have not been fully met, although progress has been made. Staff training records have improved and the database has been populated with better information. It is not fully complete, therefore it is still not yet possible to ascertain the full range of training that staff members have undertaken to support their work with young people. A policy has been developed for the use of ligature cutters. There are also associated records. The process and procedure for checking that ligature cutters are appropriate for use at all times, and how and when blades are verified as fit for purpose when not used for any period of time, is not clear. Records kept do not yet show the date a ligature cutter is commissioned,</p>	

any checks of blade viability and when blades are changed or disposed of. Statutory requirements will be raised in this report about these matters.

Of the two remaining recommendations, both have been fully met. Records made of young people's meetings now demonstrate the actions taken following issues raised by young people. Records of staff meetings reflect when key discussions have taken place and actions taken.

The work that has been completed and continues to be undertaken demonstrates the home's commitment to improving the quality of care provided to young people.

Admission to the home is a well-planned experience for a young person. The positive attitude of staff and immediate caring responses help young people to settle in quickly. There are clear processes for quickly developing detailed risk assessments for each young person that set out how any concerns will be addressed to help keep young people safe.

Staff and managers understand young people's needs very well. A detailed care plan is developed and put in place for each young person. Staff implement these plans and work effectively with relevant agencies, services and young people to support young people to make good progress and achieve positive outcomes.

Transition planning is excellent. Staff work in partnership with relevant professionals and agencies to ensure that young people are well prepared for the next stage of their lives. Transition planning for one young person was noted to be particularly complex in nature. The hard work of staff and managers is commendable in making the plan work for the young person so that a positive outcome is achieved in consideration of significant challenges.

Young people have access to the home's complaints procedure. They know how to complain if they need to. There have been eight complaints since the last inspection. Of those examined, concerns were dealt with and responded to quickly, with young people signing the records to say that they are happy with the outcome. Young people are able to escalate any matters to the local authority complaints department if they are not happy with the outcome.

There have been no child protection concerns since the last inspection. The home has a policy and procedure to follow should any concerns arise. Staff know and understand the procedure, which supports them in helping to keep young people safe.

Physical restraint is used in line with regulations. Clear records are made of any incident and debriefs take place with staff and young people. Debriefs lack details about what would help going forward. For example, what triggered the incident and any influencing factors. Incidents are monitored by managers using closed-circuit television. Formal monitoring ensures that practices are appropriate and identify, on most occasions, any lessons that can be learned to improve practice

further. In one incident reviewed by inspectors, there were aspects of learning that were not identified by managers and an opportunity was missed.

Overall, monitoring by managers has improved since the last inspection. Tighter and more rigorous scrutiny of practice and records takes place. This helps to further improve the care provided to young people. External monitoring by an independent visitor under Regulation 44 is not as robust as it could be. Recent reports do not always ensure that confidentiality is maintained with matters set out in a way that could identify young people, staff and placing social workers. As reports can be shared with any placing authority on request, this does not protect information. Reports do not always reflect the visitor's views of practice, and young people, parents and relatives are not always spoken with to attain their views of the service.

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 12 young people who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person 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
12/07/2016	Full	Good
17/11/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
02/06/2015	Full	Good
16/12/2014	Interim	Improved effectiveness

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; and</p> <p>(e) that the effectiveness of the home's child protection policies is monitored regularly.</p> <p>Specifically, ensure that the policy, procedure and process about ligature cutters sets out: the process and procedure for checking ligature cutters are appropriate for use at all times; how and when blades are verified as fit for purpose when not used for any period of time; and records kept show the date a ligature cutter is commissioned, any checks of viability and when blades are changed or disposed of.</p>	31/01/2017
<p>13. (1) The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that—</p> <p>(a) helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and</p> <p>(b) promotes their welfare.</p> <p>(2) In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>(c) ensure that staff have the experience, qualifications and skills to meet the needs of each child.</p>	28/02/2017

Specifically, ensure that robust records are kept that detail the up-to-date training each staff member has undertaken.	
Ensure, if they consent, the independent person interviews children and their parents and relatives. (Regulation 44 (2)(a))	31/01/2017

Recommendations

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

- The independent person appointed to carry out visits under Regulation 43 and 44 of the Children's Homes Regulations 2015, must make a rigorous and impartial assessment of the home's arrangements for safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children in the home's care. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 65, paragraph 15.5)

Specifically, ensure that confidentiality is maintained by not reporting on matters in such a way that young people, staff and placing social workers can be identified, any recommendations made in reports are followed up to assess what action has been taken and reports are evaluative to demonstrate the visitors views of practice and whether young people are safeguarded and their welfare promoted by practice in the home.

- Records of restraint should enable the registered person and staff to review the use of control, discipline and restraint to identify effective practice and respond promptly where any issues or trends of concern emerge. The review should provide the opportunity for amending practice to ensure it meets the needs of each child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59).

Specifically, ensure that recorded debriefings with young people and staff are more detailed to help to identify causes, triggers or what would have helped in order to better inform behaviour management plans.

- The registered person should make best use of information from internal monitoring to ensure continuous improvement. They should be skilled at reviewing incidents. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

Specifically, ensure that managers who review incidents of physical restraint are sufficiently skilled and experienced to identify and act upon any areas where practice can be improved further.

- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Specifically, produce academic year-to-date summaries, calendar year-to-date summaries, a rolling twelve-month year and analyses of all types of absence and the amount of education time lost as a result. This is so that advisory board members can monitor the trends in performance and challenge education staff about the performance of all groups of young people over time.

- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Specifically, managers should work with all relevant agencies to minimise the number and duration of authorised absences which still impinge on the core education day.

- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Specifically, personal education plans need to identify the skills development of young people, not simply the qualification outcomes. These should include topics such as: study/research skills, improved behaviours and young people's ability to follow safe working practices.

- The ethos of the home should support each child to learn. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 29, paragraph 5.18)

Specifically, managers should undertake a review of the education day in order to offer a greater degree of predictability for both young people and staff and reduce the burden of session planning.

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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