

## **Children's homes – Interim inspection**

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>06/03/2017</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC032163</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Interim</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>James Collins</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Jennifer Reed</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>06/03/2017</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Outstanding</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<p><b>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</b></p> <p>This home was judged <b>outstanding</b> at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has <b>sustained effectiveness</b>.</p> <p>This home continues to provide an outstanding level of individualised care to the young people. Individuals are making progress in their development, acquiring new skills and becoming more independent.</p> <p>The young people are kept safe from risk of harm. The young people's structured care, behaviour support plans and individual communication systems are effectively employed by staff to support them at all times. The provision of consistent care and the use of schedules and social stories assist the young people to make sense of events that may occur each day. The home's well-considered and effectively delivered care helps to reduce the levels of anxiety that the young people may experience.</p> <p>Staff demonstrate an excellent understanding of each young person's needs, abilities and vulnerabilities. An independent reviewing officer reports that they are impressed by the depth of understanding that the staff have about an individual young person's needs and progress; their knowledge was valuable in planning for this young person's future.</p> <p>Staff manage and deal with the challenging behaviours of each young person well. Staff undertake regular training in the de-escalation techniques, positive handling and restraint and control practices of the Team Teach method. The registered manager is an accredited trainer in Team Teach methodology. Restraints are appropriately and safely undertaken to promote everyone's well-being. Staff complete detailed records of every positive handling measure employed, and these records are promptly reviewed by senior staff. The registered manager reviews these records at least monthly. However, on one day, when several positive handling incidents were recorded for a young person, the month was entered incorrectly. This error had not been noted by senior staff prior to the inspection. Thus, the record kept is inaccurate. This mistake has had no detrimental impact on the welfare of the young person.</p> <p>Staff members' effective implementation of each young person's positive handling plan helps to reduce the number of times that young people self-harm or harm others. Staff are effectively supporting the young people to manage their emotions and anxieties better. Staff are empowering some young people to gain more</p>	

control of their behaviours.

Leaders and managers ensure that the premises are suitable to meet the needs of the young people who live in this home. They are well maintained, furnished and decorated. Health and safety matters within the home and grounds are given high priority, and action is quickly taken if required, to make sure that everyone is kept safe. The home provides the adaptations and specialist equipment needed to support each individual to participate and/or become more independent in their daily life. Each 'house' is designed to meet the needs of those young people living here. For example, Red House provides a jacuzzi bath for the young person to relax in. Amber House provides a shared study where the young people proudly display their awards and certificates on its walls. Its large sitting/dining room provides ample space for movement. Green House provides a 'safe space' room and is equipped with full kitchen and domestic appliances to help young people to develop their independent living skills. Blue House provides sensory and quiet rooms to help young people to calm.

Although the houses are sited in the main building, each house operates separately. The young people living in each house are supported by its core team of staff, which helps the young people to become familiar with staff members and to feel secure. Careful consideration to the matching of the young people living in each house is given by the registered manager and his team. Senior managers demonstrate an exemplary understanding of the importance of making sure that young people's unique needs are compatible when agreeing shared living arrangements in a house. Great care is taken in making such decisions to ensure that young people's lives are not disrupted and their experiences and progress are not adversely affected by poor matching decisions being made.

For the past months, the young people have successfully been looking after Cherry, a white rabbit. Pickles has recently arrived to provide a companion for Cherry. The young people can choose to help care for the rabbits. They can feed the rabbits, change their bedding and go to visit them. At suitable times, the rabbits come out of their hutches, and the young people can play with or watch their pets. Some young people are enjoying having the new additions to their home; others show little interest in the rabbits and their choice is accepted.

Staff encourage and help the young people to make choices in their daily lives and this promotes each individual's well-being and enjoyment. The young people take part in a range of stimulating activities that they like and that assist their personal development. Both in and outside of their home, the young people are enjoying doing the things that they particularly like and choose to do. They are encouraged and supported to take part in activities that other young people in their local area are doing at that time of year. For example, the young people like playing with their toys or iPads, watching television, walking, going to parks or the beach, having an ice cream, or going to see Santa Claus and the Christmas lights. When it is their birthday, they celebrate with a big cake and candles. Staff take photos of these enjoyable times for young people to keep and look at to remind them of their childhood years.

The young people regularly attend local specialist schools. Staff work closely with the schools to ensure that the young people receive consistent care and the individual support that they need, minimising the disruption caused to the young people's lives by spending time in two different settings. One young person has recently been awarded a certificate for 100% attendance. This is proudly displayed in his house.

Leadership and management in the home are strong. The substantial experience, knowledge and commitment of the registered manager underpin the home's outstanding delivery of high-quality care to the young people. The registered manager demonstrates excellent management skills and a good understanding of local policies and procedures. The senior management team members work cohesively together; their morale, commitment and enthusiasm are high and they robustly lead the staff team. Clear accountabilities and responsibilities within the team support robust team-working arrangements.

The registered manager and his team strive to improve the standard of care provided to the young people. The registered manager shows a keen interest in considering the value and suitability of research findings to influence the development of practice in the home. Discussions are in progress in the local authority, regarding such development in the home, to benefit and improve outcomes for individual young people.

The registered manager and deputy manager have taken satisfactory measures to meet the one requirement made at the previous inspection. The absence of photo identity on each staff member's file has been remedied and the local authority has been alerted by the registered manager to make sure that all of its children's homes are aware of this legislative requirement. This promotes the protection of young people.

The home has a workforce development plan to guide the development and training of the staff team to help the team to deliver high-quality care. Succession planning is in place, and the deputy manager has commenced studying for the level 5 national vocational qualification, which is the required award for registered managers.

## Information about this children's home

This home is part of a range of services provided by a local authority. The home is registered to accommodate up to nine children and young people who have complex learning difficulties and disabilities.

The home provides long-term placements for children and young people in accommodation provided by the four distinct units sited within the building. The occupancy levels of each unit are determined by the needs and the mix of the children and young people placed. Suitable equipment and adaptations are provided to meet individual need. Children and young people attend local special educational provision.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
22/11/2016	Full	Outstanding
10/11/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
12/05/2015	Full	Outstanding
16/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

## **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:

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## **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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Piccadilly Gate  
Store Street  
Manchester  
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231  
Textphone: 0161 618 8524  
E: [enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk)  
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