

SC394025

Registered provider: The National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides education and residential care for up to 60 children and young people, aged from eight to 18, across eight separate homes. Children and young people attend the organisation's special school, which is approved by the Department for Education. Children and young people who have a variety of disabilities, primarily learning difficulties, autistic spectrum disorder, complex health needs and physical disabilities, are accommodated for 38 weeks or 52 weeks. Many, but not all, children and young people who stay at the home have a diagnosis of epilepsy.

There has not been a manager registered with Ofsted since 28 February 2018.

An adult college and some houses that are exclusively for 18- to 25-year-olds are on the same site. These are separately regulated by the Care Quality Commission.

Inspection dates: 26 to 28 June 2018

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 **good**

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

Date of last inspection: 9 January 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
09/01/2018	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
06/06/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
05/12/2016	Interim	Declined in effectiveness
09/08/2016	Full	Requires improvement

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 protection of children standard is that children are protected from harm and enabled to keep themselves safe.</p> <p>In particular, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to ensure—</p> <p>that the premises used for the purposes of the home are designed, furnished and maintained so as to protect each child from avoidable hazards to the child's health. (Regulation 12 (1)(a)(2)(d))</p> <p>In particular, draw up clear plans to maintain or replace old equipment, especially the hydrotherapy pool and air conditioning systems. Consider what doors require finger guards on the hinge side and respond promptly to minor maintenance issues such as repairing the decor after equipment has been moved.</p>	31/08/2018
<p>The registered person may only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual satisfies the requirements in paragraph (3). The requirements are that—</p> <p>the individual has the appropriate experience, qualification and skills for the work that the individual is to perform. (Regulation 32 (2)(a)(3)(b))</p> <p>In particular, consider the level of training and skill base of fixed-term agency staff, as well as minibas, key-working and sensory room training for specific staff.</p>	31/08/2018
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect. (Regulation 34 (1)(a))</p> <p>In particular, clarify the roles of home managers in the safeguarding team and the use of personal mobile phones for all staff.</p>	31/08/2018

The registered person must maintain records ("case records") for each child which are kept up to date. (Regulation 36 (1)(b))

31/08/2018

Recommendations

- Children must feel safe and be safe. Staff should support children to be aware of and manage their own safety both inside and outside the home to the extent that any good parent would. Staff should help children to understand how to protect themselves, feel protected and be protected from significant harm. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.9)

In particular, ensure that staff know how to keep children safe in the cyber world.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people enjoy warm and positive engagement with staff. Staff understand their needs and respond immediately to their wishes. Children and young people with severe communication difficulties have a voice. They are able to socialise with each other, for example a child was observed to ask to go and play with a friend in another home. Staff accommodated this request immediately.

Children and young people make good progress. Examples include: a child who had a fear of water and is now able to go swimming; a child who was non-verbal who now has some vocabulary; and a child with a limited diet who now enjoys a much better range of foods. Staff help children and young people to develop independence skills. Children and young people learn about good manners, how to enter a room appropriately and how to make their views known.

Children and young people enjoy a range of on-site activities. This includes the sensory room, although some staff were unclear how to prepare the room and use some of the equipment. Staff ensure that children and young people have an awareness of the wider world, for example they organised a party to celebrate the royal wedding.

Staff are becoming confident at positive risk taking when planning activities off-site. Staff took children and young people on a holiday at a seaside resort. On occasion, children and young people have only limited choice of off-site activities due to the low number of minibus drivers available. Currently, managers have no clear plan to resolve the issue.

Staff ensure that the accommodation is warm, cosy and homely for children and young people. In some cases, staff have worked with parents to recreate the bedroom in the family home in this setting to minimise individual children's anxieties. In a minority of

cases, some minor maintenance tasks, such as filling and repainting holes after equipment has been moved, have not been completed for some months.

Some equipment, such as air conditioning units, are nearing the end of their working life. Although senior leaders are aware of the need to address this, there are no clear capital expenditure plans in place to provide replacement equipment. A further example is the hydrotherapy pool that is not in use due to the practicalities of maintaining and using the pool safely to meet the relevant health and safety standards. Some children, identified as benefiting from hydrotherapy, are not currently receiving hydrotherapy treatment.

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

Staff keep children and young people as safe as possible. When incidents occur, the safeguarding team has a rigorous approach to investigate what happened and to ensure that lessons are learned. For example, there are clear plans to attach door hinge guards to any doors that represent a risk to children or young people trapping their fingers. An external agency, which is a specialist in health and safety, commented on how well the risk management system works throughout the organisation.

There is minimal use of restraint as a behaviour management technique. The behaviour support team analyses and reviews incidents to ensure that the antecedents are identified and steps are taken to prevent recurrence. The number of physical interventions is low.

Staff work with children and young people to ensure that there is no bullying. Young people from one house developed a game, based on a television show that they like, to teach others about bullying.

Staff understand the clear safeguarding policy and implement the procedures in practice. Senior leaders form the safeguarding team. They are readily available at any time to deal with safeguarding concerns. They work well with external professionals, such as the designated officer for safeguarding, taking advice to keep all as safe as possible.

Managers use a 'spotlight' tool in team meetings to focus on safeguarding issues. Using anonymised incidents, staff discuss issues relevant to the setting and any changes in practice or resources that are needed. This is one way that staff keep safeguarding at the forefront of practice.

Senior leaders have plans to include home managers in the safeguarding team in the future. This includes the system to alert home managers to any safeguarding incidents in the home that they manage. Changes were made to electronic systems during the inspection to expedite that process. The policy on the use of personal mobile phones is brief and may be open to misinterpretation. Staff did not share an understanding of what the rules and boundaries are.

Staff write support plans and risk assessments that identify the needs of each child or

young person and the control measures to keep them safe. Some documents were found to be out of date or not reviewed in some time. However, no child or young person was deemed to be at risk because of this shortfall. Staff demonstrate a thorough knowledge of the individual needs of each child and young person. Staff would benefit from additional training and guidance on e-safety and how to keep each child and young person as safe as possible in the cyber world.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

An ambitious management team provides good leadership. Some staff described the management culture as 'the best ever'. Staff morale is high. Staff speak most positively of the interim management arrangements and the support that they receive. Senior managers empower staff to be child-focused and innovative in their approach.

Of equal value are the new homes' managers who are providing impressive leadership in their individual homes. For example, by auditing the current systems and identifying the improvements needed. Another example is planning the logistics of the summer holiday activities. Children and young people can choose their activities with the right staff team and transport arranged in advance. Parents say that there is good communication with the homes' managers and that low-level complaints are readily resolved.

Senior leaders are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the home and have clear plans to address them. Of particular note is the progress made in regard to staffing. Key staff have analysed staff retention rates, recruitment strategies and the use of agency staff. They have made key decisions and changes that are proving successful to improve the stability of the workforce. Consequently, children and young people have a consistent staff team supporting them. Senior leaders are determined to continue the journey to increase the number of permanent staff.

The use of fixed-term agency staff complements the skills and experience of the permanent workforce. Some agency staff are not qualified to the level 3 diploma. This is balanced by the vast majority of the permanent staff who are qualified or progressing through the course.

The independent visitor is a key part of the monitoring and evaluation of the service. He is skilled at identifying the pertinent points, providing a comprehensive monthly report to the home and other agencies, including Ofsted. Senior leaders use this comprehensive monitoring to drive forward improvement.

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.

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: SC394025

Provision sub-type: Residential special school

Registered provider: The National Centre for Young People with Epilepsy

Registered provider address: N C Y P E, St Piers Lane, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6PW

Responsible individual: Carol Long

Registered manager: post vacant

Inspectors

Keith Riley: lead social care inspector

Janet Fraser: senior Her Majesty's inspector

Paul Taylor: social care inspector

Suzy Lemmy: social care inspector

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