

## Children's homes inspection – Full

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>06/09/2016</b>
<b>Unique reference number</b>	<b>SC037327</b>
<b>Type of inspection</b>	<b>Full</b>
<b>Provision subtype</b>	<b>Children's home</b>
<b>Registered provider</b>	<b>The Caldecott Organisation</b>
<b>Registered provider address</b>	<b>Caldecott House, Smeeth, Ashford TN25 6SP</b>

<b>Responsible individual</b>	<b>Nicholas Barnett</b>
<b>Registered manager</b>	<b>Trudie Boorman</b>
<b>Inspector</b>	<b>Paul Taylor</b>

<b>Inspection date</b>	<b>06/09/2016</b>
<b>Previous inspection judgement</b>	<b>Improved 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>Outstanding</b>
The children's home provides highly effective services that consistently exceed the standards of good. The actions of the home contribute to significantly improved outcomes for children and young people who need help, protection and care.	
<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>Outstanding</b>

**SC037327**

## **Summary of findings**

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

- Young people form excellent attachments with staff over a number of years. This lays the foundation for young people to learn to trust the adults who care for them and to develop meaningful relationships.
- Careful consideration of new admissions has led to stability for the young people in the home. This has been key in enabling them to make substantial progress.
- Innovative questionnaires given to professionals at meetings about young people ensure that they have insight, knowledge and an understanding of the young people whom they are discussing.
- Detailed care plans outline how each young person's unique needs are to be met. These are followed closely, reviewed frequently and adapted according to changing circumstances.
- Members of staff ensure that all healthcare needs are very well met, and that emotional support for young people is of a particularly high standard.
- Young people have access to a wide range of enriching activities, which develop their confidence and social skills and widen their friendship circles.
- Clear safeguarding arrangements mean that staff are aware of what steps they need to take in order to ensure that young people are kept safe. These are followed and implemented effectively.
- Young people have succeeded extremely well academically, especially considering their starting points, and all now have full-time education placements.
- There is highly effective communication with external professionals and other stakeholders, which ensures collaborative working to promote young people's well-being and progress.
- The staff team members work closely together and show great insight and commitment to ensure that they meet young people's specific needs and understand their vulnerabilities.
- Management of the home is excellent. Close and cohesive working between the registered manager, responsible individual and senior members of staff ensures that care is scrutinised closely and that high standards are expected and achieved.

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

### Statutory requirements

This section sets out the actions that must be taken so that the registered persons meet 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 persons must comply within the given timescales.

<b>Requirement</b>	<b>Due date</b>
The registered person must ensure that within 24 hours of the use of a measure of control, discipline or restraint in relation to a child in the home, a record is made which includes a description of the measure and its duration. Regulation 35(3)(a)(iv)	9/10/2016

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

### **Recommendations**

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

- Staff should be familiar with the home's policies on record-keeping and understand the importance of careful, objective and clear recording. In particular, the registered manager should keep a record of all contacts with placing authorities and of how they are implementing decisions made at reviews. ('Guide to the children's homes regulations including the quality standards', page 62, paragraph 14.4)

## Full report

### Information about this children's home

This service is a children's home providing care and accommodation for up to eight children who have emotional and behavioural difficulties. The home is run by a registered charity.

### Recent inspection history

Inspection date	Inspection type	Inspection judgement
28/01/2016	Interim	Improved effectiveness
26/08/2015	Full	Good
02/02/2015	Interim	Sustained effectiveness
09/07/2014	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>Outstanding</p>
<p>The home provides stability, consistency and safety, which enables young people to learn to trust the adults who care for them. As a result, they develop healthy attachments. Members of staff know the young people exceedingly well and understand their anxieties, fears, hopes and aspirations. Consequently, they have a deep understanding of why young people behave the way they do and know how to support and nurture them.</p> <p>As a result of the personalised care they receive, young people have made significant progress in their development, self-esteem and achievements, both socially and educationally. For example, all the young people now have places in full-time education. This is the first time in a number of years for some of the young people. All the young people have managed to increase their educational attainments, which is excellent, bearing in mind their troubled histories and starting points.</p> <p>All the young people have gained the confidence to attend clubs in the community. This is the result of sensitive and well-planned support from members of staff who have paced the transitions to these activities at a rate that the young people can understand and cope with.</p> <p>Staff give careful attention to young people's needs. Any incidents or mishaps are not treated as failures but are used as opportunities for staff and young people to examine and reflect on what has happened. Changes to strategies and routines are then made, if needed. Staff listen to young people. For example, individual arrangements were made for a young person who felt they could not cope with a group holiday. The young person appreciated this and thanked the staff afterwards, saying that the break had 'helped to clear my head'.</p> <p>Young people's health needs are promoted and protected conscientiously and rigorously. Specific health needs are known and met, and specialist appointments organised when necessary. Therapeutic interventions and appointments are readily available to the young people, with therapists based on site. If the young people do not wish to attend these appointments, guidance and advice are provided to the staff team and, in particular, key workers by the therapists. This ensures that the young people's emotional needs are met to a very high standard.</p> <p>Any areas of conflict are addressed and resolved effectively. Members of staff spend time reflecting with the young people when there have been disagreements in the group. Subsequently, the young people are able to meet with each other, discuss their disagreements and move forward. This process has enabled young</p>	

people to improve their self-management skills and ability to listen and to consider other points of view. This is a significant improvement, especially when taking into consideration their starting points.

Young people know how to complain and that complaints are taken seriously. A senior manager meets with the young people to discuss complaints and to ensure that they are resolved. Young people's opinions are also sought in meetings with members of staff from the organisation's quality assurance team. This gives young people the opportunity to express their views about how they are being cared for to adults who are not involved in their day-to-day care. Any issues raised are discussed with the registered manager and staff, and a response given to the young people. This supports the young people to feel involved and to know that they have an influence on how their home is being run.

Support provided to the young people during contact with families is exceptional. Members of staff are acutely aware of how some young people's relationships with their families can be a source of anxiety and turmoil. Therefore, personalised and carefully thought-out strategies are implemented so that the potential trauma and upset caused by these visits is managed sensitively and skilfully. As a result, young people are able to identify how they are affected by contact and how to cope with the emotions that this may trigger.

Young people are encouraged to develop independence and self-care skills. For example, they are taught how to behave at meal times and how to be self-sufficient in their personal care. They are supported to use practical skills, such as road safety, and are assisted to learn the value of money by going shopping with members of staff. Links are made between everyday skills, such as counting change after paying for an item in a shop, with their learning about mathematics. This helps the young people to gain in confidence and to use social experiences as learning opportunities.

	Judgement grade
<b>How well children and young people are helped and protected</b>	Good.
<p>Young people said that they feel safe and cared for. They are confident that staff will support them and help them if they feel unsafe or worried.</p> <p>Risk assessments completed by the staff are comprehensive, thoroughly monitored and regularly assessed, to ensure that they remain relevant and are implemented effectively.</p>	



There have been no incidents of young people being missing from the home since the last inspection. On one occasion, two young people left without permission, but were followed by members of staff and persuaded to return.

Since the last inspection, two safeguarding incidents have been reported to external agencies. Both were managed in line with the home's procedures. Referrals were made to the local authority and relevant professionals in a timely manner, and records clearly show how the incidents have been addressed, followed up and resolved.

All members of staff have been trained in recognising the signs of child sexual exploitation. They know that young people in the home are especially vulnerable and are alert to potential threats, especially with regards to internet usage and risks should the young people go missing. This means that they are not complacent and that young people's safety is at the forefront of staff practice.

Restorative sanctions are used by staff when young people's behaviour is inappropriate. Young people are encouraged and supported to 'make good' what they have done wrong, for example, by writing a letter of apology. They are also given the opportunity to sign or write comments on the records, which encourages them to develop understanding. On two occasions, a record of a sanction did not contain sufficient details on how much a young person was meant to pay in order to make amends for some minor damage. This is a minor shortfall and the other 26 records examined were completed in line with regulations.

Physical restraint is used in line with regulations. Appropriate records are kept of all incidents. Debrief meetings, conducted after every incident, support staff and young people effectively. These sessions ensure that members of staff and young people resolve any issues and that the reasons for the restraint are understood. This has increased understanding of young people's behaviour, and incidents of physical restraint have substantially decreased. For example, in May 2016 there were five incidents of restraint, three in June and none in July.

Positive behaviour is celebrated and rewarded. Some young people's behaviour and self-management have significantly improved. When this has happened, group meetings have been held and their peers and members of staff have acknowledged the progress made. Young people have received certificates celebrating their success and been rewarded with special treats, such as outings to theme parks. This process has helped young people to develop self-esteem and enjoy success.

A robust recruitment procedure ensures that all members of staff are thoroughly vetted before commencing work. This includes background checks with referees as well as checks made by the Disclosure and Barring Service.

	Judgement grade
<b>The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers</b>	Outstanding
<p>The registered manager has over 12 years of experience of working with children and young people, and has achieved a level 5 diploma in leadership for health and social care and children’s and young people’s services. She demands high standards of care and performance from members of staff and is ambitious for the young people in her care.</p> <p>The home has enough members of staff to provide excellent support to the young people. All staff receive varied training, which gives them the skills and knowledge to provide structured and well thought-out care for the young people.</p> <p>Good arrangements are in place to scrutinise the quality of care. The registered manager’s systems for the home include checks carried out by the organisation’s quality assurance team. This is further underpinned by checks carried out by the responsible individual. Such levels of scrutiny ensure that records contain high-quality accurate information and that members of staff receive insightful guidance and advice when needed.</p> <p>Staff are supervised regularly. Supervision is reflective and gives staff opportunities to consider both their practice and the impact on them of working with young people who can display very challenging behaviour. Team meetings and therapeutic supervision are used effectively to reflect on how well the team is working together to manage young people’s behaviour.</p> <p>The registered manager and staff liaise closely with placing authorities and social workers in order to keep them up to date with each young person’s progress and any incidents of note. Comments made by a commissioning team include, ‘The home continues to excel and fully understands our young person’s needs...’ and ‘Communication is of a very high standard.’ A social worker stated, ‘They’ve been on the ball with everything. I can’t see him doing so well anywhere else.’</p> <p>Such close liaison and willingness to be accountable and transparent in their practice means that other professionals and stakeholders feel included in the provision of care and that the structure ensures collaboration and a sense of working together. This in turn provides continuity and stability for the young people.</p> <p>Staff carefully plan for reviews and meetings and facilitate young people’s contributions to them. An innovative element of practice is the provision of a questionnaire to all professionals before meetings. The questions are about the young person and test professionals’ knowledge of the young person. This ensures that all members of the meeting are reminded of the young person’s identity and</p>	

their likes and dislikes, hopes and fears. This supports the professionals to focus on the young person and to have a real understanding of them. Additionally, all young people are prepared and supported to attend their reviews and thereby have a meaningful opportunity to voice their opinions.

A diligent approach to assessing the potential impact of new admissions has meant that the young people's group is very stable. Only one young person has moved in during the last year, and the process for facilitating this was careful. The move was paced so that all young people could cope. As a result, the new young person has become an established part of the group, and stability and consistency have been maintained.

The home's statement of purpose is kept under regular review. This means that the service that the home provides is clearly documented, and all stakeholders know the home's aims and objectives.

The general standard of record-keeping is high. Incidents, such as physical restraints and safeguarding matters, are recorded and examined carefully by managers, and information is shared with external agencies when needed. Minor shortfalls have been found in the recording of sanctions and in the evidencing of how a decision made at a review has been followed up. Neither has had a negative impact on the progress or well-being of any child.

## 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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