

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC059782
Inspector	Sharon Lewis
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Children's home

Registered manager	Joeline Kerry Wright
Date of last inspection	06/08/2014

Inspection date	09/02/2015
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Previous inspection	good
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

This home was judged good at the last full inspection. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge that it has **improved effectiveness**.

This unannounced interim inspection evaluates the progress and experiences of children since the last inspection. Children are thriving within a home which has improved in effectiveness. Consistent care, stability and encouragement contribute to children's improved outcomes. The organisation innovatively responds to children's needs and is constantly adapting to provide a high quality service. The only recommendation is being made to further improve good practice. This relates to consistently recording the action staff take following each resident meeting. There were a few occasions where staff had not noted down the responses to children's requests.

Children live within a home which earnestly endeavours to comply with regulations and recommendations. The two requirements and one recommendation have been robustly addressed. The statement of purpose now includes all information required from the amended regulations. Children and involved parties benefit from greater clarity regarding the home, staffing and working practices. Children receive greater protection from the missing child policy, which has been approved by the local authority and police. Children have greater influence in staff recruitment, having devised a question which is now used in all interviews.

Children's personal development goes from strength to strength. Involved parties highlight that children are 'a lot calmer and they are 'very impressed' with the progress made within 'such a short time'. Children are more communicative, they have an increased vocabulary and greater social skills. Children are more independent and more continent. They have a marked increase in their life skills and take more responsibility for their personal care, cooking and cleaning their rooms. Children learn the importance of personal safety and have sessions on stranger awareness, fire evacuation, road safety, food hygiene and environmental risks. Children's review reports highlight that they continue 'to make good progress'.

Meaningful, personalised key work sessions further contribute to their personal growth.

Children are learning the importance of socially acceptable behaviour. There is a decrease in challenging behavioural incidents and fewer sanctions. Children respond positively to the reward system and receive specific commendation during their house meetings. Children also receive external recognition from their schools and certificates from external organisations. Staff recognise the reasons why children may 'act out' and they aim to provide children with constant reassurance. Children have a feelings tree in the activity room where they can write down their emotions. Children also highlight that they express their thoughts creatively through painting and song writing.

Children positively contribute to their community and wider national and international issues. They collect monies for charities, donate unwanted items and hold cake sales. They also plan to undertake a car boot sale to raise further funds for good causes. Children also benefit from donations from charities, resulting in the purchasing of music decks, home entertainment and play equipment.

Children engage in life enriching activities, giving them a chance to socialise with others, learn new skills and have new experiences. They enjoy going swimming, trampolining, attending youth clubs, theme parks, activity centres, museums, car racing and extensive trips to surrounding areas. Children celebrate their birthdays and a range of festivals. A recent example was Christmas, where they attended a pantomime, a bazaar, Christmas attractions in Central London and Santa's grotto. Children also learn the importance of historical issues such as visiting the poppy display at the Tower of London. They continue to celebrate diverse cultures through their world food parties; a recent example was Chinese cuisine.

The home is undergoing a refurbishment programme to provide a more comfortable, pleasant living environment. Children influence the colour schemes, purchasing of new furniture and soft furnishings. Children benefit from the internal redecoration, new flooring, matching new cushions and curtains in the lounge, new bedding and home accessories. Children continue to personalise their bedrooms to reflect their interests, preferences and needs; this includes purchasing larger, sturdier beds. Art work and photographs of children and staff contribute to the warm, homely atmosphere.

Children benefit from excellent continuity of care. The organisation has recently opened another children's home for older young people. This will mean children will be able to transfer to this setting, if appropriate. The home is also now able to provide vocational education through a curriculum development organisation and awarding body. This is an extremely valuable resource for children not in school. Children are able to go and study in the library and engage in learning out in the community.

The home continues to work in partnership with placing authorities, educational establishments, the police and parents. Children, parents and involved parties benefit from the improved website. This is interactive and concisely describes the organisation and the services. The website also includes a link to the Ofsted website. Children benefit from an independent Regulation 33 visitor who is a highly qualified nursing professional. This individual specialises in paediatric nursing and brings recognised clinical and managerial oversight to their quality assurance role.

Children receive support from an organisation which also cares about their staff team. The company finances Christmas parties and regular team building events for staff. Staff benefit from ongoing training and the opportunity to pursue their individual interests. An example of the latter is a health and safety course and cognitive behavioural therapy training. Staff describe the manager as 'brilliant'. Staff morale is high and they appreciate that they work for an organisation, which they feel is 'very forward thinking'.

Information about this children's home

The home is owned and managed by a private company. Care and accommodation is provided for up to six children with learning disabilities.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
06/08/2014	Full	good
17/01/2014	Interim	good progress
23/07/2013	Full	good
09/01/2013	Interim	satisfactory progress

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

Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further the service should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- consistently evidence how children's wishes are acted upon. (NMS1.1)

What inspection judgements mean

At the interim inspections we make a judgement on whether the home has improved in effectiveness, sustained effectiveness, or declined in effectiveness since the previous full inspection. This is in line with the *Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection*.

Information about this inspection

The purpose of this inspection is to assure children and young people, parents, the public, local authorities and government of the quality and standard of the service provided. The inspection was carried out under the Care Standards Act 2000 to assess the effectiveness of the service and to consider how well it complies with the relevant regulations and meets the national minimum standards.

The report details the main strengths, any areas for improvement, including any breaches of regulation, and any failure to meet national minimum standards. The judgements included in the report are made against the framework of inspection for children's homes.