

1243962

Registered provider:

Interim inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This home provides short-break placements for children who have severe learning disabilities and/or associated complex needs. The service provides overnight short-break care for up to six children at a time.

The home is operated by a combined healthcare NHS trust. The manager was registered with Ofsted in November 2017 and has a level 5 diploma in leadership and management for residential childcare.

Inspection date: 4 March 2020

Date of last inspection: 24 June 2019

Judgement at last inspection: Good

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 the interim inspection, Ofsted judges that it has improved effectiveness.

Young people continue to enjoy their short breaks and make good progress. The registered manager has continued to develop and improve the quality of young people's experiences and care. For example, staff provide additional sensory activities and tools that help young people communicate. As a result, young people settle and enjoy their short breaks. They develop their personal care and communication skills in a safe and enjoyable environment.

Detailed and well-planned introductions set the foundations for young people's progress. The registered manager carefully evaluates the needs and personality of each young person. She uses this information to ensure that there is an appropriate mix of young people and staff. In addition, the registered manager has improved staff communication with key partner agencies. For example, staff now complete regular school visits to gather key information and agree joint targets. This consistent and collaborative approach helps young people to make progress.

The inspector observed nurturing and supportive relationships between staff and young people. The registered manager consults families and social workers in all aspects of young people's care. This inclusive approach helps to maintain and enhance young people's routines and progress.

Young people are safe during their short breaks. There have been no significant events of concern since the last inspection. Incidents of restraint are rare. When they do occur, minimal staff interventions help to redirect young people from risk. There have been no official complaints since the last inspection. However, the registered manager worked effectively with a family when they raised concerns about their young person's care and progress. This matter was robustly addressed and reviewed to the satisfaction of all parties. In addition, the registered manager has supported staff to improve their understanding of safeguarding procedures. In particular, staff now demonstrate strong knowledge about the role of the local area designated officer.

The ambitious and determined registered manager has continued to develop the service. She has worked hard to meet the requirements and recommendations from the last inspection. For example, staff benefit from having better access to training. The registered manager has worked with leaders to improve staff recruitment processes.

The organisation is continuing to support staff to achieve the level 3 diploma in residential childcare.

The inspection identified some minor shortfalls. For example, some young people's files contain out-of-date review minutes and education, health and care plans. Staff supervisions do not always provide the staff with opportunities to discuss young people's needs or progress. Some parts of the home environment can appear clinical.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
24/06/2019	Full	Good
28/02/2019	Interim	Improved effectiveness
15/05/2018	Full	Requires improvement to be 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
The registered person must ensure that any individual who works in the home in a care role has achieved the appropriate qualification by the relevant date. The relevant date is, in the case of an individual who starts working in a care role in a home after 1st April 2014, the date which falls 2 years after the date on which the individual started working in a care role in a home; or in the case of an individual who was working in a care role in a home on 1st April 2014, 1st April 2016. (Regulation 32(5)(a)(b))	27/04/2020

Recommendations

- The registered person must have systems in place so that all staff, including the manager, receive supervision of their practice from an appropriately qualified and experienced professional, which allows them to reflect on their practice and the needs of the children assigned to their care ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 61, paragraph 13.2). In particular, ensure that staff supervision consistently records the progress of children.
- 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 legislations (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)
- Regulations 35–39 detail the records that must be kept in children's homes. All children's case records (regulation 36) must be kept up to date and stored securely whilst they remain in the home ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.2). In particular, ensure that young people's files contain up-to-date key documents and records. In addition, ensure that young people's plans consistently capture their progress.

Information about this inspection

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.

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people, 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: 1243962

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: North Staffordshire Combined Healthcare NHS Trust, Lawton House, Bellringer Road, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 8HH

Responsible individual: Alastair Forrester

Registered manager: Tracey Flanagan

Inspector

Gareth Leckey, Social Care Inspector

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