

SC037986

Registered provider: Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This is a short-breaks home which provides day care and residential short breaks for five children and young people who have learning disabilities. It is owned and managed by a local authority.

The manager was registered with Ofsted on 28 June 2007.

Inspection dates: 30 September to 1 October 2019

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people, taking into account	outstanding
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How well children and young people are helped and protected	good
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The effectiveness of leaders and managers	outstanding
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The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the children's home contribute to significantly improved outcomes and positive experiences for children and young people who need help, protection and care.

Date of last inspection: 11 December 2018

Overall judgement at last inspection: outstanding

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/03/2018	Full	Outstanding
05/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
08/06/2016	Full	Outstanding

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

Recommendations

- Staff need the knowledge and skills to recognise and be alert for any signs that might indicate a child is in any way at risk of harm. The registered person should ensure that skills in safeguarding are gained, refreshed and recorded in the home's workforce plan. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 43, paragraph 9.12)

In particular, ensure that all opportunities are utilised to explore and develop the staff's knowledge and understanding of safeguarding and the expected responses to concerns.

- As set out in regulations 31–33, the registered person is responsible for maintaining good employment practice. They must ensure that recruitment, supervision and performance management of staff safeguard children and minimise potential risks to them. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.1)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: outstanding

Children really enjoy their time at the home and look forward to their short-break visits. They describe it as being 'home from home'. Staff provide exceptionally high-quality, consistent care for children. This enables children to take part in activities and experiences, some of which they may not normally be able to do. Children's lives are enhanced and they benefit from having short breaks at the home. Staff support children to be fully involved in the home and the activities provided by staff. Children are also supported to make a positive contribution to their communities through their involvement in local projects and charity work.

Staff are very knowledgeable about children's needs, likes and dislikes. Staff are sufficiently trained, skilled and equipped to meet the complex needs of the children who are in their care. They are child focused and ensure that every child has a positive and enjoyable stay when they visit the home. Staff offer a wide variety of opportunities and experiences that promote each child's individual development and progress. Staff plan activities that they know children will enjoy. They ensure that their favourite toys, games and food are available to them during their stays.

Children make outstanding progress during their time at the home. They each develop essential life, personal care and social skills that promote their future life opportunities as they move into adulthood. Children become more resilient and independent through their time at the home. Staff support children to achieve their full potential through the 'Smart Stars' system. Individualised, child-focused targets encourage children to develop skills and achieve new things.

Children build strong, secure relationships with staff. Children seek the staff's support and advice when they are worried or upset. Staff help children to make and maintain friendships and keep in touch with family and friends during their time at the home. Staff welcome family visits to the home, and parents described this as being reassuring for them.

Staff use a variety of methods and systems to communicate well with children. In addition, staff know the children very well. This supports and promotes the communication between children and staff. Some children use sounds and gestures to communicate their needs to the staff, who are quickly able to identify what is needed and respond to it. Staff offer children choice in every aspect of their care and the children's voices are heard and listened to. Staff regularly ask children about their views regarding the home, their likes and dislikes, and what improvements they would like made to the home. Staff hear every child's voice no matter how a child may communicate it.

Staff support each child in every aspect of their daily care. The multidisciplinary, child-centred approach followed by staff has a very positive impact on how children are supported and cared for. It considers children's different needs across a variety of environments. Staff maintain excellent communication with family and other professionals, including health and education specialists, and this is evident through the outstanding quality of care provided.

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

Children feel safe and each child has trusted adults who know them well. As a result, staff can identify when a child is sad, upset or worried even if the child is unable to verbally communicate this. Staff are very aware of any change in a child's behaviours and any sign that a child may be upset, or experiencing pain or discomfort. Children talk with the staff, who take their concerns seriously. Staff help children to keep themselves safe, and provide children with helpful information and advice that promote their safety in and out of the home.

There is a positive culture of safeguarding in the home and staff are quick to identify concerns. These concerns are, overall, reported and referred to others where necessary. However, on one occasion, staff did not immediately report a concern to managers, but as soon as it was noted, managers acted on the concern and it was explored and addressed. Records of such concerns are clear and well recorded. Managers have challenged other organisations who have not acted on concerns notified to them and so ensured children were safe.

Staff use physical intervention as a last resort and only after first trying a wide variety of strategies to support the child to become calm. When physical intervention has been used, it has been in its lowest form possible and only for the minimum amount of time. Records contain all of the required details and are clear about what happened.

Staff thoroughly review and reflect on incidents. They consider what they might do differently next time and whether they need to change their practice. Staff review behaviour plans with families and other specialist professionals. There is good, thorough, detailed consideration of risk in the home. Children are encouraged to take age-appropriate risks in well-managed environments. There is careful thought given to each child's needs and risk-taking behaviours, among other aspects, when considering the compatibility of groups attending the home. This promotes good risk management and planning.

Staff complete regular safeguarding training in a wide variety of topics, and regularly talk about safeguarding within supervision. However, staff do not routinely consider different scenarios, and the desired responses to these, during staff team meetings. This means that staff may not always be encouraged, or tested, to further develop their skills and knowledge.

Good safer-recruitment systems and processes ensure that only safe adults are employed within the home. However, one recruitment file viewed did not evidence that all gaps in employment had been explored. This was rectified during the inspection.

The home is well presented and well maintained. It has a homely, comfortable feel to it, which the children like. Staff and children are proud of the home and all of them take good care of it. Children's bedrooms are personalised for their visits with their name plaque and favourite bedding.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: outstanding

Leaders and managers are inspirational. They aspire for all children to achieve their full potential. Managers are child focused and ensure that each child has great fun and feels safe and secure while attending the home. Managers also consider recent research on practice and utilise this when exploring and considering the best approaches to use in order to support the children. One area of focus is to support children to prepare for their onward journeys into adulthood.

Leaders and managers are clear about the home's strengths and weaknesses, and what they intend to do to improve areas of weakness. The home's business plan details a wide variety of activities and actions that promote the quality of care provided by the home and the opportunities and experiences available to those who stay in the home. Leaders and managers ensure that they work towards achieving the aims and aspirations as detailed in the home's statement of purpose.

Staff access regular and effective supervision that covers a wide variety of topics, including development, reflection, and review of children's needs. Leaders and managers are ambitious and encourage staff to develop and achieve their very best. Staff are supported and mentored to learn new skills and develop their practice, which in turn benefits the children. They access a wide variety of training opportunities that equip

them for their roles. All staff possess the required qualification, or the equivalent of this.

Leaders, managers and staff work exceptionally well with families and other agencies and organisations, involving all relevant parties in care planning and review processes. This has a positive impact on the quality of information and detail in care plans. Staff embrace the approaches that have been agreed collectively, and use them to provide the children with consistent support.

Managers regularly ask children about their views of the home. Staff listen to and act on concerns and any requests made. Children understand that they have an impact in the home, that their views matter and that people take them seriously.

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: SC037986

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Registered provider address: Time Square, Market Street, Bracknell RG12 1JD

Responsible individual: Louise Richer

Registered manager: Samantha Whitehouse

Inspector

Amanda Maxwell: social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

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Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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