

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	07/02/2017
Unique reference number	1159884
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Spark Of Genius North East LLP
Registered provider address	King Edwin School, Mill Lane, Stockton-On-Tees, Cleveland TS20 1LG

Responsible individual	Zak McIlhargey
Registered manager	Stephen McGill
Inspector	Susan Atkinson-Millmoor

Inspection date	07/02/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
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 good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>Young people continue to make good progress which is supported by a cohesive and knowledgeable staff team. Detailed plans, developed with young people from their starting points, identify their likes, dislikes, hopes and dreams. This allows them to develop a sense of ownership of the choices they make and gain an understanding of change and its impact on their lives. This improves emotional well-being.</p> <p>Care planning and risk assessments that identify needs and offer strategies to mitigate against risk are a strength of the home. The management team has ensured that recording has improved, which has given them the opportunity to evaluate the information contained in the records, which has in turn led to improved safeguarding practice.</p> <p>Education attendance is seen as important. Young people continue to achieve in education and work. The staff team works well in partnership with schools and agencies to ensure that education opportunities continue to improve. One young person has gained employment and is successfully managing to maintain relationships with family and friends, which will offer resilience when moving out to return home.</p> <p>Since the last inspection, one young person has left the home. This transition was well supported and contact with the young person was maintained at their pace. The planning of transitions for two of the young people to the home was good. The staff liaised with other professionals to gather all relevant information, ensuring that they were able to respond to the young people as they settled into the home. The young people visited the home prior to moving in and were enabled to develop a sense of ownership in terms of their bedrooms and the home in general. One young person said that this had been a 'good move' for her and that the staff were 'mint'.</p> <p>Contact with family and friends is recognised as important by the manager and the staff. Most of the young people have contact with one or more significant family members. When family relationships are difficult, the team have referred the young</p>	

people to advocacy and independent visitor organisations. This ensures that the young people have an independent voice and develop relationships with significant adults.

The manager and the staff team work well with other organisations to ensure the stability and consistency of placements. A professional working with the home said: 'They use other services appropriately and attend all meetings as required.'

Records that were viewed at inspection demonstrate that professionals visit the home often, recognising the importance of partnership working. A reviewing officer said that she: 'feels they work closely with the social worker for [Name] and consult appropriately'.

Leadership and management of the home is good. The day-to-day manager is an experienced practitioner who fully understands the complex needs of the young people and provides a positive role model for her team. This enables consistent messages to be given to the young people and trusting relationships to develop.

There has been a significant turnover of staff since the last inspection. However, an examination of recruitment and supervision records showed that issues that had arisen were dealt with appropriately by the management team. Recruitment practice is robust and the management team is focused on building a competent team in this first year of operation. A member of staff who has recently joined the team stated: 'Despite being new, the team has really gelled and work together well.'

Supervision that offers reflective opportunities is well established for all team members, with the exceptions of the team manager and registered manager. This has resulted in a requirement being raised at this inspection because opportunities to reflect and review actions are essential when dealing with the complex needs of young people.

The last inspection identified that the environment was well maintained and homely. However, while efforts are made to respond quickly to repairs, the home is now showing signs of wear and tear. In particular, bedroom doors are not closing sufficiently to offer protection in the event of a fire and these need to be addressed quickly. The home would benefit from a rolling programme of decoration to maintain the high standards seen at the last inspection.

Training has improved, with the staff accessing relevant courses to enable them to address the needs of the young people who are resident. This has strengthened the team's understanding of the need for young people to have a sense of belonging and worth.

Information about this children's home

A private provider manages and operates this children's home. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children and young people who have behavioural and/or emotional difficulties.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
05/07/2016	Full	Good

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. In order to meet the protection of children standard, the registered person must ensure 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>(d) that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child’s health;</p>	21/02/2017
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees: receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	28/02/2017

Recommendations

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

- For children’s homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children’s homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislations (alarms, food hygiene etc.); however in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than ‘institutional’ impression. In particular, there should be a rolling program of redecoration. (‘Guide to the children’s homes regulations including the quality standards’, page 15, paragraph 3.9)

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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