

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>07/11/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC462450</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>Satash Community Care Project Limited</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>25 Balham High Road, London SW12 9AL</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Thanaletchmi Loganathan</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Vyramuthu Loganathan</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Joanna Heller</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>07/11/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Sustained effectiveness</b>
<b>Enforcement action since last inspection</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>This inspection</b>	
<b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b>	<b>Good</b>
The children's home provides effective services that meet the requirements for good.	
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>

## SC462450

### Summary of findings

#### **The children's home provision is good because:**

- Good-quality care planning means that staff have a clear idea of children's individual needs and that they are equipped to meet these. As a result, the children receive individualised care, which has a positive impact on their lives.
- The children's well-being and progress are central to the service delivered. All children are making strong individual progress from their starting points.
- The children are constantly stimulated and encouraged to develop their communication skills. This helps them to develop their awareness of the world around them.
- The children feel safe, and their thoughts, wishes and feelings are constantly sought, however complex their needs.
- Equality and diversity are threaded through the service effectively, ensuring that children's needs are met.
- Staff changes are rare, facilitating placement stability and allowing children to develop positive relationships with staff.
- There is very good partnership working. The home is extremely highly thought of by families and partner professionals.
- The children benefit from a homely, well-equipped building, which meets their needs.
- The home is well managed. The manager has a clear overview of the strengths and areas for development in the home and is driving improvement.
- The manager has been asked to improve particular aspects of records management, staff recruitment and supervision practice. The shortfalls, however, do not detract from the good care and support that the children receive.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions which must be taken so that the registered person(s) meet(s) 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 only employ an individual to work at the children's home if the individual is mentally and physically fit for the purposes of the work that the individual is to perform, and full and satisfactory information is available in relation to the individual in respect of each of the matters in Schedule 2. In particular, they must ensure that references are verified and explore gaps in employment. (Regulation 32(3)(c)(d))	23/01/2017

### Recommendations

To improve the quality and standards of care further, the service should take account of the following recommendations:

- Put 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)
- Ensure that all children's case records (regulation 36) are kept up to date and stored securely while they remain in the home. In particular, ensure that the level of delegated authority is clearly documented. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.3)
- Review the appropriateness and suitability of the location and premises of the home at least once a year. The review should include the identification of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's location and strategies for managing these. Providers should refer to the non-statutory advice about the location assessment process. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 64, paragraph 15.1)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This children's home is run by a private company. The home is registered to provide a service for up to four children who have learning difficulties.

The small company offers a variety of support services to children who have learning disabilities. This children's home is one of a small number of services operating as part of the group.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
18/03/2016	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
30/11/2015	Full	Good
24/02/2015	Interim	Improved effectiveness
18/09/2014	Full	Good

## Inspection judgements

	Judgement grade
<p><b>The overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home are</b></p>	<p><b>Good</b></p>
<p>The children flourish in their long-term stable placements, and those who have short breaks look forward to their stays. The good management of individual routines helps children who have autism to feel safe and secure. Staff provide individualised care, which meets all of the children’s complex needs. As a result, they develop skills, and their emotional well-being improves. Parents and professionals refer to excellent levels of support. A parent said, ‘Intuitive care and support are provided unconditionally.’</p> <p>The children are unable to verbally articulate their emotions and anxieties. Thus, the positive relationships that they develop with staff are crucial. They enjoy the company of staff, as is demonstrated by children pulling staff by the hand to show them things and rushing up for cuddles when coming in from school. One parent described their child’s joy when he realises that it is time for their short break stay. They said, ‘He loves going. When he sees the photos of the home to tell him what’s happening, his face lights up.’</p> <p>All of the children make personally significant progress in their communication, independence, behaviour and social skills. For some, the progress is particularly significant. One child’s teacher said, ‘The strategies in place are amazing. They are helping her with all her skills. They have helped her move from being a solitary child fed by spoon, to somebody who is now able to sit at the table with others and feed herself. Amazing.’</p> <p>Communication regimes are in place and are being effectively used. Information technology is utilised to assist communication and provides a sensory overlay of verbal information. This helps staff to seek children’s thoughts, wishes and feelings, and helps to minimise children’s distress. It also allows staff to gain a greater insight into some children’s special interests and to unlock previously unknown abilities.</p> <p>Effective care planning guides staff in how to meet the individual children’s complex needs. The format of the plan has recently changed to a more child-centred approach, in which children are actively involved. For example, the children are involved in setting targets for their own achievement and choosing pictures for their ‘person-centred plan’. The staff get to know the children really well. One social worker said, ‘The key worker is really becoming an expert on the child.’ This knowledge is key to helping staff to plan and to preventing everyday situations. One professional commented, ‘Staff are very good with autistic children. They are doing a terrific job.’ Another said, ‘They recognised very quickly that she had abilities and have been promoting her capability. As a result, it has been identified</p>	

that her abilities are much greater than had previously been thought.'

The staff and the manager work well in partnership with families and partner professionals to improve the experiences of the children and, on occasion, challenging other agencies. Such effective partnership work with families promotes contact and ensures, when appropriate, that they remain key figures in their child's day-to-day life.

Equality and diversity are threaded through the service. Staff have very specific guidance with respect to cultural needs. For example, there are photos of one child's favourite halal dish available in a particular shop, to aid staff to purchase exactly the right dish. They have supported the celebration of Eid, have installed cultural 'apps' on a child's tablet computer, and regularly read the children's Koran to the child.

The children benefit from close partnerships with schools, which enable effective sharing of strategies. As a result, one child is now beginning to eat and drink during the school day, for the first time in the whole of their school life. The children experience fun activities, such as cinema, bowling, walks and swimming. Staff are mindful that the journey is as important as the end activity for some children. They are meticulous in their planning to ensure that trips meet the child's special interests, for example, undertaking internet research with the child prior to a visit to the museum to look at crystals. All of these opportunities broaden children's experiences and promote their learning and development. Photographs in personalised events books help children to share experiences, such as outings and the summer holiday at Butlin's.

Admission to and transitions from the home into adult services are well planned by the home. This is in partnership with the children, their families and placing authorities. For example, one child over several months has mixed with older peers in the organisation's adult services. This has allowed the child to develop key peer relationships and familiarity with the staff. Thus, when the time came for them to move on, it was a positive experience, and they quickly settled and now enjoy more time with their friends.

The children benefit from an environment, which is suitably adapted and equipped to meet their needs.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	<b>Good</b>

Safeguarding is at the core of staff practice. There have been no safeguarding concerns in the past year. Staff are aware of the vulnerabilities of children who have disabilities. They are conversant with the home's safeguarding and whistleblowing procedures and know what to do, should they have any concern regarding a child's well-being.

The children feel safe, secure and well cared for. This is demonstrated in the way in which they respond to and choose to spend time with staff or their faces light up when coming for their short breaks. The staff ensure that the routines that children have in place reflect their individual needs and are consistently implemented, and this helps to reduce any anxieties.

Families and professionals have absolute confidence that the service effectively safeguards the children. One parent described how the staff's sensitive approach had given them the confidence to allow their child to have a short break. They said, 'They really adore the children. I can totally trust them.' One professional said, 'I wouldn't want her to be anywhere else.'

Comprehensive risk assessments are regularly updated. This ensures that risks are identified and well managed. Staff are successful in balancing risks while continuing to promote children's development. Behaviour management is appropriate and responsive to each child's needs, as detailed in their individual behaviour support plans. Due to the positive approach of staff, there has been only one incident of physical restraint in over a year. Staff recognise behaviour as a means of communication. They encourage children who are distressed to use symbols, signs and tablet computers to communicate what is making them unhappy. As a result, children make demonstrable progress in their behaviour. One social worker said, 'She has moved on so much from a couple years ago when she was quite violent, to being a settled and happy child.'

Staff vetting procedures are generally sound but require better-documented investigation to ensure that children are fully safeguarded from unsuitable people gaining employment. For example, there was no documented evidence to show that gaps in one staff member's employment history had been explored and a reference for another, from their previous employer, had not been verified. The manager ensures, however, that no staff are employed until criminal record checks and verification of identity have been completed.

Good staffing levels and appropriate security measures prevent children from leaving the home or accessing dangerous areas without essential staff support. The home has been transparent in its use of these measures, which have been agreed with children's families and placing authorities.

The building is suitable to meet the needs of the children. Health and safety arrangements are well managed, and regular servicing of equipment and suitable fire prevention measures are in place. The manager has undertaken a review of the appropriateness and suitability of the location of the home, which identifies low risks in relation to criminal activity in the community. However, there are limited information and evaluation of any risks and opportunities presented by the home's

location, and the strategies for managing these. This has no impact on the current children, as they have been able to maintain and access the support services that they currently need and are fully supervised outside of the home.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	<b>Good</b>
<p>The manager has managed the home since registration and provides consistent, good-quality leadership. He is suitably professionally qualified and has many years' experience of working with children and adults who have learning disabilities. The home is well resourced to meet the services outlined in the home's statement of purpose. The new trainee deputy manager has been recruited to support the manager in ensuring the effective operation of the home.</p> <p>Staff are enthusiastic and committed to their jobs. They are well thought of by the children, families and professionals alike. One parent said, 'They do look after them beautifully.' Comments from professionals included, 'I have been really impressed by the care and support they have offered. I am full of praise for the placement.'</p> <p>The staff are individually committed to delivering good individualised care and to building positive relationships with the children. The needs of the children are consistently prioritised, and staff effectively advocate on their behalf. As a result, the children all make good progress from their starting points. Improved systems to monitor children's progress have recently been introduced, which chart each child's individual targets and development.</p> <p>All staff receive effective induction and training, which equip them to carry out their roles. All staff who have been working with children in a children's home for over two years have completed their level 3 diploma and all remaining staff have been enrolled for this.</p> <p>The staffing arrangements meet the individually assessed needs of each child. Staff changes are rare, and staffing levels are high. Staff feel well supported. However, formal individual supervision arrangements for both staff and manager are not sufficiently frequent. For example, one new member of staff has received only one formal supervision in the past two months, and the manager's last professional supervision was seven months ago.</p> <p>Recording systems in the home are generally sound. However, key documentation regarding delegated authority was not contained in one child's file. This potentially inhibits clarity in understanding what tasks can be undertaken by staff in the home,</p>	

such as the administration of medication. It is essential that children's records are maintained to a good standard to ensure that their care needs can be consistently and effectively met.

The home works well in partnership with other professionals and parents. This ensures that children's needs remain at the centre of the support given. The home has received a lot of positive feedback from families and partner professionals. When comments for improvement are received, the manager uses this to develop the service. No significant incidents have occurred. Monitoring systems have improved within the last twelve months, enhancing the manager's awareness of the strengths and areas for growth in the service.

The manager has successfully addressed the requirements and most recommendations from the last inspection. While one requirement and some recommendations have been made at this inspection, these do not significantly impact on the very positive experiences of children living at the home.

## What the inspection judgements mean

The experiences and progress of children and young people are at the centre of the inspection. Inspectors will use their professional judgement to determine the weight and significance of their findings in this respect. The judgements included in the report are made against 'Inspection of children's homes: framework for inspection'.

An **outstanding** children's home provides highly effective services that contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help and protection and care. Their progress exceeds expectations and is sustained over time.

A **good** children's home provides effective services that help, protect and care for children and young people and have their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

In a children's home that **requires improvement**, there are no widespread or serious failures that create or leave children being harmed or at risk of harm. The welfare of children looked after is safeguarded and promoted. Minimum requirements are in place. However, the children's home is not yet delivering good protection, help and care for children and young people.

A children's home that is **inadequate** is providing services where there are widespread or serious failures that create or leave children and young people being harmed or at risk of harm or that result in children looked after not having their welfare safeguarded and promoted.

## **Information about this inspection**

Inspectors have looked closely at the experiences and progress of children and young people living in the children's home. Inspectors considered the quality of work and the difference that adults make to the lives of children and young people. They read case files, watched how professional staff work with children, young people and each other and discussed the effectiveness of help and care given to children and young people. Wherever possible, they talked to children, 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.

This 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 Children's Homes (England) Regulations 2015 and the 'Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards'.

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