

SC425985

Registered provider: Autism Initiatives (UK)

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This privately run children's home can provide care and accommodation for up to seven children who have learning disabilities.

Inspection date: 30 January 2018

Judgement at last inspection: requires improvement to be good

Date of last inspection: 14 June 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 requires improvement to be good at the last full inspection. At the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The manager was registered with Ofsted in October 2017. She is suitably qualified and has a range of experience working with young people and adults who have a learning disability. Prior to her appointment, the home had an unsettled period because of illness of the previous manager and shortfalls in the staff numbers. This affected the young people's attachments with staff and each other. Additionally, there was insufficient oversight of the documents and records at the home. Since the manager's appointment, she has made good progress in addressing most of the 16 requirements and four recommendations made at the home's last inspection.

The manager has focused on recruiting new staff members and there is now a full staff team. The company has followed the safer recruitment guidance. Therefore, young people are protected, as far as possible, from unsuitable adults working at the home. In

addition to this, the manager has also completed team-building exercises with the staff team. Young people now know who will be caring for them on each shift and are building trusting relationships with the staff. The staff team members now work more cohesively together. This is evident in the significant decrease in the use of restraint and sanctions. Restraint records now show the duration and a description of the measure used and that the young people have the opportunity to discuss these incidents with the manager. As a result, the staff team and the young people discuss different strategies and take the learning from this to inform how they can best respond to young people's needs going forward.

The young people now have confidence to raise any issue about their care. The manager responds to informal and formal complaints. This means that she is actively listening and responding to comments and written concerns. As a result, one young person has been able to move bedrooms and some mediation work has been completed between two young people. There are good recordings of complaints and the actions that the manager has taken to address them. However, the records are not fully complete because there is no outcome recorded. This does not show the complainant's view of the outcome.

Young people's files are now in good order. This means that young people and staff can access the correct information quickly. In addition to this, the manager has challenged the different local authorities and professionals to secure all of the necessary documentation required to care well for young people. Reviews and meetings are completed within timescales. This means that there is a clear plan for each young person to move forward. However, not all paperwork is signed and dated by the author, the manager and the social worker. This does not show that everyone is aware of any changes or that they are in agreement with the plans.

Young people's medication is stored appropriately and their medication records are now clear. There are good arrangements for the safe administration of medication. Young people's healthcare plans now show what work is undertaken to support their emotional health and their identity. This is further supported with an 'all about me' document that the young people complete. This gives staff, professionals and visitors a good insight into how the young people view themselves and how they would like to be cared for. In addition to this, the home has worked closely with a dietician and consequently the menus have improved. This is because a healthier diet is being offered to the young people, especially with snacks options. The young people now choose fruit rather than a sweet or savoury snack. Staff are continuing to encourage the young people to exercise and they look for activities that will promote this. Therefore, young people enjoy trampolining, swimming and horse riding. They are encouraged to walk to destinations rather than being taken in a car. As a result, some young people have lost weight as part of their individual plan.

Young people's views, wishes and feelings are taken into account and they readily discuss these in their young people's meetings. One young person wanted a meal added to the menu and another young person wanted an activity night changed so that she could participate in an alternative activity. These requests were quickly implemented.

This shows that young people can influence the care that they receive.

Young people have different arrangements for residing at the home and for seeing their family. Some young people return home every weekend and some young people see their family on a weekly or monthly basis. Each young person has a contact plan that shows their family's name, address and telephone numbers but not the exact arrangements or whether there are any restrictions with regard to contact. For example, there is no information on whether parents pick the young person up from the home and return them or whether members of staff do this. This means that there is not clear information on whose responsibility it is. Having said that, members of staff support contact extremely well. For example, one young person returns home for the weekend. Her mother was having difficulty in managing the young person's behaviour. The manager has put together a package of support that allows a designated member of staff to support them during the day. This means that the mother and the young person are able to maintain their relationship.

The company has employed a new independent service to complete the monthly external monitoring of the home. The manager said that these reports help her to prioritise any recommendations that the independent visitor raises. In addition to this, the manager has a good development plan that identifies areas that can be improved or developed. For example, she has invited healthcare professionals to the staff meeting to discuss different aspects of autism and how these can affect young people's speech and language. Therefore, the staff team members have a greater understanding of how too much information or conversation with a young person can be difficult for them to process. The manager has completed a workforce plan, but it still requires more information. For example, it does not identify timescales for staff supervision, induction, probation and training. Therefore, it is unclear what the expectations are in these areas. This is evident in that some staff members have not received regular formal supervision. This means that some staff have not had the opportunity to discuss their practice or their development.

The home has recently undergone some redecoration and damaged furnishings have been replaced. However, the carpets throughout the home are heavily stained and worn. The manager has received some quotes for replacing these and has a plan for further decoration at the home. Although it is clear that some progress has been made, this requirement was given over seven months ago at the time of the home's last inspection. Therefore, it has only been partially met and has been repeated to ensure that young people live in a homely and well-maintained environment.

The six requirements and one recommendation made at this inspection are mainly about recording issues. There are no serious safeguarding concerns to report. The manager is aware of the shortfalls and has a clear plan to address them.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
14/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
27/03/2017	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
24/11/2016	Full	Good
03/02/2016	Interim	Improved 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
The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child, which are kept up to date and signed and dated by the author of each entry. (Regulation 36 (1)(b)(c))	30/03/2018
The registered person must ensure that all employees receive practice-related supervision by a person with appropriate experience. (Regulation 33 (4)(b))	30/03/2018
<p>The care planning standard is that children receive effectively planned care in or through the children's home.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that each child's relevant plans are followed; and</p> <p>that, subject to regulation 22 (contact and access to communications), contact between each child and the child's parents, relatives and friends, is promoted in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 14 (1)(2)(c)(d))</p> <p>This is in relation to ensuring that clear arrangements for contact are recorded in the young person's contact plan and that any restrictions regarding absent parents or unsuitable adults are recorded.</p>	30/03/2018
The registered person must ensure that a record is made of any complaint, the action taken in response and the outcome of any	30/03/2018

investigation. (Regulation 39 (3))	
<p>The quality and purpose of care standard is that children receive care from staff who understand the children home's overall aims and the outcomes it seeks to achieve for children and use this understanding to deliver care that meets children's needs and supports them to fulfil their potential.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to—</p> <p>ensure that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed and furnished so as to meet the needs of each child. (Regulation 6 (1)(a)(b)(2)(c)(i))</p> <p>This is specifically in relation to ensuring that carpets are replaced and general maintenance is completed quickly.</p>	30/03/2018

Recommendation

- The registered person should have a workforce plan, which can fulfil the workforce related requirements of regulation 16, schedule 1 (paragraphs 19 and 20). The plan should be updated to include any new training and qualifications completed by staff while working at the home. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.8)

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: SC425985

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Autism Initiatives (UK)

Registered provider address: Sefton House, Bridle Road, Bootle, Merseyside L30 4XR

Responsible individual: Katharine Silver

Registered manager: Hayley Tasker

Inspector

Pam Nuckley, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: <http://www.gov.uk/ofsted>

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