

# 1232380

Registered provider: Birtenshaw

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

## Information about this children's home

The home is part of a charitable organisation. It provides a short-break service and shared care placement for up to six children or young people who have physical and/or learning disabilities.

**Inspection dates:** 24 to 25 August 2017

**Overall experiences and progress of children and young people,** taking into account **good**

How well children and young people are helped and protected **good**

The effectiveness of leaders and managers **requires improvement to be good**

The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.

**Date of last inspection:** 7 March 2017

**Overall judgement at last inspection:** Declined in effectiveness

**Enforcement action since last inspection**

None

## Key findings from this inspection

This children's home is good because:

- Children have good relationships with staff.
- The staff treat children with dignity and respect, supporting and encouraging them to achieve positive outcomes.
- Staff work in partnership with parents and other professionals to provide individualised care and support to children.
- Children are enabled to take part in a range of activities, both in the home and the local community. This contributes to their overall experiences.
- Care plans are in place for each child, and managers and staff regularly review them.
- Communication books provide parents with written information about their child's stay. This helps them to understand their child's experiences and progress.
- The range of communication methods used by staff ensure that all children contribute their wishes and views to their care and support.

The children's home's areas for development:

- Monitoring systems must be improved to ensure that the quality of recording is consistent.
- The statement of purpose must be sent to Ofsted when it is reviewed.
- Children's records must reflect any changes. These must be signed and dated.
- Some areas of the home are showing signs of wear and tear. Consideration should be given to how to make the home feel more homely.

## Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
07/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
27/04/2016	Full	Outstanding

## What does the children's home need to do to improve?

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that the registered person(s) must take to meet 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>13: The leadership and management standard</p> <p>The leadership and management standard is that the registered person enables, inspires and leads a culture in relation to the children's home that helps children aspire to fulfil their potential; and promotes their welfare.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure that staff work as a team, and ensure staff have the experience, qualifications and skills and use monitoring and review systems to make continuous improvements in the quality of care provided. (Regulation 13 (1)(a)(b) and (2)(b)(h))</p>	31/10/2017
The registered person must keep the statement of purpose under review and, where appropriate, revise it; and notify HMCI of any revision and send HMCI a copy of the revised statement within 28 days. (Regulation 16 (3)(a)(b))	30/09/2017
The registered person must maintain records for each child which are kept up to date. This relates specifically to changes to care plans following any change in care needs. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))	31/10/2017

### Recommendations

- For children's homes to be nurturing and supportive environments that meet the needs of their children, they will, in most cases, be homely, domestic environments. Children's homes must comply with relevant health and safety legislation (alarms, food hygiene, etc.). However, in doing so, homes should seek as far as possible to maintain a domestic rather than institutional impression. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 15, paragraph 3.9)
- The registered person must ensure that all young people's case records are kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)

## Inspection judgements

### **Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good**

Children receive care on a planned basis at the home. The home can provide emergency placements; however, wherever possible, admission is on a planned basis. This is to avoid unnecessary disruption to the children already receiving a service. Introductory visits enable children to visit the home before they stay overnight. It also provides an opportunity to meet other children and the staff.

There are good relationships between staff and children. Staff are aware of children's individual needs and follow the agreed plan in place. Children experience a range of activities, support and encouragement. This helps them to make progress. One parent said, 'My child is making progress since attending this service. He has begun to do things for himself, before he would not get involved in. This includes helping to get himself dressed. Staff provide me with regular updates and the introduction of the communication book between here and home lets me know what he has been doing. It is also showing the progress he is making.'

Health and educational needs remain the responsibility of the parents. However, when the young people are at the home, staff make sure communication with education continues. They also ensure that transport is in place to enable the safe transfer of children to their respective places of education. Healthcare needs form part of each child's healthcare plan. Staff review and update these as required.

Staff administering medication have completed appropriate training. This includes specialist emergency medication for epilepsy. When there are changes in medication, the home requests formal confirmation by the prescribing doctor. Staff sign medication forms when they have administered medication to a child. These measures safeguard children. Staff support children with their diets and choices of food. They know about specific food intolerances or allergies that children have. However, on one child's essential information sheet there was conflicting information. One document reported he did not eat something because he was allergic to it. The other document reported that he did not like it. The manager clarified the correct information that should be included in the documents and took appropriate action to update these at the time of the inspection.

Children contribute their views on a regular basis about their individual wishes and feelings. Staff record the detail using relevant documentation. Staff use many communication methods including signing, pictorial and observation. On occasions, staff do not record all individual key-work sessions. This is important, as it contributes to each child's ongoing development and progress.

Staff provide appropriate support for young people when they are reaching the age of 18 to move on from the home. Engagement with social workers and families helps this transition to be a positive experience.

Children take part in a range of activities, both in the home and in the community. Risk assessments reflect the level of support each child will require. These provide all staff

with the relevant information that they need to plan activities safely. The home has a sensory room for children to use. Children all have their own bedrooms during their stay and can bring personal items that help them to personalise their bedrooms. Each child has a box to store things at the home. Some areas of the home need redecorating, and soft furnishings and pictures could be added to make the environment feel more homely. Some children struggle with change and the extra sensory stimulation that this may present. Therefore, the manager is seeking further advice from other professionals and families about any additional support that they can provide to children to help them during times of change.

### **How well children and young people are helped and protected: good**

Children who visit the home on a regular basis enjoy positive relationships with staff. Children who are new to the short-break service are gradually developing these positive relationships. This will help children to feel secure and confident during their stay. Staff take part in regular training. This includes safeguarding children and young people, including those with complex needs. This helps staff to provide appropriate support to keep children safe during their stay. Staff understand the importance of strong and consistent safeguarding practice. One staff member said, 'The children who stay here have very complex needs. We look at all aspects of their safety and welfare to make sure they receive the care and support that they need.'

Risk assessments reflect all known risks and the measures for staff to use to help minimise risk to the children. Effective information sharing between the home, parents, guardians and professionals helps to inform practice in the home. All children have personal evacuation plans. These plans detail the support children will need to leave the home in an emergency. Staff follow these plans. This promotes the safety and welfare of children.

Staff have a good understanding of all children's needs and behaviours. Behaviour management plans include potential triggers to a child's behaviour. This helps staff give children the right reassurance and support. Positive handling plans include information on appropriate holds if a child is at risk of harming themselves or others. This helps to keep them safe. Staff complete detailed records that the manager regularly reviews. This contributes to informing future practice.

The manager matches the placement of children. An impact assessment format is in place. However, the manager has not received guidance on how to use it. The manager currently uses her knowledge of the children when considering placements, but she has not recorded her decision-making about all placements. This does not show a clear audit trail of appropriate matching for children attending the short-break service.

### **The effectiveness of leaders and managers: requires improvement to be good**

The previous registered manager moved to another home in February 2017. The new manager commenced in May 2017. She had submitted an application to register with the regulator, Ofsted. She has experience of working in residential care and has worked at the home for some years. Her role before becoming the manager was the deputy manager. The manager now has the support of a deputy manager and experienced staff

in the home. A service manager from the organisation provides additional support to the manager. This is through supervision and mentoring. This support is assisting the manager in her role.

The home's statement of purpose outlines the home's aims and objectives. This document is available to professionals, parents and carers. Although the manager had recently reviewed and updated the document, a copy had not been provided to Ofsted, as required by regulation. This does not enable the regulator to have appropriate oversight of the service.

The staff team has experienced a number of changes. New staff have joined a core staff team. Staff are managing the changes and beginning to develop a positive team approach. The manager is keen to develop this further. She has plans to strengthen staff practice through team meetings and development days. Quality audit systems are in place. However, they have failed to address some inconsistencies within recording. Records must reflect correct information to support and safeguard children effectively. Key-work sessions do not reflect the progress children are making. The manager has identified recording as an area for development.

Staff receive regular supervision to support them in their role. This provides an opportunity for staff to develop and reflect on their practice. Of the 16 staff on the home's statement of purpose, nine hold relevant qualifications. A further six staff are due to begin this training in September 2017. Staff induction ensures that they have a good understanding of their role and responsibilities. Staff spoken to say that they enjoy their work. They acknowledge the home has been busy throughout the school holidays and this has affected some recording.

The home works in partnership with parents, carers and social workers to meet the needs of the children. Where there have been concerns raised, the home has responded to these. For example, one parent felt the communication was not always consistent. As a result, the home has introduced home communication books. This practice enables all parents and carers to have an overview of their child's short-break stay at the home.

External monitoring of the service takes place on a monthly basis by a person independent of the home. This provides extra scrutiny of the service. This supports the manager in ensuring the service addresses any shortfalls on time. The manager is aware of the home's strengths and weaknesses. A clear development plan demonstrates plans for the home.

The home has met one requirement made at the last inspection. This is in relation to the recording of restraints. The other two requirements, in relation to monitoring, need further scrutiny. The manager is aware of the need to address these and has clear strategies in place to do this.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference made to the lives of children and young people. They watched how professional staff work with children and young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care provided.

Wherever possible, they talked to children and 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.

Using the 'Social care common inspection framework', this inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service, how it meets the core functions of the service as set out in legislation, 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'.

## Children's home details

**Unique reference number:** 1232380

**Provision sub-type:** Children's home

**Registered provider:** Birtenshaw

**Registered provider address:** Birtenshaw, Birtenshaw, Darwen Road, Bolton BL7 9AB

**Responsible individual:** David Reid

**Registered manager:** Post Vacant

## Inspector

Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

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