

Inspection report for children's home

Unique reference number	SC020558
Inspector	Anne Daly
Type of inspection	Interim
Provision subtype	Residential special school (>295 days/year)

Registered manager	Jackie Davenport
Date of last inspection	13/11/2014

Inspection date	03/02/2015
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Previous inspection	outstanding
Enforcement action since last inspection	none

This inspection

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

This home was judged outstanding at the last full inspection in November 2014. At this interim inspection Ofsted judge has sustained effectiveness.

Children and young people continue to have positive and stimulating experiences as a result of living at the home. They regularly take part in interesting and exciting activities both within the home and in the community. A group of young people recently recreated a Viking festival, building a Viking long boat, preparing Nordic food and culminated in a visit to the Yorvic Viking Centre in York. This experience promotes children and young people's confidence and self-esteem.

Children and young people continue to make significant progress in developing their life skills. They are supported to take on more responsibility for their own personal care, handling money, going food shopping and cooking. Staff know the children and young people and know how best to encourage achievement. As a result, young people are being prepared for their transition to independence.

Children and young people benefit from a stable and knowledgeable staff team. Parents and professionals have observed warm and meaningful relationships between staff, children and young people. As a result children and young people enjoy positive attachments, feel valued and safe. A parent commented, 'I know my child is happy here and they need that loving home environment'.

The home continues to be led by an experienced and committed Registered Manager. There is a stable and experienced leadership team who have a good and realistic understanding of the strengths and priorities for development to secure better outcomes for children and young people, including staff understanding of autism and transition to adult life.

Since the last inspection a clinical psychologist has been appointed to work alongside the staff team. This will enhance the staff's understanding of the complex needs of the children and young people. Staff have successfully used desensitization techniques to prepare young people for complex medical interventions. This enables the young people's health needs to be met without additional emotional trauma.

Children and young people live in a safe environment where they are protected from harm. Staff use excellent safeguarding practice to identify risk and protective measures to keep vulnerable children and young people safe.

Since the last inspection there has been a rise in the number of physical interventions used. All physical interventions are monitored and analysed by the Registered Manager who has a clear understanding of the reasons and has taken appropriate action to address this. As a result of this specialist assessments are undertaken to enable staff to work with young people in alternative ways. A professional commented on the skill and commitment demonstrated by the staff team facing exceptionally challenging behaviour.

Staff effectively communicate with children and young people to enable them to express their views in a meaningful way. Children and young people are enabled to understand why their behaviour may be unacceptable to others using photo stories and comic strip art.

Children and young people have access to independent advocates to ensure their views are listened to and acted upon. This enables children and young people to feel valued and actively contribute to their care plans.

Staff effectively work in a coordinated way with families and professionals to promote children and young people's welfare. Staff make excellent use of the expertise available from speech and language and occupational therapists to inform practice and support children and young people's plans.

A recommendation from the last inspection has been addressed. A recommendation has been made as a result of this inspection in respect of ensuring children live in a homely environment.

Information about this children's home

The privately owned school is registered as a children's home to accommodate 22 children and young people. The school provides education and care to children and young people who present with severe learning disabilities, challenging behaviours, autistic spectrum disorder and sensory impairment.

Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
13/11/2014	Full	outstanding
20/02/2014	Interim	good progress
20/11/2013	Full	outstanding
14/02/2013	Interim	good 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):

- ensure the home provides a comfortable and homely environment and is well maintained and decorated. Avoidable hazards are removed as is consistent with a domestic setting. Risk reduction does not lead to an institutional feel. (NMS 10.3)

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.