

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	02/03/2017
Unique reference number	1230411
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered manager	Navjot Dhanoa
Inspector	Maire Atherton

Inspection date	02/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Requires improvement
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 requires improvement at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.</p> <p>There were eight requirements and five recommendations arising from the last inspection. The management response has been thorough and secured improvements to the service that benefit the young people.</p> <p>The last inspection reported on a management capacity concern because the funding for the registered manager's post is 10 hours per week. The current registered manager, who is also registered in respect of an adjacent children's home, highlighted the need for the role to be full time. This was agreed at a recent review of the management arrangements. A person has been appointed who will take up the role from 1 April 2017 and is in the process of submitting an application for registration. The proposed manager has an in-depth knowledge of the service and has been working in partnership with the registered manager to address the identified shortfalls successfully.</p> <p>The staffing structure has been reviewed and increased with a view to operating a seven day a week service from April 2017. It is currently closed alternate weekends. Full recruitment records are not kept in the home. The checklist maintained confirms that the range of required checks has been undertaken.</p> <p>Staff appreciate the support they receive through supervision, team meetings and team-building activities. These have proved effective in the further development of constructive working relationships across the social care and health disciplines. This joint working promotes the safety and well-being of the young people in their care. Staff share reflections at the end of the shift. This serves both to highlight good practice and identify areas of work with young people.</p> <p>Risk assessment and risk management are an integral part of this service. Staff demonstrate a high level of awareness of risks that young people present. They engage in active risk management and their responses to unforeseen changes are pragmatic and focus on the needs of the young people. They are vigilant in their support of young people and skilfully use distraction and diversion techniques in their interactions. This is better reflected in the supporting documentation, the risk management plan for example, and enables staff to provide a consistent approach.</p>	

This, coupled with the positive relationships between staff and young people, means that staff rarely use physical intervention. Staff records meet requirements and demonstrate that any such use is appropriate, proportionate and for the minimum length of time necessary. Staff have not given any sanctions to young people. There are no individual missing person protocols for young people; staff have to refer to the relevant policy and procedure. This does not provide staff with specific guidance that reflects the individual needs and associated risks. There is no central record maintained of missing person incidents. Although these have been few, this does not provide the manager with easy access to information to enable monitoring.

The office space has been reorganised, with new furniture, so that sleeping-in staff sleep in the office and not in the lounge. A temperature valve has been fitted in the bathroom to restrict the hot water temperature to safe levels. Any meetings for young people are planned in advance so that rooms can be booked off site if necessary. The location risk assessment was not found and this recommendation has been repeated.

Staff ensure the safe management of medication by using the sound systems in place. Staff gain the necessary consents from parents/guardians to ensure that young people's healthcare needs can be met without delay. They also gain consents for the use of viewing panes in bedroom doors, where a risk assessment indicates that this is necessary.

Through consultation, including with young people, there is work in progress on the statement of purpose, the children's guide and a new placement plan format for young people who are not looked after by the local authority. The management team is keen to reflect the individuality of the service and provide young people with easily accessible information that is relevant for a maximum 10-day stay.

The service is being well used and is proving successful. Young people benefit from staff's sensitive management of transitions. Young people move in at a crisis point. The swift assessment process is professional and maintains a focus on the needs and risks of the individual, gathering information from those involved with the young person. Young people are confident in the staff. They describe them as 'lovely' and know that staff are working with them to keep them safe, both for the short time they are there and to enable a safe transition onwards. The vast majority of young people return home with a tailored support package identified at their exit planning meeting. This reduces the need for admission to hospital; one young person reflected: 'this is so much better than being in hospital'.

Information about this children's home

This local authority home, registered for two young people, is part of an innovative, jointly commissioned and funded multi-agency service that provides psychiatric and therapeutic support for young people who have complex mental health, education and social care needs that cannot be met by one agency alone. The residential element of this service offers support to young people in mental health crisis who need intensive support, without which they may be admitted to a psychiatric ward or become a child looked after. Places are available to young people for up to 10 days at a time and enable partner agencies to respond better to young people's mental health needs out of hours.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
15/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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 recommendations:

- When establishing the home, the registered person must ensure that it is suitably located so that children are safeguarded effectively and can access services to meet needs identified in their relevant plans (see regulations 12(2) (c)). Under regulation 46, the registered person should review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Providers should refer to the non-statutory advice about the location assessment process: 'Children's homes regulations amendments 2014: Advice for children's homes providers on new duties under amendments to regulations that came into effect in January and April 2014'. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)
- 'Statutory guidance on children who run away or go missing from home or care' sets out the steps that local authorities and their partners should take to prevent children from going missing and to protect them when they do go missing. Children's homes should have regard to the relevant aspects of this guidance. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.25) In particular, develop individualised missing person procedures.
- Records must be kept detailing all individual incidents when children go missing from the home (regulation 36 (schedule 3(14))). This information should be shared with the placing authority and, where appropriate, with the child's parents. Evaluation of incidents of going missing should be undertaken to identify any gaps in training, skills or knowledge for staff or to record and retain evidence of what worked well. This evaluation should inform the review of the quality of care. (see paragraph 15.2) ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 45, paragraph 9.31)

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 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 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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