

Report Title: Ofsted Activity Report – Residential Services

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan? No

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report -

Report Author(s): Gary Pickles, Head of Care for Children in Care: Brent Lumley, Responsible Individual CYPs

Ward(s) Affected: ALL.

Summary

The report provides a summary of Ofsted Inspections and Activity at Rotherham MBC children's homes in 2016. All three Children's Homes are registered with Ofsted and they are inspected by them twice a year. They receive a full two day inspection and an interim one day inspection. The full inspection determines the grade and the interim inspection assesses progress in relation to that grade.

Recommendations

That the Panel notes the detail provided in this report detailing the outcome of recent Ofsted inspections of Rotherham MBC children's homes.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - Silverwood - Strengths and Areas for Development

Appendix 2 - Cherry Tree House - Strengths and Areas for Development

Appendix 3 - Liberty House - Strengths and Areas for Development

Background Papers

There is no decision required from this report as it is for information purposes only.

However the following reports give some context:

'Consultation on the proposed closure of Cherry Tree House Children's Home'

'Consultation on the proposed closure of Silverwood Children's Home'.

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Yes

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

Ofsted Activity Report – Residential Services

1. Recommendations

1.1 That the Panel notes the information provided in this report detailing the outcome of the recent Ofsted inspection of RMBC's Children's Homes.

2 Background

2.1 All Children's Homes are registered with Ofsted and they are inspected by them twice a year. They receive a full inspection and an interim inspection. The full inspection determines the grade and the interim inspection assesses progress in relation to that grade. Rotherham MBC currently has three children's homes and this report provides the detail from the most recent Ofsted inspections.

2.2 Ofsted inspections feature three key areas for the home and service:

- **Statutory Requirements** - These refer to areas in which Ofsted have judged that the home may be in breach of the laws and statutory guidance which govern practice in children's homes
- **Strengths** - These refer to areas in which Ofsted have judged that practice is strong and worthy of commendation
- **Areas for Development** - These refer to areas in which Ofsted have judged that practice should improve for the home to move up to the next grade

3 Key Issues

3.1 Rotherham MBC currently has three children's homes; Silverwood; Cherry Tree House; and Liberty House.

3.2 **Silverwood Children's Home** provides long-term care for male and female young people aged between 10 to 18 years, with emotional and behavioural difficulties. The maximum number of children who can be placed at Silverwood is five. At the time of writing this report the home is empty, and there are no plans currently to admit children and young people.

Full Ofsted Inspection of the service on the 30/06/2015 graded the service as 'Good'. At the Interim inspection undertaken on the 15/02/2016 the service was graded 'declined effectiveness'.

Ofsted Inspection History - Silverwood Children's Home		
Inspection Date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgement
12/09/2013	Full	Good
03/03/2014	Interim	Good Progress
24/09/2014	Full	Inadequate
12/11/2014	Full	Good
30/06/2015	Full	Good
15/02/2016	Interim	Declined Effectiveness

3.3 **Cherry Tree Children's Home** provides long-term care for male and female young people aged between 10 to 18 years, with complex disabilities. It was refurbished in 2012 and forms part of a complex of buildings, which include Liberty House Short Breaks Children Home and The Disability Family Support Service. This was previously known as the Orchard Centre.

Cherry Tree House provides long-term care for male and female young people with disabilities. The maximum number of children who can be placed at Cherry Tree House is five. At the time of writing this report the home has two young people resident and there are no plans currently to admit further children and young people.

Full Ofsted Inspection of the service on the 18/08/2015 graded the service as 'Requires Improvement'. At the Interim inspection undertaken on the 23/03/2016 the service was graded 'Improved Effectiveness'.

Ofsted Inspection History - Cherry Tree Children's Home		
Inspection Date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgement
31/07/2013	Full	Adequate
25/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
05/11/2014	Full	Inadequate
05/01/2015	Full	Adequate
18/08/2015	Full	Requires Improvement
23/03/2016	Interim	Improved Effectiveness

3.4 **Liberty House Short Breaks Children's Home** provides planned short-break overnight respite care seven days a week for up to eight children, aged between 8 to 18 years, of either gender who have physical or sensory disabilities, complex health needs and challenging behavior as a result of their disability.

Liberty House also has provision to offer a ninth placement on an emergency basis. The emergency bed will only be offered to young people that currently access Liberty House. This will allow for a more accurate matching process and will also improve outcomes for that particular young person.

Liberty House Short Breaks Service overall aims are twofold. Which are:-

- (i) "To provide a residential short break service which will support children and their families continue to operate as a family unit".
- (ii) "To ensure the experience is stimulating and enjoyable for each child and young person to enable them to develop skills through participation in a range of activities".

A Full Ofsted Inspection of the service on the 27/01/2016 graded the service as 'Good'. At the Interim inspection undertaken on the 17/03/2016 the service was judged 'Sustained Effectiveness'.

Ofsted Inspection History - Liberty House Short Breaks Children's Home		
Inspection Date	Inspection Type	Inspection Judgement
01/05/2013	Full	Adequate
13/02/2014	Interim	Good Progress
18/09/2014	Full	Good
11/12/2014	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness
27/01/2016	Full	Good
17/03/2016	Interim	Sustained Effectiveness

4. Ofsted Reports

Silverwood

4.1 Key Issues arising from the most recent Ofsted inspection in February 2016

Statutory requirements following inspection

*In meeting the **Quality Standards**, the registered person must ensure that staff seek to secure the input and services required to meet each child's needs. (Regulation 5(b)) with particular reference to making sure that all agencies involved in keeping young people safe are consulted, such as the police and specialist child sexual exploitation services. This information should then inform the young people's future care plans,*

The Protection of Children Standard - To meet the protection of children standard with particular reference to ensuring young people have up-to-date risk assessments. This includes specific missing person assessments. Staff must take action to protect young people, the registered person must ensure that staff:-

Assess whether each child is at risk of harm, taking into account information in the child's relevant plans, and if necessary, make arrangements to reduce the risk of any harm to the child.

The Leadership and Management Standard - To meet the leadership and management standard, with particular reference to management oversight of young people's safety and care. This includes where young people are accessing cigarettes and cannabis as well as the manager's ability to monitor and demonstrate progress, the registered person to –

Understand the impact that the quality of care provided in the home is having on the progress and experiences of each child and use this understanding to inform the development and quality of care provided in the home.

Action taken following most recent inspection

- Increased direct support provided by the Responsible Individual. This has ensured oversight of the young people's case file and daily contact with the registered manager.
- A comprehensive action plan and multi-agency meeting convened to monitor and ensure that immediate issues with regard to the young person's safety were addressed.
- The action plan to safeguard the young person was shared with Ofsted who were confident that the comprehensive nature of this plan meant no compliance notice needed to be issued.
- All young people's risk assessments were updated and shared with the CSE Evolve Team and the social worker for approval.
- Direct work undertaken with the young person who was specifically supplying tobacco.
- There are no plans to admit young people to the Home

*See Appendix 1 for **Strengths and Areas for Development***

Cherry Tree House

4.2 Key Issues arising from the most recent Ofsted inspection in March 2016

Statutory requirements following inspection:

The Quality of Care Standard To meet the quality of care standard, with particular reference to the use of sanctions being detailed in the home statement of purpose, the standard in paragraph (1) requires the registered person to – Understand and apply the home's statement of purpose

*In meeting the **Quality Standards**, the registered person must ensure that staff seek to involve each child's placing authority effectively in the child's care, in accordance with relevant plans; (Regulation (5)(a))*

In particular, this relates to making sure plans are agreed and reviewed by the social worker. They are signed and decisions about the child's care including the use of sanctions are made jointly

Action taken following most recent inspection

- Increased direct support provided by the Responsible Individual. This has ensured oversight of the young people's case file and daily contact with the Registered Manager.
- Management oversight of all significant incidents is in place; this would include violence to staff and use of physical intervention.
- The Homes Statement of Purpose has been revised to reflect their approach and management of the sanctions applied to young people in their care.
- The Placement team in partnership with Social Care are sourcing alternative placement for the current residents. One of the two remaining residents is scheduled to move out on the 27/05/2016.
- Signage has been reviewed and simplified where the use of symbols is coupled with text.
- There are no plans to admit young people to the Home

*See Appendix 2 for **Strengths** and **Areas for Development***

Liberty House Short Breaks

4.3 Key Issues arising from the most recent Ofsted inspection in March 2016

Statutory requirements following inspection

The registered person should be skilled in anticipating difficulties and reviewing incidents. They are proactively implementing lessons learned and sustaining good practice (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 55, paragraph 10.24). With particular reference to the registered manager consistently reflecting and analysing practice to ensure internal monitoring systems are embedded and plans demonstrate young people's progress.

Some records may be kept electronically (regulation 38) provided that this information can be easily accessed by anyone with legitimate need to view it and, if required be produced in a legible form (The Guide to the Quality Standards page 61, paragraph 14.2). With particular reference to; access to electronic records for agency staff or alternatively providing paper copies of all necessary documentation.

Action taken following most recent inspection

- Increased direct support provided by the Responsible Individual. This has ensured oversight of the young people's case file and daily contact with the Registered Manager.
- The service consisting of 27 staff is now split into the 3 teams to address the three key areas as defined by the Ofsted Inspection framework:
 - The impact and effectiveness of leaders and managers;
 - Develop staff Practice which supports safeguards and protects young people within the home;
 - and the overall experiences and progress of children and young people living in the home
- All care plans are now reviewed every three months and signed off by either the Registered Manager or Deputy Manager.
- A Business case has been submitted in order to strengthen the management team and increase the number of duties to two. This will not incur any increased costs as existing staffing will be reduced to facilitate this.
- The service will develop an improvement plan to Take the home to Outstanding

See Appendix 3 for **Strengths and Areas for Development**

5 Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 There is no decision required as it is for information purposes only
However the following reports give some context:
'Consultation on the proposed closure of Cherry Tree House Children's Home'
'Consultation on the proposed closure of Silverwood Children's Home'.

6. Financial and Procurement Implications

7. Legal Implications

8. Human Resources Implications

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 At the time of writing there were two young people both aged 14 who are residents at Cherry Tree Children's House. It is predicted that they will have moved to placements better able to meet their needs by the time this report reaches Cabinet however if they are still in residence they will be consulted on their views and options for future placements as part of this proposal
- 9.2 There are currently no young people resident at Silverwood Children's Home.
- 9.3 Liberty House continue to deliver a full service of short breaks to a cohort of 35 children within a calendar month, this is subject to fluctuation due to demand.

10 Equalities and Human Rights Implications

- 10.1 The council must comply with its duties under the Equality Act 2010, as set out in section 8 above. In addition, the council has a duty to fully consider the human rights implications for residents, staff and future looked after children.

11. Implications for Partners and Other Directorates

- 11.1 Partners will be consulted as other directorates who contribute to supporting the home where relevant.

12. Risks and Mitigation

- 12.1 Continuation of the current provision presents the following risks:

- Inadequate care being provided to any future children in care who might be placed in the home.
- That in the event of a further inadequate inspection there could be a forced closure resulting in young people having to move from the home in distressing circumstances.
- Risk to the Council's reputation in the event that future inspections find the provision further declining or even inadequate.
- The financial burden that would be incurred during the period required to bring the provision up to the necessary standard would risk the investments required to support other key elements of the Sufficiency Strategy such as developing Edge of Care provision and enhancing the therapeutic services needed to support permanent alternatives to care for Rotherham's looked after children such as Adoption and Special Guardianship

The risks associated with the closure of the last of the Council's mainstream residential provision are as follows:

- There is a risk that there will be insufficient placement choice for the Borough's children. This risk is mitigated by the other elements set out in the Sufficiency Strategy, including growing the in-house fostering provision, growing and developing the independent fostering market locally to better meet local needs by enhanced commissioning arrangements and similarly maximising the potential to work with local and nearby providers of specialist residential care so that bespoke arrangements can be commissioned to meet individual needs.
- It is of note that despite the loss in effect of 15 in house residential beds that has resulted from the closure of Woodview, St. Edmund's and the freeze on admissions in Silverwood only 4 new residential placements have been made since December 2015. Of those that have been made in recent months none would have been considered suitable for admission to Silverwood in terms of the current Statement of Purpose.
- It has been evidenced that Cherry Tree House Children's Home is not able to provide appropriate care to the young people with high levels of complex needs identified as needing residential care. This is evidenced by the fact that the home has not been able to meet the needs of young people with complex disabilities who have had to be placed outside the borough. Despite a robust management response the home has not been able to make sufficient improvements within a reasonable time frame and it is estimated that considerable additional investment would be required which cannot be justified.
- Officers of the council are required to maximise resources and ensure that we get best value for money. The continued low occupancy and under-utilisation of the homes means that it is not value for money.

The proposed closure upon which consultation is based mitigates these risks.

13. Accountable Officer(s)

Gary Pickles Head of Service – Children in Care

Brent Lumley, Responsible Individual - Residential Services;

Approvals Obtained from:

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services:- Paul Jackson

Director of Legal Services:- Neil Concannon

Head of Procurement (if appropriate):- Luke Ricketts

Appendix 1

Silverwood Children's Home	
Strengths	Areas for Development
No young people have been admitted to this home since the last inspection. Young people who have moved out have been well supported through positive planning involving the young people, social workers and their families. Staff ensure they have everything they need to make their move successful. Young people's beds have been left open for a number of weeks to make sure they have a place to come back to if any issues arise. As a result, young people are well supported and confident in their transition to independence.	
Staff demonstrate a verbal understanding of child sexual exploitation,	Young People are not kept safe. Staff lack the support and experience to transfer [their understanding of child sexual exploitation] into practice. As a result, the signs of risk are not always identified and acted upon.
	Young people's risk assessments in relation to child sexual exploitation are not up to date. Staffs do not have the correct information to enable them to understand young people's levels of risk. This limits the action taken to keep young people safe.
Positive efforts are made to liaise with other professionals such as social workers schools and the police. When information is received at meetings,	It is not always evaluated and acted upon. The ineffective analysis of the information hinders the ability to put strategies in place to keep young people safe. Consequently, the full extent of risks to young people is not always known and the full range of preventative measures are not in place to keep them safe.
	Despite staff efforts, some young people continue to smoke cigarettes and cannabis. Other young people on-site are involved in the purchase of cigarettes for those who are under age. There is a lack of evidence of this being robustly monitored and addressed.
Management have ensured a requirement from the last inspection regarding the homes door buzzer is documented appropriately in the statement of purpose. Additional staffs have been employed to make sure sufficient numbers are on shift. This meets part of a recommendation set at last inspection.	The lack of robust internal management oversight has failed to identify the short falls highlighted at this inspection. Young people are not safeguarded and the failure to process information has been a contributing factor. It has also affected the ability to demonstrate any progress young people make.

Appendix 2

Cherry Tree House Children's Home	
Strengths	Areas for Development
This home continues on a steady journey of improvement. Successfully meeting all the requirements from the last inspection. Extensive efforts by the acting management team and temporary responsible individual are steadily improving the quality of care and enhancing experience for young people living in this home.	The implementation of sanctions for young people is low. However when they are used they are not detailed in individuals behaviour management plans and views from other professionals such as social workers are not present. This does not demonstrate a multi-agency approach to the thought process behind using them for individuals with very complex needs. Additionally, while the homes statement of purpose now reflects which young people it cares for, it does not mention the use
Training around individuals needs such as autism and safeguarding practice, coupled with ongoing input from the consultant is helping staff to understand young people and provides clear guidance on reporting safeguarding issues.	No safeguarding incidents have occurred since staff received training; consequently, the staffs understanding is not yet tested. Knowledge now needs to transfer effectively into practice. Training and support is helping staff feel more confident to undertake their role and the quality of care is improving. One member of staff commented, 'We are supported now by all managers. Things are a lot more positive. We know what to do.'
External monitoring systems are effective. The management team and responsible individual are quick to respond to any issues raised by the independent visitor. This promotes improvement and ensures managers are confident young people are safe. The management team and responsible individual welcome opinions from the young inspector's team. They listen to young people's views and respond to their recommendations. For example, a suggestion that young people should cook more of their own meals is now in progress and is working well.	
Ongoing training for staff coupled with consistent oversight and advice from the consultant enhances the staff's skills in managing individual challenging behaviours. Consequently, staff are more skilled in using de-escalation techniques and there is a significant reduction in the use of physical restraint. When physical interventions do occur, staff complete records promptly. Managers and the responsible individual swiftly review them, ensuring good care practice continues.	

Cherry Tree House Children's Home continued...	
Strengths	Areas for Development
Additional training around young people's communication needs is equipping staff with the skills required to communicate with individuals. Staff are now motivated to continue to improve the quality of care because they see their efforts are successful. The consistent use of sign language by staff is helping to encourage young people's use of this also. This is assisting them to express themselves and is helping to lower their anxiety levels. As a result, relationships between staff and young people continue to develop positively. One member of staff commented, 'Our relationships have definitely improved with young people. Now we can communicate with them better.'	Communication through symbols is much more evident. However, some symbols do not match the meaning of the word written underneath it. Other symbol notices contain too many symbols for young people to understand. Further improvement is required in this area to enhance communication and avoid any confusion for young people.
Young people's life opportunities are now significantly increasing. The introduction of new hobbies such as judo have improved young people sense of achievement. It has provided them with skills to attain grades and enter competitions. Additionally, young people have opportunity to socialise with others and have made friends for the first time. Staff nurture these new friendships and provide opportunities for their friends to come back to the home and share birthday parties and tea visits.	
Young people are now enjoying their own allotment and are successfully managing the land. They plan to grow their own vegetables. They are also benefitting from the new addition of pet rabbits. Looking after them gives young people a sense of achievement and responsibility. It is helping to develop understanding of other's needs.	
Good communication with other professionals such as school, social workers and health specialists is ensuring a consistent approach to young people's health care and education. Although this is evident in practice, it is not always clear in young people's plans. Having this evident in plans will demonstrate a multi-agency	

Appendix 3

Liberty House Short Breaks Children's Home	
Strengths	Areas for Development
Since the last inspection, Manager and responsible individual have made significant efforts to address the requirements set. The implementation of a robust system for reporting safeguarding issues has clearly defined the process.	Additionally staff training around recording safeguarding incidents has strengthened staff understanding. No significant incidents have occurred since the last inspection; consequently, this new system is not yet tested. Knowledge now needs to transfer effectively into practice.
Internal quality assurance systems are good at challenging practice. Registered manager and responsible individual are swift to scrutinise issues that are raised. This ensures young people are safe and practice prioritises individual's wellbeing. Managers welcome further examination from the young inspector's team. This team of children from the local area carry out inspections of services. This group of young people effectively raise concerns from their own perspective, which managers quickly address. For example, at the last inspection they suggested a brochure in the entrance with details about the home would benefit visitors. This is now in place.	Some care plans are not up to date in line with young people's needs. The home has implemented a new process for reviewing care planning. However, this process is not yet been embedded and requires further consideration to ensure clear management oversight.
	Recent issue with internet access has at times limited young people's use of the computer. The registered manager's efforts to address this have been successful. However, the home's information technology system continues to present challenges for staff. For example, on occasions some staff cannot immediately access children's information which has the potential to undermine safety.
New systems to promote consultation with young people about their care are in progress. Enthusiastic and motivated staff create innovative methods for young people to review their time here. Current projects include the use of emoji questionnaires and voice boards. Staff also encourage young people to express themselves through art.	Ongoing development in this area will help provide a personalised feel to the home helping to enhance young people's sense of belonging. In addition, the creation of new photo collages promote young people's sense of value. It is a positive way to share their experiences and celebrate achievements.
Young people continue to enjoy an excellent range of activities,	
Young people continue to make good progress in all areas of their development. Staff know young people well and their aspirations for them to achieve are good. Consequently, young people take small steps, which lead to big achievements	
Staff work closely with other professionals such as schools, dieticians & social workers to ensure effective sharing of information	

