

Children's homes – Monitoring visit

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Type of inspection	Monitoring
Inspector	Amanda Maxwell

This monitoring visit:

This monitoring visit was completed following the previous interim inspection when the home was judged to have declined effectiveness.

Leaders and managers have worked effectively to address the requirements and recommendations set at the previous inspection. The impact of these changes has been significant; young people have made progress and positive outcomes are evident. The requirements and recommendations set have all been met and implemented.

On this visit the inspectors looked at: how and what staff do to safeguard young people; behaviour management policies and records; the effectiveness of leaders and managers; care planning; risk assessments; and staff recruitment processes.

Inspectors met with young people, the registered manager, responsible individual and some staff.

How the home safeguards young people

Managers have reviewed their policy and procedures for acting on any identified concerns. They have updated staff knowledge and understanding regarding the home's policy and procedure for safeguarding when a concern arises. Specifically, they have reviewed the home's procedure following a bruise or mark on a young person being noted. A new recording system has been implemented and there is clarity regarding staff roles and responsibilities following a concern being raised.

Body maps viewed were clear about what type of mark had been noted and its location. All documents are now forwarded to the designated safeguarding lead in the home for review and consideration for required next steps.

Safeguarding processes are more robust, with staff providing insight and rationale for marks and bruises. Those without a clear explanation are referred on to others for further review and investigation.

Staff record action and timescales with records evidencing actions and outcomes from instigation through to outcome. The records do not detail when actions have been completed. They have implemented prompt sheets to ensure that all aspects of policy and procedure are complied with.

Staff have completed reviews with stakeholders following concerns, and this ensures that the team around the young person is fully engaged and involved in the assessment and review of care plans. This, in turn, ensures that staff's and others' actions are consistent and well-focused.

Leaders and managers have referred concerns to other agencies and have challenged when they have deemed that decisions made have not explored or considered risk.

Behaviour management policies and records

Staff have reviewed and changed the recording systems for incidents and

occurrences of physical intervention. They have explored and reviewed why they review each incident and the benefits of this.

Staff follow detailed behaviour support plans, which inform staff how to support a young person, what strategies and de-escalation methods to attempt and, if required, how to support a young person when in crisis. Records now provide high levels of detail about what occurred before, during and following an incident.

The therapy service has developed effective communication tools for staff to use with young people, to enable them to engage in debriefing and to explore their views and feelings about the intervention used. This has provided some essential information and insight for staff, who have improved their reviews of behaviour support plans through this insight.

Staff are also offered a debrief, allowing them the opportunity to reflect on their practice and interventions to support young people as well as an opportunity to reflect on the personal impact of supporting a young person in crisis.

All records which highlight an injury to a young person sustained during a physical intervention are referred on, and assistance and action are sought. Records now detail the action offered to support young people.

Effectiveness of leaders and managers

Leaders and managers have embraced and acted on the requirements and recommendations which were set at the previous inspection. They have formulated actions plans which evidence that targets set have swiftly been addressed and acted on. They have completed regular reviews and updated plans with clear targets and timescales to achieve them. Leaders and managers have fully explored what is needed to improve the quality of care provided in the home. Following this, they have focused on the ethos and culture in the home. The development plan includes actions to improve the homely feel to the residential settings. Leaders and managers have developed a broad strategic view, exploring all staff practice and impact on the quality of care provided in the home. Systems and processes for monitoring have improved with regular scrutiny, evaluation and oversight of records and reports in the home.

The responsible individual has completed work to improve her knowledge and understanding of regulation. The impact of this is apparent in the influence she has had in the home and the changes which have been made.

Care planning

Staff have reviewed and updated assessments and care plans with good focus on known risk factors and needs. Newly formulated plans are very detailed and provide practical guidance and strategies, which support staff to meet need and minimise risk. Plans are regularly reviewed.

Monitoring and surveillance

Managers have made formal requests to placing authorities to gain consents for

the use of surveillance equipment. They have been successful in gaining some of these, with robust next steps being implemented to ensure that they gain these from all placing authorities and required parties. They have ensured that these will be routinely sought at placement or when first needed in the future.

Staff recruitment

A review and audit of personnel files has been completed, which identified areas of weakness. Managers have acted on this and ensured that personnel records now meet the required standard. New systems have been implemented which follow safer recruitment process. Personnel files viewed met the required standard.

Independent person

Leaders and managers have sourced a new independent visitor for the home, who has visited the home on two occasions. The full impact of their visits is still emerging, due to their need to develop knowledge and understanding of the service and to develop relationships with young people to encourage them to engage with the visitor.

Conclusion

- Systems and procedures to safeguard young people are robust and effective. Staff are aware of their responsibilities and required actions to follow if and when the need arises. Designated safeguarding officers act on the concerns raised, and report and refer all matters as required. Records evidence instigation through to outcome, with clear actions identified.
- Detailed behaviour support plans provide strategies for staff to follow which meet young people's needs. Records provide evidence of staff offering young people and staff the opportunity to debrief and review the incident or physical restraint. A wide variety of communication systems are being used to support young people to share their views and engage in the process.
- Leaders and managers have evidenced a proactive response to findings from the previous inspection. The detailed and effective action plan addresses all of the findings. It also highlights new areas that they wish to improve and develop.
- The findings at this visit have been very positive, with a real shift in culture and ethos. All managers and staff have identified that roles and responsibilities, specifically for safeguarding matters, were not clear and that the changes now made have had a significant positive impact on how concerns are addressed.

Information about this children's home

This service is a residential special school, registered as a children's home to care for up to 40 children. It is owned by a charity, which also has other services within the grounds. The home is registered for children who have learning disabilities, including children who have autistic spectrum disorder and those who have communication and interaction difficulties. The accommodation is provided in seven separate areas over the site.

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.

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