

SC037986

Bracknell Forest Borough Council

Monitoring visit

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

The home provides day care and residential short breaks for five children and young people with learning disabilities. It is owned and managed by a local authority.

The manager has been registered with Ofsted since 28 June 2007.

Inspection date: 21 January 2021

This monitoring visit

The home was judged as outstanding at the full inspection on 1 October 2019. This visit took place virtually due to COVID-19 (coronavirus) restrictions. The visit was conducted because of the length of time since the last inspection and because of concerns about children moving to the home on an emergency basis. The concerns relate to the potential disruptive effect on the children that regularly use the short-break service. A response to Ofsted's social care 2020 survey raised a similar concern about children with challenging behaviour having an impact on the children with complex health needs.

This visit focused on how the provider has addressed the recommendations made at the previous inspection.

Children enjoy excellent care during their short breaks and some have been accessing the service over many years. Since the last inspection, two children have stayed at the home as a response to an emergency need for a short-term placement. This was due to safeguarding concerns and a lack of available placements, exacerbated because of COVID-19. This impacted on the availability of short-break stays for some of the children and, on occasion, the staffing capacity.

The registered manager is satisfied that the home can respond effectively to the children's assessed needs. She thoroughly considers the impact that the emergency placements would have on the existing group of children. Dedicated staff respond

flexibly. On occasion, when there are gaps in staffing, leaders utilise staff from within the local authority health and social care workforce who know the children.

Decisions made by leaders are made in line with the home's statement of purpose. The registered manager and responsible individual are conscientious in pre-placement planning and assessment of the children's needs. All decisions are informed by a rigorous evaluation of the individual child's needs and kept under regular review. The strong working relationships between the staff of the home and the local authority ensured that there were positive outcomes for the two children who temporarily stayed at the home.

The registered manager has developed an effective group impact assessment to consider the suitability of children referred to the home. She identifies which group of children would be the best match, considering the child's ability and level of need. As a result, children are well matched, with opportunities to socialise and have fun with other children to support their personal development.

The registered manager has addressed the recommendations made at the last inspection. Improved measures when staff are recruited ensure that any gaps in an applicant's work history are clearly identified and accounted for.

The registered manager seeks varied learning opportunities to develop the staff's safeguarding knowledge, for example by reviewing and sharing learning from published serious case reviews at team meetings. This ensures that there is an ongoing development and strengthening of the team's skills. Established multi-agency relationships help the staff to provide holistic, child-centred care.

Joined-up risk assessments and behaviour management plans help to ensure that risks are minimised. Staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities about keeping the children safe.

Staff provide a range of stimulating activities, including a play tuck shop, messy play and a sensory room for children to relax in. A family support worker said that while children experience fun and play, activities are carefully focused on helping the children develop and gain greater independence.

The well-established staff team ensures that the children receive high-quality and individualised care. Staff provide care that considers the needs of the children's ethnicity and culture. However, in some of the children's care plans, information on the children's identity and cultural needs is limited. The lack of information on culture and heritage undermines the staff's ability to ensure that the children develop a positive sense of their identity.

The staff work closely with families and professionals. They actively seek their views and share strategies to enable consistency between home, school and the short-break setting. Feedback from professionals describes children as being happy and enjoying their stays at the home. Staff morale is strong in the home and all the

children are receiving their full short-break care package. This is a testament to the staff's and leader's commitment to the children and their families.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
30/09/2019	Full	Outstanding
11/12/2018	Full	Outstanding
14/03/2018	Full	Outstanding
05/12/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness

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

Recommendations

- The registered person should ensure that care is provided which meets each child's needs and promotes their welfare, taking into account of the child's gender, religion, ethnicity, cultural and linguistic background and sexual identity. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 14, paragraph 3.2)

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this visit was to monitor the action taken and the progress made by the children's home since its last Ofsted inspection.

This inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000.

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

Inspectors

Anne-Marie Davies, Social Care Inspector
Helen Simmons, Social Care Inspector

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