

SC062079

Registered provider: The Children's Trust

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is linked to the on-site non-maintained school. It provides residential care for children who have multiple disabilities and/or 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. The residential accommodation comprises three separate houses. At the time of this inspection, there were 24 residential children. The site is also registered with the Care Quality Commission.

Inspection date: 20 February 2018

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 16 October 2017

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

This home was judged good at the last full inspection.

At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

Since the last inspection, the management team has focused on meeting the previous requirements and recommendations made at the last inspection. With only four months since the last inspection, there has been good progress made in starting to meet these and also positive developments made in other areas. There are various action plans and audits in operation, which evidence good management awareness of the strengths and areas of development that are still required. The whole management team has continued to ensure that the staff morale in each of the teams is improved and also to embed good practice. There has been a big improvement in these areas with staff stating 'it's better

here than it's ever been' and 'we work so well together; I love working here'. The whole team is child-centred in its approach and all those spoken to clearly love the work that they do.

The relationships between staff and young people are a real strength. The staff group members are able to communicate with young people, and through this the staff provide young people with as much choice in their daily lives as they can and many opportunities to do things that the young people enjoy doing. There has been a focus in gaining views from young people in other imaginative ways and also in purposefully observing young people's behaviours. The senior management has asked young people from the on-site short-breaks unit to visit the children's home and reflect on what the home is like from their perspective and gaining young people's views through this avenue. Young people are engaged in many more activities than they were previously, both in each of the houses and in the community. There is much less of a resistance by staff to enable young people to try new opportunities. The activities within the houses are much more individualised and the young people in one house have enjoyed cooking so much that they are producing a cook book.

There are lots of examples of how young people progress in each of the homes from their starting points. Staff use 24-hour evaluation sheets that identify young people's individual goals, which are then reviewed at key-work sessions to ensure that they are still appropriate. Staff were able to describe the progress that young people have made with their independence and social awareness and were proud to share this. Young people now not only progress in their physical health but also in their social well-being. The use of memory books reflects back to young people the many happy experiences that they have had.

Since the last inspection, there have been no new admissions and no young people have left the children's homes. There are three young people being prepared for moves into adult services, with staff working very closely with families and professionals prior to these transitions. This ensures that future placements are clearly informed of the support that each young person requires and that the young person is well prepared for this move.

Staff report that they feel well supported and are able to approach all the managers. The forms used for staff supervision have been greatly improved and now include much more reflection upon practice. However, there remain inconsistencies in how regularly these are carried out and in the quality of some of them. Some staff have not received any formal supervision for a number of months. The records also continue to include training as a form of supervision, which does not give a true reflection of when one-to-one supervision has taken place. There is more work required to ensure that the quality and quantity of supervision with staff is consistent.

In discussion with staff, it was evident that they are confident in their roles and that key workers are well informed about the needs of their key child. They are also aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and did not hesitate when asked who they would report to, including identifying external professionals. However, they were not confident that they are fully aware of some key safeguarding areas, including around child sexual exploitation, female genital mutilation and an awareness of 'Prevent' duty. This lack of awareness means that staff are, in these areas, less well prepared to report any

concerns should they arise.

The department responsible for staff recruitment has reviewed the advert for staff and recognised the need for prospective staff to be fully briefed on the role to ensure that they know what to expect. There is closer working between this department and the senior managers in the homes to ensure that all understand the role and what it entails. Staff retention has improved since the last inspection and this continues to be an area receiving close scrutiny. There have been improvements in the staff recruitment process: files now contain all the necessary details. The gaps of employment are now explained. However, some gaps lack further exploration. In addition, there are, at times, delays in gaining certificates of good conduct for employees from other countries and the organisation's protocol does not reflect its current practice. The guidance for the managers in the event of delays in obtaining these checks is not clear and does not currently include a formal risk assessment to evidence how the decision has been made.

The management team is continuing to ensure that staff are working towards the required qualification. There remain a number of staff who have not completed this within the required time frame. There are now clear action plans in place to review progress, but this previous requirement is not yet met. However, it is recognised that progress has been made in the number of staff who have now completed this and the action taken to ensure that targets are met.

Risk assessments have been implemented to identify how often young people need to be checked at night-time. However, there are inconsistencies across the houses at present while they are trialling different risk assessments and recording with regard to these night-time checks and how they are documented. This recommendation has yet to be met.

The internal monitoring systems in place review the quality of care that young people receive and identify areas in which experiences for young people may be improved. The manager's monitoring reflects an awareness of key issues and clearly identifies patterns and trends. The manager has amended the complaints recording system, with verbal complaints now being included. The complaints process has been changed to also enable verbal complaints to be recorded. This will now enable clear documentation of all complaints to determine if further work is required. There has been one complaint received since the last inspection. This was fully investigated and learning arose from this complaint. The managers work closely with external professionals to alleviate and resolve any other concerns.

The whole staff team has developed strong links with external professionals and parents, with a number of compliments being received. One parent stated, 'There are no sufficient words to thank all the staff for looking after our son with so much pampering and love and making him happy, content and secure.' Inspectors observed the warm and nurturing approach that staff have with the young people who they care for.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/10/2017	Full	Good
20/09/2016	Full	Requires improvement
25/01/2016	Full	Good
22/06/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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>The registered person must ensure that—</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 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 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or</p> <p>(b) in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016.</p> <p>(Regulation 32 (4)(a)(b)(5)(a)(b))</p>	30/03/2018
<p>The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))</p>	30/03/2018

Recommendations

- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1) In particular, ensure that the risk assessment and protocols for obtaining checks on applicants who have lived overseas are reviewed, especially when there is a delay or difficulty in obtaining a certificate of good conduct.
- The registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1) In particular, ensure that recruitment records evidence the consideration of the explanation given for any gaps in employment.
- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)
- The registered person is responsible for ensuring that each child's day-to-day health and well-being needs are met. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 33, paragraph 7.3) In particular, ensure that night-time checks are consistently carried out and recorded in line with children's risk assessments.

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 differences 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 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.

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: SC062079

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The Children's Trust

Responsible individual: Margaret Clancy

Registered manager: Helena D'Angelo

Inspectors

Emeline Evans, social care inspector

Keith Riley, social care inspector

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