

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	30/03/2017
Unique reference number	SC062079
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	The Children's Trust
Responsible individual	Margaret Clancy
Registered manager	Helena D'Angelo
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

Inspection date	30/03/2017
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>Leaders, managers and staff have made great progress in implementing new systems to address the requirements and recommendations of the last inspection. Their hard work is evident across the home, and staff appear to have embraced the changes required. Some tasks have been completed, while others still require further work or have yet to be embedded into staff practice.</p> <p>Staff have initiated several new ways to capture the views and feelings of young people throughout the day. They encourage young people to make choices and decisions about aspects of their daily care. These include choosing what to eat at meal times and which activities they would like to engage in. However, staff do not consistently record these responses and choices.</p> <p>Skilled and knowledgeable staff support and care for young people. They follow detailed care plans which have improved in quality and clarity. Each young person's basic needs are detailed in their plan, providing clear guidance to staff. Relationships of trust and understanding are visible between young people and staff. Staff are able to interpret and respond to the needs of young people. They reassure and encourage young people through each young person's individual communication method.</p> <p>Managers have updated and produced a 'young person's guide', which details and reflects what young people can expect when they arrive at the home. Managers plan to produce other accessible communication versions to meet the needs of all young people.</p> <p>Staff have improved the quantity and variety of activities offered to young people. These include holidays, day trips and a wide variety of home-based activities. Staff have utilised the skills of other professionals linked to the home, offering music and craft activities. The daily 'wake up' sessions create some consistency to the daily weekday routine before transitioning to education. Young people have enjoyed visits from the 'PAT Dog' and visiting drama groups. The photograph scrapbooks provide a visual reminder of activities for young people, families and others to enjoy. Staff respond to young people's expressions of choice in finding activities for</p>	

them. The home is now more stimulating for young people than at the last inspection.

A robust safeguarding culture is in evidence in the home, and staff apply a low threshold to reporting concerns and near misses. Managers have reported, recorded and referred concerns as required. Records detail and provide evidence, from instigation through to outcome. Staff follow a robust and effective bruising protocol, with all noted bruises recorded, reviewed and acted on.

Managers have referred and reported concerns and allegations about staff to the designated officer. They also maintain regular contact with the designated officer, seeking advice and guidance as required. Records detail the home's actions and responses to referrals made. However, managers did not refer one concern to the designated officer for guidance as per the home's policy and procedure. Managers completed an investigation and have detailed records regarding the concern raised, including a clear outcome and further actions completed.

Leaders and managers have updated policies and procedures on safeguarding and staff conduct. These now reflect specific risk factors pertinent to children who have disabilities. The staff conduct and behaviour policy is now explicit in its demands of staff.

Records of medication are thorough, including any errors and subsequent actions by staff. Staff seek additional advice and guidance following missed medication or errors. Leaders have implemented new systems, following learning from medication errors and incidents. An example of this is the initiation of separate records and medication sheets for emergency medications. Managers have installed new maximum and minimum indicators on all medication fridges. They have also relocated the storage bins for medication that needs to be disposed of.

Managers record complaints in the home's central incident record system. One complaint has been received which is currently being responded to in line with the home's policy and procedure.

The management team updated the statement of purpose. However, this update did not contain all the required information. In addition, the organisation's website did not include the updated version. The home's statement of purpose was updated during inspection and now details how to make a complaint and where information about making a complaint can be located. It also details how to locate the home's child protection and safeguarding policy.

Staff completed a pre-admission assessment and considered impact and compatibility for a recent transition into the home. The young person is known to the setting, and staff implemented a clear transition plan to support and promote a smooth admission. The young person has settled well in the home.

The management team now uses monitoring processes to improve practice. External monitoring visits take place each month, and the reports offer challenge and identify areas that the service needs to improve. Monthly governance meetings explore critical incidents. Root-cause analysis methodology is employed to follow up incidents. These approaches provide the opportunity for reflection and learning.

The management team has developed a greater awareness of social care regulations within both its own team and the staff team, and has created and displayed posters in each house, as well as holding discussions in team meetings. The management team has had an increased focus on the quality standards and children's home regulations, and house managers report an increased understanding of the standards.

At the last inspection, a number of issues relating to safer recruitment processes were identified. The service has responded robustly to the identified shortcomings. A team was employed to undertake a substantial audit of the recruitment records and to take subsequent action to ensure compliance. This work is ongoing, and the management team recognises that while significant progress has taken place, and new staff have the necessary information on file, further work is necessary before the requirement can be considered met.

In addition, while the management team has ensured that the staff are working towards the required qualifications, there are a significant number of staff who have not completed these within the required time frame. Managers regularly review staff progress and performance regarding this.

The management team has ensured that supervisions are now happening; however, the records lack clarity and depth. Managers have identified this as a training need for supervisors.

The management team has introduced a new recording system to capture the actual hours worked.

The management team has used monitoring processes to drive forward improvements arising from the Ofsted inspection and independent visits. A system is in place to follow up findings, incidents and concerns. The home's development plan identifies areas of weakness and what is required to improve these. The multi-disciplinary in-house clinical governance group reviews near misses and incidents.

Information about this children's home

This home is linked to the onsite non-maintained school. It provides holistic services for children who have multiple disabilities and complex health needs. The school provides 52-week placements for learners and is therefore registered as a children's home. The registered children's home accommodates up to 33 young people, in single or twin bedrooms. The residential accommodation comprises three separate houses. At the time of this inspection, there were 25 residential children. The three houses are also registered with the CQC.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
20/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement
25/01/2016	Full	Good
22/06/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
28/01/2015	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>32. Fitness of workers</p> <p>(1) The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety.</p> <p>(2) The registered person may only:</p> <p>(a) employ an individual to work at the children's home; or</p> <p>(b) if an individual is employed by a person other than the registered person to work at the home in a position in which the individual may have regular contact with children, allow that individual to work at the home, if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3).</p> <p>(3) The requirements are that:</p> <p>(a) the individual is of integrity and good character;</p> <p>(b) the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform;</p> <p>(c) the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform; and</p> <p>(d) full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. This is with specific reference to the following points in the regulation.</p> <p>(4) An individual who works in the home in a care role has the appropriate qualification if, by the relevant date, the individual has attained:</p> <p>(a) the Level 3 Diploma for Residential Childcare; or</p> <p>(b) a qualification which the registered person considers to be the equivalent to the Level 3 Diploma.</p> <p>(5) The relevant date is:</p> <p>(a) in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1 April 2014, the date which falls two years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home;</p> <p>(b) in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1 April 2014, 1 April 2016.</p> <p>(Regulation 32(1)(2)(a)(b)(3)(a)(b)(c)(d)(4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b))</p>	<p>01/07/2017</p>

Recommendations

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

- Children who cannot or choose not to verbalise, have the right to have their views, wishes and feelings heard and respected in the same way as other children. There may be children whose abilities and understanding are such that regulations 7(2)(a)(iv), (b)(i) and (c) will need interpretation according to their individual circumstances in consultation with their social worker. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 24, paragraph 4.24)
- Each local authority should have clear arrangements in place for the management and oversight of allegations against people that work with children. The relevant officer or teams within the local authority should be informed promptly of all allegations that come to an employer's attention or that are made directly to the police. For further information, including about the role of a local authority designated officer, see 'Working together to safeguard children'. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 44, paragraph 9.18)
- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care. Professionally qualified staff employed by the home, e.g. teachers or social workers, should be provided with relevant professional or clinical supervision by an appropriately qualified and experienced professional. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2)

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 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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