

SC013402

Registered provider: Action for Children

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a registered charity in partnership with a local authority. Care and accommodation are provided in two separate and distinct houses. The home may provide care and accommodation for no more than four children under short-break arrangements and two to live permanently in one house, and no more than five children to live permanently in the other long-stay house. Children may have learning disabilities and/or a physical disability. The long-stay residential house specialises in working with children who have autistic spectrum disorder.

Inspection date: 19 March 2019

Judgement at last inspection: good

Date of last inspection: 16 July 2018

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 this interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has sustained effectiveness.

The home has addressed two of the three recommendations which resulted from the last full inspection. The remaining recommendation is restated. There are two recommendations resulting from this inspection.

Staff morale is positive. Managers have worked hard to reduce staff turnover. Staff are rightly proud of the progress achieved by the young people. Staff receive a stimulating programme of training and strong management support.

Young people in the long-stay home are settled. There have been no new admissions since April 2018. All the young people are engaged in full-time education and are making progress towards individualised goals and targets.

The living environment has improved and is homelier. Staff have decorated and refurnished the living room and the shower area of the long-stay part of the home. In addition, young people benefit from a new sensory room.

Support for agency staff is stronger. Agency staff attend group supervision and staff training. However, agency staff use for waking nights is excessive.

Restraint practice remains a concern. Recordings still lack sufficient detail about the duration of the intervention. In addition, staff failed to offer a debrief session following one recent intervention. This limits a full evaluation of incidents of restraint.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
16/07/2018	Full	Good
20/02/2018	Interim	Improved effectiveness
06/09/2017	Full	Requires improvement to be good
15/02/2017	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- Ensure that the required recording made of restraint incidents includes enough detail to identify effective practice. This particularly relates to ensuring that the duration of any physical intervention is detailed. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 49, paragraph 9.59)
- Ensure that when a restraint occurs that young people be given the opportunity to express their feelings about the 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)
- No more than half the staff on duty at any one time, by day or night at the home should be from an external agency. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 53, paragraph 10.17)

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: SC013402

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Action for Children

Registered provider address: Action for Children, 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG

Responsible individual: Shelagh Frankcom

Registered manager: Jhenni Izquierdo

Inspector

Barnaby Dowell, social care inspector

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