

1159884

Registered provider: Spark of Genius North East LLP

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

A private provider manages and operates this children's home. It provides care and accommodation for up to five children or young people who have behavioural and/or emotional difficulties.

The manager has applied to register.

Inspection dates: 4 to 5 December 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: 11 February 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: good

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
11/02/2019	Full	Good
06/06/2017	Full	Good
07/02/2017	Interim	Improved effectiveness
05/07/2016	Full	Good

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

Recommendations

- Regulation 40(4) requires the registered person to notify Ofsted and any other relevant persons if one of the situations specified in regulation 40(4)(a)(d) occurs, or if there is an incident relating to the protection, safeguarding or welfare of a child living in the home which the registered person considers to be serious (40(4)(e)). ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 63, paragraph 14.10)

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

The young people receive good-quality care and support from adults, who come to know and understand them very well. Relationships between staff and young people are caring and nurturing. The staff spend individual time with young people, providing consistent safe-care messages to support their well-being. The home is warm and welcoming and provides a comfortable environment where the young people can relax. Individualised care plans and risk assessments ensure that young people are becoming increasingly safe and are making good progress from their starting points.

Staff spend time with the young people, coming to understand their needs on an individual basis. Even when relationships are tested, staff take great care to ensure that the views and opinions of young people are listened to and taken seriously. This ensures that young people's concerns are thoroughly investigated.

All young people have made progress in education since moving to the home. Staff work hard to advocate on behalf of young people when they require additional support in school. This support gives young people the best chance to improve their confidence, attendance and attainment. One social worker spoke of her young person's refusal to engage with school before moving to the home, commenting, 'Now, through the hard work of staff, he's engaging in education and this progress is all down to the staff talking to him, encouraging him and supporting him when he is at school.'

The individual bedrooms are decorated and furnished to the young person's preferences, and this ensures that they have a space that reflects their character and identity. Young people can have a say in how the communal areas of the house look. The living room has recently been decorated for Christmas with a real tree, which the young people helped to pick. This adds to the relaxed, homely atmosphere that young people enjoy and helps them feel valued.

The young people benefit from activities that are well planned. Some of the young people enjoyed a holiday to Spain over the summer. For some young people, this was their first experience of a holiday abroad. Photographs of the holiday are displayed around the home to ensure that young people can reflect on these exciting adventures and take the fond memories into adulthood with them.

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

All young people have detailed and individualised risk management plans in place, overseen by a clinical psychologist, that are followed by staff and are effective in helping to keep young people safe. Young people are encouraged to be involved in the writing and the review of their risk assessments. This ensures that risk assessments are accurate and relevant to young people. Being involved in the review of their risk assessments enables the young people to see the progress that they have

made while living at the home.

The young people are making good progress, demonstrated by the large reduction in the number of missing-from-home episodes and the use of physical intervention. Staff are aware of the risks facing with the young people. They use a wide range of de-escalation techniques to ensure that young people are guided into making positive choices before incidents escalate. On the rare occasion that young people do go missing from the home, the staff are proactive in looking for them and liaising with other agencies to ensure that they are returned quickly and safely to the home.

Young people understand the boundaries and expectations in the home. Young people and staff are encouraged through house meetings to develop their own expectations of each other's behaviour. This approach ensures that everybody living in the home knows how to behave towards one another and nurtures a sense of belonging and empowerment in young people. Staff respond quickly and effectively to any incidents of bullying and have used external agencies and additional training to ensure that they are responding in the most effective way. Restorative approaches, positive rewards and praise are used to encourage young people to reflect on their behaviour.

Staff training supports the awareness of safeguarding arrangements to protect children from all forms of exploitation and promotes their welfare. Recent training in county lines has been well received by staff, who state that it has improved their knowledge and practice and, in turn, helps them to identify signs that young people could be at risk.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers have an ambitious vision for the home and the young people. Although new in post, the manager and deputy have plans to develop the home into a place where the young people are at the centre of everything that they do. The manager and deputy are supported by a staff team with a wide range of skills and abilities who share their vision and commitment toward the young people.

Leaders and managers have a good understanding of the progress that young people are making, which starts with a baseline assessment developed through the evidence gathered at the referral stage. The manager and deputy spend time with the young people daily. This ensures that they have a clear understanding of the young people's needs.

A great deal of time is spent in handovers, team meetings and supervisions discussing individual young people and their plans. This means that all staff are providing consistent support to young people, and this will assist them in achieving their goals.

Feedback from other professionals is clear about the positive impact that the staff team's efforts are having on progress for young people. The manager and staff have developed good working relationships with other agencies to ensure that young people continue to develop and are kept safe. Communication between the home and

other professionals is good, however the manager does not always notify serious events to the relevant parties. Although young people are kept safe, this limits the effectiveness of external scrutiny.

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 difference 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: 1159884

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider: Spark of Genius North East LLP

Registered provider address: King Edwin School, Mill Lane, Stockton-on-Tees, Cleveland TS20 1LG

Responsible individual: Zak McIlhargey

Registered manager: Post vacant

Inspector

Mark Proffitt, social care inspector

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Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
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