

SC472374

Registered provider: Middlesbrough Borough Council

Full inspection

Inspected under the social care common inspection framework

Information about this children's home

This children's home is owned and run by a local authority. It is registered to provide care and accommodation for up to four children and young people who may have physical disabilities and/or learning disabilities. The qualified and experienced manager has been registered with Ofsted since July 2019.

Inspection dates: 1 to 2 October 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: 20 March 2019

Overall judgement at last inspection: not judged

Enforcement action since last inspection: none

Recent inspection history

| Inspection date | Inspection type | Inspection judgement |
|-----------------|-----------------|---------------------------------|
| 20/03/2019 | Interim | Not judged |
| 05/02/2019 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |
| 20/02/2018 | Full | Requires improvement to be good |
| 21/02/2017 | Interim | Improved effectiveness |

Inspection judgements

Overall experiences and progress of children and young people: good

Children moved into this home very recently. Generally, they have settled and are increasingly happy. When children take longer to become familiar with the home, members of staff use a range of strategies to help them. This includes seeking advice from family members and former carers. As a result, children are responding well to the care being provided to them.

Members of staff use creative ways of engaging with children in their care. They are learning to understand the needs, wishes and feelings of children with significant communication difficulties. This means the care they are providing, including personal care, is sensitively attuned to individual children.

Children move into this home as a result of detailed preparation. Planning is specific according to the needs of each child. Where members of staff need additional training, for example to help with communication, this is arranged quickly. Because of this approach, children move into the home when it is right for them and for children already living there.

Children take part in a wide range of activities. These include trips out, playing in the garden and going shopping. These activities provide children with enjoyable experiences. They also enhance their social skills and promote positive relationships with their carers.

Children are physically healthy. They attend a range of routine appointments, including going to the dentist. Members of staff plan such trips very carefully. They ensure that children are as well prepared as possible. For some children, this has been a significant achievement.

Members of staff work closely with professionals who are experts in understanding the needs of the children with learning and communication difficulties. Because of this input, members of staff are improving their skills and knowledge. They are providing the care that each child needs.

Children live in a home that has been refurbished to a very high standard. Children's bedrooms are personalised according to their wishes. Some family members helped with the decoration. Communal areas are homely, while also meeting children's needs. Children are living in a home that is not institutionalised and does not look any different to other houses in the area.

Members of staff have developed positive relationships with family members. They are welcomed into the home and their views are regularly sought. Children see that their families trust members of staff. This helps children to feel settled and to have confidence in their carers.

Children give their views about how the home is run. When children are able to engage in young people's meetings, these take place. This forum gives children a sense that their views are important and that they have a right to influence their worlds.

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

Members of staff use individualised strategies to help manage children's behaviour. They are learning when children are likely to become frustrated or upset. They put in place plans to reduce the likelihood of difficulties escalating. Because of this approach, the number of incidents when staff find children's behaviour challenging is reducing.

Members of staff have undertaken a wide range of training on working with children whose behaviour challenges. Physical restraint of children is used as a last resort. When members of staff do intervene physically, they follow procedure and record what happened in line with policy. The number of restraints is reducing, which is positive for the children.

Members of staff prepare detailed safety plans that are specific to the needs of each child. Plans are reviewed regularly. Because of this approach, members of staff know the up-to-date arrangements for working with children, including any risks children might face.

Members of staff use their positive relationships with children to provide consistent care. There are enough staff to ensure that each child is always well looked after. This means that children are safe in their home and in the community, with the level of staff support they need.

The effectiveness of leaders and managers: good

Leaders and managers are skilled, passionate and committed to providing the very best care for children. Family members and professionals are very positive about the way in which managers involve them in the development of the home. Managers are excellent role models to members of staff and to the children.

The quality of planning that went into the development of the home was excellent. Managers ensured that they covered all pertinent areas, including staffing, training and health and safety. As a result, children have moved into a home where staff have the skills and resources to meet their needs to a good standard.

The registered manager understands the progress that children make. Review and monitoring systems are very good. Managers address any concerns about the well-being of children or about staff practice. These systems mean that children have the best opportunity to maintain and improve their progress.

Managers support the staff team. They recognise that some members of staff struggled with the challenges that children present. In response, managers provided additional

training. This has increased staff knowledge and skills. As a result, members of staff report that they feel supported and are becoming more confident in their roles.

Supervision and recruitment processes ensure that children are safeguarded. Managers supervise members of staff regularly. Issues of performance are dealt with competently. Staff are encouraged to be self-reflective. This approach means that staff feel valued by their managers and poor practice does not develop.

Managers are passionate about their vision for the home. In particular, they want to improve the opportunities for children to provide their wishes and feelings. This includes those with the most complex needs.

Managers respond well to the external monitoring of the home. They are open and honest in discussions about its operation and development. Managers value this input and they complete identified tasks quickly.

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: SC472374

Provision sub-type: Children's home

Registered provider address: Middlesbrough Borough Council, PO Box 99,
Middlesbrough TS1 2QQ

Responsible individual: Paul Rudd

Registered manager: Robert Hamer

Inspector

Jane Titley: social care inspector

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