

1232380

Registered provider: Birtenshaw – company number 02978546

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.

The home has a registered manager in place.

Inspection dates: 14 to 15 August 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: 24 August 2017

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/08/2017	Full	Good
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>If the registered person considers, or staff consider, a placing authority's or a relevant person's performance or response to be inadequate in relation to their role, challenge the placing authority or the relevant person to seek to ensure that each child's needs are met in accordance with the child's relevant plans. (Regulation 5 (c))</p> <p>Particularly relating to young people's pathway plans and review meetings.</p>	09/11/2018
<p>The registered person must notify HMCI and each other relevant person without delay if there is any other incident relating to a child which the registered person considers to be serious. (Regulation 40 (4)(e))</p>	09/11/2018

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)
- Any child who has been restrained should be given the opportunity to express their feelings about their experience of the restraint as soon as is practicable, ideally within 24 hours of the restraint incident, taking the age of the child and the circumstances of the restraint into account. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.60)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children and young people are happy and settled in their home. They have good relationships with their staff. Staff know them well. Staff gain information from parents and placing social workers to ensure that they provide children and young people with consistent care.

Children and young people are admitted to the home following a gradual introduction. They visit the home so that they get to know staff and the other young people who live there. Children and young people who move on from the home take their memory book with them. This shows photographs of them enjoying activities in the home and in the community.

Staff encourage and support children and young people to participate in education. They work closely with education staff to promote progress. The home follows advice from education staff so that subjects that are taught in the school continue in the home. These are often activities, such as planting seeds in the garden.

The home environment is looking worn in some areas. It does not give a welcoming feel. Some of the soft furnishings need replacing. Plans are in place to redecorate the home. Children and young people are supported by their staff to choose the colours for their bedrooms.

Most of the children and young people prefer to communicate with picture symbols and sign language. The staff are now using an identical communication book which is used in school. This means that there is a seamless communication system in place that provides consistency. This is helping children and young people to communicate their views to staff.

Parents have, in the past, commented on the lack of communication from the home. They felt that staff could give them more information on how their child is progressing. The manager has implemented monthly reports. These are sent to parents and placing social workers. A parent said, 'Staff tell us what activities [name] has been doing, what he's been doing and how he has slept. Communication is much better now. I would recommend the home to anyone.'

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

Young people's safety and welfare are given top priority. High staffing levels and care delivered by staff who understand and know young people's individual risks and vulnerabilities ensures that the right action is taken to keep young people safe from harm.

Children and young people are supervised by staff. Consequently, they do not try to go missing from the home. Staff are vigilant and use key fobs to gain entry to other areas,

creating a safe environment for children and young people.

The manager notifies Her Majesty's Chief Inspector about incidents that she assesses as serious. There has been one significant incident relating to an error in the administration of medication. The manager sought medical advice. She failed to notify Her Majesty's Chief Inspector about the incident, which could have had a negative impact on the child's health.

Staff introduce a variety of leisure opportunities and experiences to young people. Comprehensive risk assessments and behaviour management plans support young people to safely engage in community activities, which develops social skills and preparation for adulthood.

Staff use low-level physical intervention to ensure that children and young people are safe. The manager evaluates the method used to ensure that it is proportionate and necessary. It is important that staff gain children and young people's views about the intervention. The manager is keen to compile a social story for staff to use to gain young people's feelings and views.

Whenever children and young people have accidents, staff respond quickly. They make a sound judgement as to whether medical attention is needed. The manager ensures that there is always a staff member in the home that is qualified to administer first aid.

Staff know how children and young people's complex needs can cause them frustration and anxiety. Social stories help young people to understand how staff will support them. This tool is effective for young people who are unable to vocalise their needs and emotions.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

The manager was registered in July 2018. She has experience of caring for children and young people who have highly complex needs. She holds the level 5 qualification in leadership and management and is supported by two registered manager delegates.

The manager has quickly identified areas in need of improvement. The home has two floors. Children and young people's individual files and medication were stored on the upper floor. These are now stored on the same floor where the child or young person resides. This means that staff have easier access to medication and records.

All children and young people have care plans. A young person's pathway plan does not tell the reader what her long-term plans are. A review of the plan is five months out of date. The manager has tried to resolve this issue with the young person's social worker. This needs to be escalated to a higher level.

The manager is committed to ensuring that children and young people reach their individual goals. She wants them to have fun and to be happy in the home. She ensures that staff follow young people's plans so that children and young people receive consistent care.

Staff supervision is regular. Staff value their manager and say that she is approachable, supportive and motivated to improve the service. The manager is getting to know staff strengths and where improvement is needed. A staff member said, 'We were without a manager for a while. I'm getting to know the new manager and I feel supported by her. I have regular supervision and we discuss the young people and their needs.'

The manager has recently reviewed the medication procedures. She has good oversight of the administration of children and young people's medication to ensure that they have their prescribed medication at the correct time of day.

The manager has good organisational skills. She is getting to know the children and young people. She is child-focused and takes a calm approach with both the staff, children and young people. She is making good working relationships with parents, health professionals and placing social workers to ensure that children and young people receive consistent care that is tailored to their individual needs.

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: 1232380

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Birtenshaw – company number 02978546

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

Responsible individual: David Reid

Registered manager: Amanda Williams
Joanne Grime

Inspectors

Jo Hornby, social care inspector
Sarah Oldham, social care inspector

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