

1273497

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home is a short-break service for seven children who have learning disabilities.

The home has been operated for over 20 years by a local authority. The service and the existing manager registered again under a newly created local authority trust in March 2018. The registered manager is appropriately qualified and experienced to manage this home.

The home is one of four homes run by this local authority children's trust.

Inspection dates: 12 to 13 November 2019

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: 19 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: sustained effectiveness

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
19/03/2019	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/08/2018	Full	Good

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 staff—</p> <p>assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and, if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child. (Regulation 12 (1)(2)(a)(i))</p> <p>This relates to ensuring that risk assessments capture key information about risks and strategies for physical intervention techniques, staffing levels and health tasks.</p>	31/12/2019
<p>The registered person must prepare and implement a policy which—</p> <p>is intended to safeguard children accommodated in the children's home from abuse or neglect; and</p> <p>sets out the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect.</p> <p>The procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse or neglect must, in particular—</p> <p>provide for liaison and co-operation with any local authority which are, or may be, making a child protection enquiry in relation to a child accommodated in the home;</p> <p>provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about current or ongoing abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the home is located;</p>	31/12/2019

<p>provide for the prompt referral of an allegation about past abuse or neglect in relation to a child to the placing authority and, if different, the local authority in whose area the alleged abuse or neglect occurred;</p> <p>provide for records to be kept of an allegation of abuse or neglect, and the action taken in response;</p> <p>describe the measures which may be necessary to protect children following an allegation of abuse or neglect; and</p> <p>describe how and to whom staff are to report, without delay, any concern about abuse or neglect of a child. (Regulation 34 (1)(a)(b)(2)(a)(b)(c)(d)(e))</p> <p>In particular, to ensure that referrals are made in a prompt way and safeguarding records are clear.</p>	
<p>The registered person must recruit staff using recruitment procedures that are designed to ensure children's safety. (Regulation 32 (1))</p> <p>This relates to evidencing that vetting checks have been undertaken for all agency staff.</p>	31/12/2019
<p>The registered person must maintain in the home the records in Schedule 4. (Regulation 37 (a) (Schedule 4(2)(3))</p> <p>This relates to staff records and rosters showing full information.</p>	31/12/2019

Recommendations

- The registered person should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents. They are responsible for proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 55, paragraph 10.24)

This includes safeguarding monitoring systems and implementing systems to regularly monitor and share learning from all incidents across the home.

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Staff communication and consultation with children is a strength of the home. Signs, symbols and picture exchange systems make up a system of creative communication. Children take part in a city-wide advocacy group. Children have been successful in

campaigning for the home to receive more electronic tablets and securing the promise of training for the city's social workers in a nationally recognised sign language scheme. This means they know their views are taken seriously.

Staff's work with parents is excellent. The staff hold coffee mornings and joint training for parents, with good attendance as parents feel welcome at the home. This develops the staff's relationships with families, which promotes good communication and trust. Parents are positive about the home and confident to leave their children there. Several parents told inspectors about the positive impact of the short-break service on their children and families.

Staff plan introductions to the home well. This supports children to have the best start at the home. Even in emergencies when children need an extra short break, staff prioritise the needs of individual children in the group. Staff knowledge and long-term experience of the children is invaluable in making these decisions.

Staff match the children who stay together well. The groups are reviewed by staff using reports and assessments, views from parents and their own detailed knowledge of the children. This review process is effective. It maximises children's opportunities and experiences during their time at the home.

Activities at the home are child-centred. Staff are highly focused on children's positive experiences and them enjoying the fun time they have.

To help children to achieve goals staff use direct work sessions, daily experiences and reward systems. The staff are enthusiastic about children's achievements. As a result, children's self-esteem grows. My Stay booklets are used to capture each stay. However, it is not clear how this record contributes to coherently capturing progress and this is a missed opportunity.

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

Staff know all children's routines well. This means they can predict potential difficulties and mitigate against these, which helps children to feel safe.

The stable staff team knows the children well and staffing levels meet children's needs effectively. However, the risk management documentation to support trips out in the community is not always clear about how many staff should help each child. Similarly, while special aspects of healthcare and behaviour are safely managed, the protocols for these are not always sufficiently detailed to address individual strategies to reduce risk.

The home is well kept and welcoming for children. Staff make changes to support children's individual needs. Staff and managers have high aspirations for improving the home environment. For example, a new sensory garden has been developed since the last inspection and is an impressive addition, which is well used by children.

Since the last inspection, risk assessments and behaviour management plans have been

combined. Not all risk assessments consistently identify strategies to reduce risk and this information is held elsewhere in files. For example, a key health protocol for one child was not included in relevant plans. While there was no evidence of impact on the child's care, this could lead to confusion.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

A knowledgeable, respected and aspirational manager leads the home. Staff work to and meet the home's outlined aims and goals. Supervisions and team meetings take place regularly and staff morale is good. Staff report they feel supported by managers and each other. Children benefit from the significant commitment staff have to them and the home.

Complaints are rare. When they happen, the manager responds quickly, decisively and follows through. This means that parents have confidence their concerns will be addressed.

Formal and informal opportunities for feedback mean that parents and professionals are included in the care of children at the home. They are clear that the service benefits their children and their families.

Systematic managerial monitoring does not extend to review of potential safeguarding concerns. Staff practice is good, but their recording is inconsistent and decision-making is not well evidenced. This means the manager may miss information and the opportunity to learn lessons to improve staff safeguarding practice and child safety.

Managers believe the trust confirms full safer recruitment checks on agency staff under a service level agreement, but this is not available in the home. Records in the home about the limited number of agency staff do not show full vetting checks and rotas do not make clear the full names of staff who have worked. This means the manager cannot be certain of agency staff's suitability to work with children.

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: 1273497

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Birmingham Children's Trust Community Interest Company

Registered provider address: Third Floor Zone 16, 1 Lancaster Circus, Birmingham B4 7DJ

Responsible individual: Melanie Page

Registered manager: Julie Clark

Inspectors

Karol Keenan, social care inspector

Christy Wannop, social care inspector

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