

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	15/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC046524
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Secure Unit
Registered manager	Kieran Hill
Inspector	Paul Taylor

Inspection date	15/03/2017
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 in effectiveness.</p> <p>Three requirements made at the last inspection have been addressed. All members of staff have now received training in key areas such as safeguarding and recognising child sexual exploitation. This ensures that members of staff have the knowledge to identify issues, and know what to do and who to inform if they have concerns. This training has been put into practice when needed, and this shows that the staff understand their duties and obligations.</p> <p>Another requirement relating to ensuring that all the young people’s bedroom doors have fitted intumescent strips has also been met. This means that this shortfall, identified in the fire risk assessment, has been rectified. All the doors to the young people’s rooms are now suitably fire proofed.</p> <p>Complaints now have a clear narrative recorded which shows how they have been investigated, the reasons for the conclusion, and whether the young person who made the complaint is satisfied with the resolution. This has made the process more transparent, and young people have been unanimously satisfied with the outcomes.</p> <p>Six recommendations were made at the last inspection. Two of these are in relation to the educational setting and have not been assessed on this occasion. The other four recommendations have been met.</p> <p>Recommendations addressed include managers ensuring that all members of staff receive supervision in line with the organisation’s policy. Since the last inspection, this target has been met, and all members of staff, bar those on long-term sick leave, have received regular supervision to ensure that they are performing their roles to a good standard.</p> <p>There has been substantive improvement to the decor of the home. New furnishings are in place in the lounge areas, and this has made the area more homely and comfortable. The completion of a new music studio is a popular addition to the facilities in the home. This resource is both useful as an educational tool and to provide an activity in which young people can relax and express</p>	

themselves.

Part of the building programme is the construction of a bespoke medical room. This is underway and will provide a clinical area for young people to meet health professionals. This is an improvement on the current arrangements, and the recommendation made regarding this issue has been addressed.

A recommendation relating to ensuring that minutes include written responses to issues raised by young people during their community and council meetings has also been met. For example, a request for young people to have a 'steak night' one evening at a weekend was responded to, and the event took place. Young people have requested new games for consoles and the DVD library to be reorganised, and these requests have also been responded to and met. This practice ensures that young people feel that they have an influence in the running of the home and that their requests are fully considered and formally addressed by managers.

The young people's council meetings are meant to take place on a monthly basis and are chaired by the independent advocate. On two occasions in the last four months, they have not taken place because the advocate has not been available. This means that the young people may have had issues that they would have liked to raise in this forum but did not have an opportunity to do so. The possibility of another adult, or perhaps a manager, chairing these meetings in the advocate's absence has not been fully explored. This is a missed opportunity for the young people to voice their opinions in this particular forum. This is a minor shortfall and young people have numerous other opportunities to voice their feelings and opinions with managers, during group meetings and with key workers, as well as to other external professionals such as social workers, youth offending officers and readily available helplines.

The transition arrangements for young people moving on from the home are very carefully explored and planned. The attention to detail and willingness of the staff team to be flexible and innovative has meant that one plan in particular has ensured close working with the young person's next placement. This includes managers being involved in recruiting new staff for the next placement, which has been individually developed to meet the young person's needs. The plan also includes members of staff from the home working with the young person once she has moved on, in order to nurture and support her transition. This shows a high level of commitment to the young person and a drive to ensure success in her placement.

Records of single separation are appropriately recorded and checked by managers. This means that the reasons for such measures are assessed and monitored to ensure that they have been fairly and proportionately used. Records of restraint are also examined by managers, the Regulation 44 visitor and an external representative from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. This ensures that thorough scrutiny is achieved and that practice is transparent and accountable.

Any safeguarding concerns are promptly referred to the relevant agencies so that they can be investigated and young people's safety protected and promoted. Records show which agency or member of staff has been responsible in following up any issues to ensure that they have been addressed and resolved.

Information about this children's home

This secure children's home is operated by a local authority and is approved by the Secretary of State to restrict young people's liberty. The children's home can accommodate up to eight young people who are aged between 10 and 17 years. It provides for up to four young people placed by the Youth Justice Board and for four young people accommodated under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who are placed by local authorities. Admission of any young person under section 25 of the Children Act 1989 who is 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
13/09/2016	SCH - Full	Good
02/02/2016	SCH - Interim	Improved effectiveness
20/10/2015	SCH - Full	Good
10/03/2015	Interim	Improved 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 recommendation:

- Ensure that children must be consulted regularly on their views about the home's care, to inform and support continued improvement in the quality of care provided. This is with particular reference to enabling young people to take part in the young people's council meetings even if the independent advocate is unable to attend. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 22, paragraph 4.11)

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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