

Children's homes – Interim inspection

Inspection date	16/03/2017
Unique reference number	1183479
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home
Registered provider	Slough Children's Services Trust Limited (09487106)
Registered provider address	Ground Floor West, St Martin's Place, 51 Bath Road, Slough, Buckinghamshire SL1 3UF

Responsible individual	Jackie Pape
Registered manager	Post vacant
Inspector	Chris Peel

Inspection date	16/03/2017
Previous inspection judgement	Good
Enforcement action since last inspection	None
This inspection	
<p>The effectiveness of the home and the progress and experiences of children and young people since the most recent full inspection</p> <p>This home was judged good at the full inspection. At this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.</p> <p>The home has undergone significant changes in management since the previous inspection and it is to the credit of the interim manager and the staff that the home has continued to provide a good service to children and families.</p> <p>The manager has taken action to ensure that sufficient numbers of staff are available to meet the needs of children booked to have short breaks. As a result, there are fewer cancellations of stays at short notice. This has been achieved through the deployment of agency workers, who are given an induction to the work of the home and appropriate supervision.</p> <p>Key workers record sessions with children, mainly by taking photographs of an activity undertaken. But, if a camera is unavailable staff do not routinely complete any other documentation, meaning that there is no evidence that a session took place.</p> <p>Children and young people have had the summary of the last full inspection discussed with them both in a children's meeting and in key-work sessions – one including a child's comment stating that he agreed with the overall judgement made.</p> <p>The manager and staff have responded well to the requirements and recommendations of the last inspection report, although some require more work to be met completely. For example, the manager and staff have developed excellent practice in responding to the grievances of children and young people, whether expressed through behaviour or verbally. These grievances have been treated and recorded as complaints and subsequently resolved. However, the log is not sufficiently specific to capture the actions taken, and the provider's complaints procedures do not deal with managing complaints made by or on behalf of children who cannot or do not verbalise. This has been a requirement or recommendation of previous inspections.</p> <p>Staff now seek the permission of parents for the independent person undertaking Regulation 44 visits to view files, but staff have not sought the consent of the placing authority. In addition, the independent person's reports do not explicitly</p>	

state the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded and if their well-being is promoted.

Supervision sessions for staff are now held more frequently, but appraisals are not up to date.

The manager was not able to find records of checks of fire equipment or emergency evacuation drills. These are important documents, without which it is not possible to demonstrate that effective measures are taken to protect children and young people in the event of a fire.

The manager has taken steps to improve monitoring procedures significantly, such as the recording of the administration of medication, and to improve the environment, such as ensuring that children do not play in the area where waste bins are kept. This ensures that the home is a safer place for children to stay. In addition, the manager and staff continue to make the premises a more homely environment for children and young people by the removal of electronic locks from doors and putting up attractive displays, including a new information board with the names and photographs of staff and showing who is on shift.

The home's development plan demonstrates the manager's commitment to further improve the services provided for children and young people. It is ambitious in its scope and depth, but prioritised so that it is not unwieldy to put into operation.

A significant incident involving a young person damaging his possessions is currently being investigated, as it went unrecorded and was not reported at the earliest opportunity. Staff have not yet drawn up a risk assessment because the manager is waiting to take into account the outcome of the investigation; the impact of this is mitigated by the fact that the circumstances are well known to members of staff, who are aware of how to respond if an incident like this occurs again.

Case files demonstrate that the setting and recording of targets for children and young people is a focus of the work done by staff, and that they are making progress. Collaboration with teachers and others at the schools that children attend is key to this success, ensuring that a consistent approach is taken to such matters as toileting and reducing anti-social behaviour. Progress is therefore quicker than it might otherwise be. Currently, the home does not have a system for measuring a child's progress from the point of admission to leaving the service.

Staff provide as much autonomy to children and young people as possible, giving them time to complete tasks, promoting their sense of confidence and personal agency. During the inspection, staff were observed to treat children with patience and respect, whether or not those they were working with were compliant.

Staff working with young people who have specific medical needs now wear an emergency medication bag, ensuring that emergency medicine is available immediately if needed. This is an excellent development of practice, and

demonstrates the high priority given by the manager and staff to safeguarding.

Staff are ever mindful of children and young people's safety. During the inspection, one young person was lying in a place where he could easily have been run into by another child. Care was taken to prevent this from happening while staff attempted to persuade the young person to move, by using humour and by coaxing the young person in equal measure.

Information about this children's home

This service offers residential short breaks for children and young people who have learning and/or physical disabilities. The home is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to six children.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/08/2016	Full	Good
04/02/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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 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 must comply with the given timescales.

Requirement	Due date
The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (2)(a)) In particular, a record of every fire drill or fire alarm test conducted must be available for inspection.	12/05/2017
The registered person must establish a procedure for considering complaints made by or on behalf of children. (Regulation 39(1)) In particular, the policy should include managing complaints made by or on behalf of children who cannot or do not verbalise.	12/05/2017
The registered person must ensure that the independent person carrying out visits to the home only inspects a child's case records if the child's placing authority consent. The report must set out the independent person's opinion as to whether children are effectively safeguarded, and if the conduct of the home promotes children's well-being. (Regulation 44 (2)(b) and (4)(a) and (b))	28/04/2017

Recommendations

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

- Information about the child must always be recorded in a way that will be helpful to the child. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62 paragraph 14.4) In particular, that each key-work session is recorded giving the agenda and/or purpose of the session, the content and any outcomes.

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'.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance 'Raising concerns and making complaints about Ofsted', which is available from Ofsted's website: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted. If you would like Ofsted to send you a copy of the guidance, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It inspects services for children looked after and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 4234, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.gov.uk/government/organisations/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2017